



Task-based Language Learning in Business English Courses for Thai EFL Undergraduate Students: Challenges and Opportunities

การเรียนรู้ภาษาโดยเน้นภาระงานในรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจสำหรับนักศึกษาที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ: ความท้าทายและโอกาส

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บทความวิชาการนี้วิเคราะห์ความท้าทายและโอกาสในการประยุกต์ใช้การเรียนรู้ภาษาโดยเน้นภาระงานในรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจสำหรับนักศึกษาระดับปริญญาตรีโดยใช้วิธีการทบทวนวรรณกรรมร่วมกับการวิเคราะห์บริบทสถาบันจากการวิเคราะห์ได้พบอุปสรรคหลักประกอบด้วย ข้อจำกัดในการปรับตัวทางวัฒนธรรม ทรัพยากรที่มีจำกัด และปัญหาการประเมินผล ขณะเดียวกันพบโอกาสในการพัฒนาทักษะการสื่อสาร ความสามารถเชิงปฏิบัติ และการมีส่วนร่วมของนักศึกษา นอกจากนี้บทความได้นำเสนอข้อเสนอแนะสำหรับอาจารย์และผู้กำหนดนโยบายเพื่อส่งเสริมการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจแบบเน้นการสื่อสาร ผลการวิเคราะห์ชี้ให้เห็นว่า แม้จะมีความท้าทาย แต่การนำการเรียนรู้ภาษาเชิงภารกิจมาใช้สามารถเพิ่มประสิทธิภาพในการพัฒนาทักษะภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจและความพร้อมทางวิชาชีพของนักศึกษา

คำสำคัญ : การเรียนรู้ภาษาโดยเน้นภาระงาน; ภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจ; นักศึกษาที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ; ความสามารถด้านการสื่อสาร; การทบทวนเชิงวิเคราะห์



ABSTRACT

Challenges and opportunities in implementing Task-based Language Learning (TBLL) for Thai EFL undergraduates in Business English courses are examined through literature review and institutional analysis. Key obstacles are identified including cultural adaptation barriers, resource constraints, and assessment limitations, while potential for developing communicative competence, practical skills, and student engagement is highlighted. Recommendations are offered for practitioners and policymakers to enhance communicative approaches in Business English instruction. Analysis indicates that despite implementation challenges in Thai EFL contexts, TBLL can effectively improve students' business English proficiency and professional readiness when properly adapted.

Keywords : Task-based Language Learning; Business English; Thai EFL learners; Communicative Competence; Analytical Review

Introduction

Globalization and the necessity for English competence as the world business language have made it essential to develop effective English teaching methods in Thai higher education (East, 2024a ; Newton, 2022). The traditional grammar-translation approach has failed to adequately prepare Thai undergraduate students for the communicative requirements of international business (Srisupha & Seepho, 2021 ; Newton, 2022). Task-based Language Learning (TBLL), which focuses on meaningful communication and authentic language use, has emerged as a promising alternative for Business English instruction (Ellis, 2022 ; Lu, 2024).

This exploratory paper critically examines the implementation of TBLL in Business English contexts for Thai EFL undergraduates, addressing both challenges and opportunities. Rather than reporting a single research study, the article offers a comprehensive analysis integrating existing insights, theories, and applications concerning the Thai educational context (Swatevacharkul, 2024 ; Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023). This study is significant as it addresses the growing need for enhanced digital TBLL practices, particularly in the post-pandemic era where AI-based platforms and hybrid learning models have become increasingly relevant (Gökçearslan et al., 2024 ; Kurata, 2024). The research attempts to bridge the gap between traditional English language teaching methods and the communicative competency required in modern business environments, while incorporating contemporary technological innovations such as chatbots and adaptive simulations that have transformed language learning landscapes (Parmaxi, 2020 ; Schorr et al., 2024).

Literature Review and Related Research

Task-based Language Learning: Conceptual Foundations

Task-based Language Learning (TBLL) is a pedagogical approach rooted in communicative language teaching principles and has evolved into a comprehensive educational framework that prioritizes authentic communication and meaningful interaction (Ellis et al., 2020 ; Long & Ahmadian, 2022). Multiple scholars have provided complementary definitions of tasks. Willis & Willis (2007) describe a task as "an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to promote the achievement of an objective." This contrasts with traditional form-focused instruction which ultimately values linguistic structural accuracy over communicative production (Ellis, 2021 ; Gutiérrez, 2024). Long (2015) proposed the Interaction Hypothesis that validates TBLL by claiming that collaborative tasks foster learning as learners negotiate meaning, receive comprehensible input, and modify output. These principles are particularly pertinent in Business English (BE)



contexts, which require learners to develop both language and professional skills simultaneously (Charles, 2019 ; Xie, 2022).

Recent developments in TBLL theory have emphasized the importance of modular approaches and flexible implementation strategies (Ellis, 2020 ; Ellis, 2022). East (2024a) argues that TBLL has experienced substantial expansion over the past decade, with increasing recognition of its adaptability to diverse educational contexts. Ellis (2021) has advocated for moving TBLL forward through addressing real implementation challenges rather than theoretical debates, emphasizing the need for practical solutions in contemporary language education.

Business English in EFL Contexts

Teaching Business English in EFL environments presents unique challenges, particularly when the target language serves as a foreign rather than second language (Dudley- Evans & St. John, 2018 ; Charles, 2019). Contemporary research has highlighted the complexity of Business English pedagogy, requiring educators to balance linguistic competence with professional communication skills (Rudd, 2020 ; Xie, 2022). Studies examining Thai EFL students reveal persistent challenges including limited exposure to authentic business environments, cross-cultural communication differences, and insufficient opportunities for sustained practice (Dokchandra & Boonnoon, 2023). These findings justify the need for careful, context-sensitive pedagogical design that addresses both linguistic and professional development needs (East, 2024a ; Newton, 2022).

TBLL in Asian EFL Contexts

Research on TBLL in Asian EFL settings has yielded mixed findings, highlighting the importance of cultural and contextual adaptation (Zhang & Li, 2022 ; Han, 2022). In Thailand specifically, Suksan & Thongkam (2021) identified teacher training, resource access, and assessment practices as critical factors influencing TBLL success, while Swatevacharkul (2024) emphasized the importance of autonomous learning development. The Asian context of language learning, characterized by examination-driven environments and teacher-centered instructional cultures, presents specific challenges for TBLL implementation (Han, 2022 ; Lu, 2024). However, recent studies also indicate that well-adapted TBLL designs can effectively improve communicative competence when implemented thoughtfully. Fang et al. (2021) found that mobile-supported task-based approaches showed positive effects on EFL students' linguistic achievement and conversational interaction in Asian contexts, though implementation required careful cultural consideration. Contemporary research has expanded understanding of TBLL adaptation in Asian contexts (Khajavy et al., 2024 ; Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023). Lu (2024) investigated localized TBLL approaches in examination-oriented settings, finding that hybrid models combining traditional and task-based elements showed promise. Gutiérrez (2024) emphasized the importance of longitudinal evaluation in understanding how TBLL curricula are implemented across different institutional contexts.

Analytical Framework and Approach

This analytical paper adopts a comprehensive framework to address TBLL implementation in Thai Business English courses. The discussion is organized around four major dimensions that provide systematic analysis of the implementation context, challenges, opportunities, and strategic solutions for Thai educational settings:

The first dimension involves contextual analysis, examining cultural, institutional, and educational factors specific to Thailand (Swatevacharkul, 2024 ; East, 2024b).

The second dimension focuses on challenge identification through systematic review of TBLL implementation barriers (Suksan & Thongkam, 2021 ; Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023).

The third dimension involves opportunity mapping to discover potential benefits and successful practices (Manosuthikit, 2025 ; Newton, 2022).

The fourth dimension encompasses strategic synthesis that translates findings into actionable recommendations (Wollny et al., 2021 ; Gökçearslan et al., 2024).

The approach draws upon: Current theorization in second language acquisition and business communication (Ellis et al., 2020 ; Long & Ahmadian, 2022); Documented experiences from Thai and international institutions (Rudd, 2020 ; Okyar, 2023); Thai cultural and educational research perspectives (Swatevacharkul, 2024 ; East, 2024a); Digital learning innovations and AI-enhanced educational technologies (Wollny et al., 2021 ; Gökçearslan et al., 2024); Theoretical studies on TBLL integration in EFL classrooms (Ellis, 2021 ; East, 2024a); and Pedagogical research on TBLL application in EFL environments (Lu, 2024 ; Khajavy et al., 2024).

As shown in Figure 1, the author presents a TBLL framework that enables comprehensive insight into the potential and limitations of TBLL in Thai Business English teaching, providing information valuable for both theory and practice.

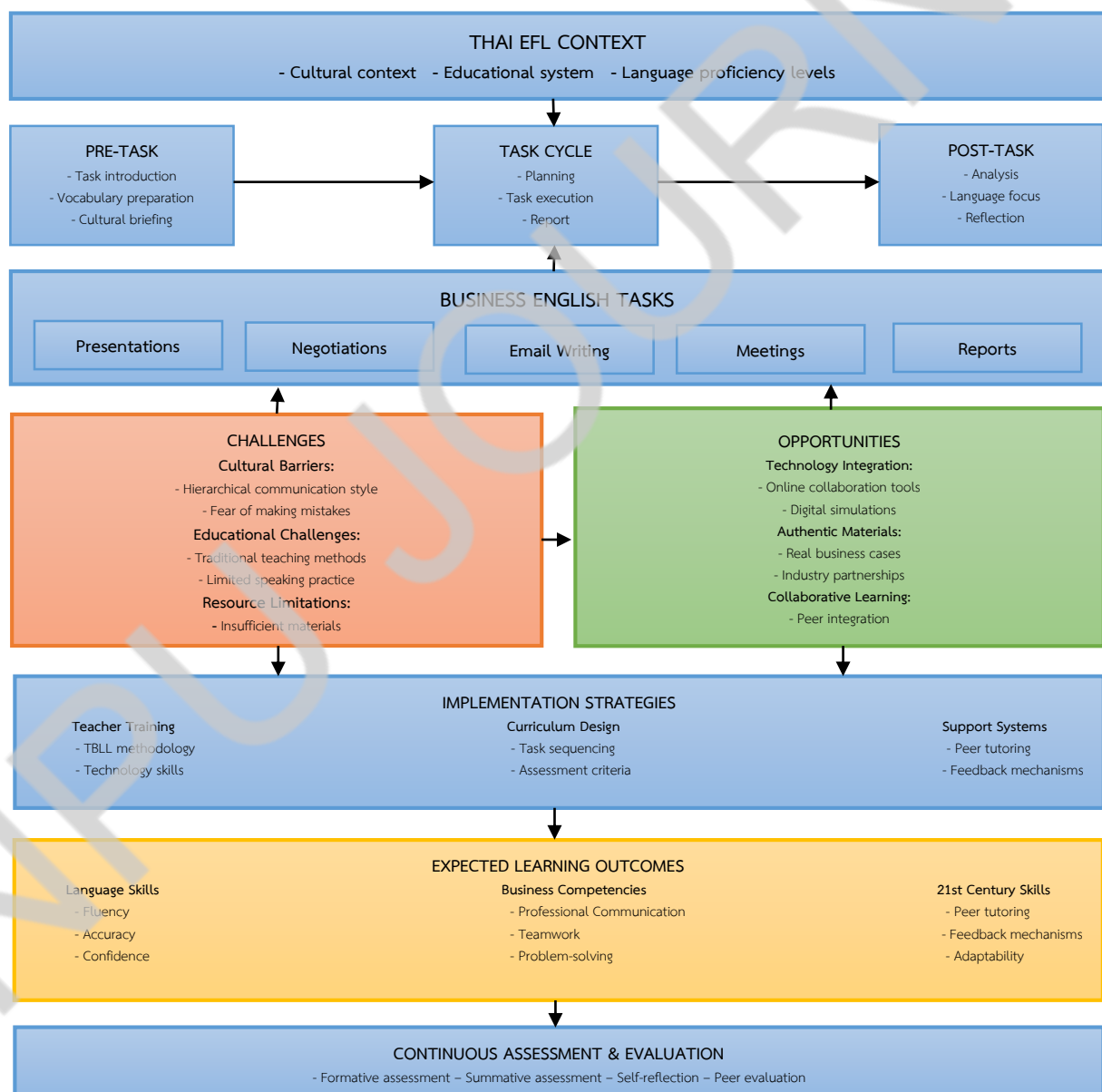


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of TBLL for Business English in Thai EFL Context Source: Author's own Creation



Contextual Analysis: The Thai Educational Landscape

Cultural Dimensions in Thai Education

Thai learning culture presents unique considerations for language pedagogy implementation that significantly influence the potential success of TBLL approaches (Swatevacharkul, 2024 ; East, 2024a). The deeply embedded social hierarchy within traditional Thai educational contexts represents a fundamental aspect where respect for authority and hierarchical relationships are paramount in classroom interactions (Han, 2022 ; Gutiérrez, 2024). This top-down framework often conflicts with TBLL's emphasis on communicative learning and student autonomy, as the traditional teacher-student relationship emphasizes deference and passive learning rather than the active participation required in task-based activities (Swatevacharkul, 2024 ; Manosuthikit, 2025). The hierarchical structure creates expectations for teacher-centered instruction that can inhibit students from taking initiative in communication tasks or questioning authority figures, thereby limiting the collaborative and interactive nature essential to effective TBLL implementation.

Collectivist orientations within Thai culture present both opportunities and challenges for TBLL integration, as the emphasis on group harmony and consensus-seeking can facilitate certain aspects of task-based learning while complicating others (Han, 2022 ; East, 2024b). While group work occurs naturally within cultural contexts and students are comfortable working collaboratively, individual performance requirements in tasks may create discomfort for learners accustomed to collective decision-making processes (Nirattisai & Chiramanee, 2020 ; Newton, 2022). This cultural preference requires careful consideration in task design to balance individual accountability with group collaboration, ensuring that assessment and evaluation methods align with cultural expectations while still promoting individual language development and personal responsibility for learning outcomes.

Face-saving concerns represent perhaps the most significant cultural barrier to TBLL implementation, as Thai students are heavily concerned with maintaining dignity and avoiding public embarrassment in academic settings (Phaisanwan, 2021 ; East, 2024b ; Swatevacharkul, 2024). The pervasive fear of making visible mistakes prevents students from engaging actively in speaking and communicative activities, creating a fundamental tension with TBLL's requirement for meaningful interaction and authentic communication practice. This cultural factor significantly impacts willingness to communicate, which represents a crucial component of successful TBLL implementation, as students may prefer silent participation or written activities over oral communication tasks that expose them to potential public correction or criticism (Manosuthikit, 2025). Understanding and addressing these deeply rooted concerns becomes essential for creating psychologically safe learning environments where students feel comfortable taking linguistic risks necessary for communicative competence development.

Institutional Characteristics

Thai universities operate within structural and systemic constraints that significantly influence the feasibility and effectiveness of TBLL implementation across higher education institutions (Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023 ; Okyar, 2023). Resource limitations stemming from persistent budgetary constraints create fundamental barriers that impact institutions' ability to invest adequately in essential components for successful TBLL programs, including advanced technology, authentic learning materials, and comprehensive professional development opportunities for faculty (Somjai, 2021 ; Khajavy et al., 2024). Many universities struggle to provide the sophisticated technological infrastructure and regularly updated materials necessary for effective TBLL implementation, resulting in reliance on outdated textbooks and limited access to digital platforms that could enhance authentic communication experiences. This resource scarcity forces institutions

to make difficult choices between competing priorities, often leading to compromises that undermine the quality and effectiveness of innovative pedagogical approaches.

The prevalence of large class sizes across Thai university contexts presents another substantial institutional barrier that fundamentally challenges the personalized and interactive nature of task-based language learning (Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023 ; Suksan & Thongkam, 2021). Managing meaningful task-based learning experiences with 40-50 students per class presents significant logistical challenges for instructors, who must balance individual attention with group management while maintaining the authentic communication focus essential to TBLL effectiveness. These oversized learning environments make it extremely difficult to provide adequate feedback, monitor individual progress, and ensure equal participation opportunities for all students, thereby compromising the individualized learning experiences that contribute to TBLL success. The practical realities of large classes often force educators to resort to more traditional, teacher-centered approaches that can accommodate larger numbers but sacrifice the communicative interaction fundamental to task-based methodologies.

Assessment traditions within Thai educational systems create additional institutional barriers through test-driven evaluation approaches that routinely prioritize discrete language forms and grammatical accuracy over communicative competence and functional language use (Wattanakit, 2023 ; Lu, 2024). This emphasis on standardized testing and quantifiable linguistic elements often undermines communicative approaches to language learning by creating misalignment between classroom activities focused on meaningful communication and evaluation methods that measure isolated language components (Ellis, 2022 ; Gutiérrez, 2024). The institutional pressure to demonstrate measurable outcomes through traditional assessment methods creates tension for educators attempting to implement TBLL approaches, as they must navigate between communicative teaching objectives and institutional requirements for standardized evaluation, often resulting in compromised implementation that fails to fully realize the potential benefits of task-based methodologies.

Challenge Analysis: Barriers to TBLL Implementation

Cultural and Pedagogical Challenges

TBLL implementation in Thai educational settings faces several substantial challenges related to cultural and pedagogical traditions (Swatevacharkul, 2024 ; Han, 2022):

Student preparedness represents a primary concern, as Thai EFL students typically enter university with limited experience in self-directed learning approaches (Boonsathorn, 2022 ; Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023). Their educational background usually emphasizes receptive rather than productive language skills, creating a fundamental mismatch between student expectations and TBLL requirements for active participation and autonomous learning (Swatevacharkul, 2024 ; Manosuthikit, 2025). This preparedness gap necessitates significant scaffolding and gradual transition strategies to help students adapt to more interactive learning environments. Teacher preparedness presents equally significant challenges, as Thai educators are often inadequately trained in TBLL methodology and feel uncomfortable working with less structured pedagogical approaches (Suksan & Thongkam, 2021 ; Newton, 2022). Many teachers lack confidence in facilitating communicative activities and managing student-centered learning environments, preferring the predictability and control of traditional teaching methods (Ellis, 2022 ; Okyar, 2023). This preparedness deficit requires comprehensive professional development programs that address both theoretical understanding and practical implementation skills.



Practical Implementation Challenges

Beyond cultural factors, practical barriers impede TBLL adoption (Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023 ; Khajavy et al., 2024).

Material adaptation challenges arise because available Business English materials often require significant modification to create tasks that are both authentic and relevant to Thai contexts (Chantarangsi, 2022 ; Rudd, 2020). Creating culturally appropriate business scenarios while maintaining international relevance requires considerable expertise and time investment, often exceeding the capacity of individual instructors (Xie, 2022 ; Gutiérrez, 2024). Time constraints represent another significant practical barrier, as TBLL requires extensive preparation time for task design, implementation, and evaluation, creating additional burden for faculty members already managing heavy teaching loads (Suksan & Thongkam, 2021 ; Ellis, 2022). The time-intensive nature of task-based instruction conflicts with institutional expectations for efficiency and standardized delivery, making systematic implementation challenging (Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023 ; Okyar, 2023). Furthermore, technology integration has potential to enhance TBLL, insufficient facilities and expertise constitute barriers to successful implementation (Siripho, 2022 ; Khajavy et al., 2024). The digital divide between institutions and inadequate technical support limits the effectiveness of technology-enhanced TBLL approaches (Fang et al., 2021 ; Chong & Reinders, 2020).

Assessment Complexity

Adapting assessment to TBLL principles presents additional challenges (Ellis, 2022 ; Lu, 2024):

The complexity of developing appropriate assessment methods for TBLL implementation presents multifaceted challenges that extend beyond technical measurement issues to encompass broader institutional and cultural considerations. Developing reliable and valid assessments for communicative proficiency that simultaneously meet institutional demands for objectivity and consistency proves particularly challenging in Thai educational contexts where traditional evaluation approaches dominate (Pongthep, 2022 ; Wattanakit, 2023). The fundamental tension between traditional assessment paradigms that prioritize discrete, measurable linguistic elements and the holistic nature of task-based performance evaluation creates ongoing difficulties for educators attempting to demonstrate student progress through conventional institutional metrics (Gutiérrez, 2024 ; Bui & Wong, 2022). This assessment challenge requires developing entirely new evaluation frameworks that can capture the multidimensional nature of communicative competence while maintaining the reliability and objectivity expected by institutional stakeholders.

Creating comprehensive assessment rubrics that adequately address the diverse components of task-based performance represents a complex undertaking requiring specialized expertise in both language assessment and business communication evaluation (Ellis, 2022). The multifaceted nature of TBLL assessment demands rubrics that simultaneously evaluate task completion effectiveness, linguistic accuracy and fluency, pragmatic appropriateness, and professional communication skills, creating a complex matrix of interconnected criteria that must be clearly defined and consistently applied. Balancing these multiple assessment dimensions while maintaining practical usability for busy educators presents ongoing challenges, as overly complex rubrics become unwieldy for regular use, while oversimplified evaluation tools fail to capture the nuanced competencies that TBLL aims to develop (Lu, 2024 ; East, 2024b). This complexity is further compounded by the need to train evaluators in consistent rubric application and maintain inter-rater reliability across multiple assessment dimensions.

Perhaps the most significant barrier to implementing alternative assessment approaches lies in achieving stakeholder acceptance within examination-oriented educational cultures where traditional testing methods carry substantial social and institutional credibility (Wattanakit, 2023 ; Han, 2022). Convincing administrators, students, and parents of the validity and value of performance-based assessment methods

requires sustained effort and compelling evidence of their effectiveness in measuring meaningful learning outcomes. The deeply embedded cultural preference for standardized, quantifiable assessment results creates resistance to alternative evaluation approaches that may appear less objective or rigorous, despite their potential for providing more authentic measures of communicative competence (Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023 ; Swatevacharkul, 2024). This stakeholder resistance significantly limits institutional adoption of TBLL principles, as educational institutions must balance innovative pedagogical approaches with community expectations and perceived credibility, often resulting in compromise solutions that fail to fully realize the assessment potential inherent in task-based methodologies.

Opportunity Analysis: Potential Benefits of TBLL

Communicative Competence Development

TBLL offers substantial opportunities for developing business communicative competence among Thai EFL learners (Ellis et al., 2020 ; Charles, 2019). Task-based activities emphasize authentic communication, increasing both English fluency and professional confidence as students develop natural speech patterns through meaningful interaction rather than mechanical practice (Nakornkhet, 2020 ; Manosuthikit, 2025 ; Fang et al., 2021). Students acquire essential strategic competence by learning to cope with communicative breakdowns and negotiate meaning in professional settings, developing repair strategies, clarification techniques, and adaptive communication skills crucial for international business contexts (Long, 2015 ; Ellis, 2021 ; Charles, 2019 ; Rudd, 2020). Through exposure to authentic business situations, learners develop pragmatic awareness that leads to more appropriate language use across various professional contexts, gaining sensitivity to register variations, formality levels, and cultural appropriateness in business communication (Xie, 2022 ; Dokchandra & Boonnoon, 2023 ; Manosuthikit, 2025).

Professional Skills Integration

TBLL naturally incorporates essential business skills alongside language learning, providing integrated professional development (Ellis et al., 2020 ; East, 2024b). Team-based tasks develop crucial collaboration skills as students learn to negotiate roles, manage conflicts, and achieve consensus through English-medium interaction, mirroring teamwork abilities essential for modern business environments (East, 2024b ; Fang et al., 2021 ; Manosuthikit, 2025). Complex tasks requiring creative solutions enhance critical thinking and problem-solving abilities directly transferable to professional contexts, as task-based scenarios mirror real-world business challenges while developing analytical and decision-making capabilities (Ellis, 2021 ; Lu, 2024 ; Charles, 2019 ; Xie, 2022). Additionally, task-based activities often culminate in presentations that simultaneously develop both language proficiency and professional presentation abilities essential for business success (Ruengrong, 2020 ; Manosuthikit, 2025).

Motivation and Engagement Enhancement

The authentic nature of TBLL significantly increases student motivation and engagement through multiple pathways (Ellis et al., 2020 ; Swatevacharkul, 2024). Real-world business tasks make learning more meaningful and applicable to future careers, as students perceive direct connections between classroom activities and professional aspirations, thereby enhancing intrinsic motivation (Poonpong, 2021 ; Manosuthikit, 2025 ; Nakornkhet, 2020 ; East, 2024b). TBLL promotes learner autonomy by allowing students to take ownership of their learning processes, shifting from teacher-directed to student-centered approaches that empower learners and develop essential self-regulation skills (Swatevacharkul, 2024 ; Ellis, 2022 ; Poonpong, 2021 ; Khajavy et al., 2024). The diverse task types accommodate different learning styles while maintaining sustained interest, as the dynamic nature of task-based instruction prevents monotony and ensures continued engagement throughout extended learning periods (East, 2024b ; Fang et al., 2021 ; Lu, 2024).



Strategic Synthesis: Implementation Strategies for Thai Contexts

Cultural Adaptation Strategies

Successfully implementing TBLL in Thai contexts requires comprehensive cultural adaptation that respects traditional learning preferences while introducing communicative approaches (Han, 2022 ; Swatevacharkul, 2024). Gradual introduction strategies beginning with highly structured tasks before progressing to open-ended activities allow students to adjust systematically, using scaffolded approaches that respect cultural learning preferences while moving toward enhanced communicative competence (Piyarattanakul, 2022 ; Lu, 2024 ; Ellis, 2022 ; Manosuthikit, 2025). Incorporating face-saving mechanisms through anonymous feedback systems, peer support networks, and private preparation time addresses cultural concerns about public mistakes while creating psychologically safe learning environments that encourage risk-taking in language use (Phaisanwan, 2021 ; East, 2024b ; Swatevacharkul, 2024). Cultural content integration using familiar elements in business scenarios reduces anxiety while maintaining authenticity, helping students bridge cultural gaps by balancing local relevance with international business practices (Chantarangsi, 2022 ; Newton, 2022 ; Rudd, 2020 ; Xie, 2022).

Institutional Support Development

Institutional changes can significantly facilitate TBLL implementation through systematic support mechanisms (Suksan & Thongkam, 2021 ; Ellis, 2022). Comprehensive teacher development programs focusing on TBLL principles, task design methodologies, and assessment methods are essential for successful implementation, requiring professional development that addresses both theoretical understanding and practical application skills (Ellis, 2021 ; Gutiérrez, 2024 ; Okyar, 2023 ; East, 2024a). Strategic resource allocation involving investment in appropriate technology, authentic materials, and flexible classroom spaces directly supports effective task implementation, as institutions must prioritize infrastructure development to enable innovative pedagogical approaches (Khajavy et al., 2024 ; Chong & Reinders, 2020; Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023 ; Siripho, 2022). Policy alignment ensuring institutional policies support communicative approaches and alternative assessment methods creates enabling environments for TBLL adoption, with administrative support proving crucial for overcoming systemic barriers (Wattanakit, 2023 ; Lu, 2024 ; Suksan & Thongkam, 2021 ; Ellis, 2022).

Pedagogical Innovation Strategies

Specific pedagogical strategies can enhance TBLL effectiveness while addressing implementation challenges (Ellis et al., 2020 ; East, 2024a). Scaffolding techniques providing adequate linguistic and strategic support help students succeed in complex tasks, requiring careful attention to task design and support mechanisms that ensure appropriate challenge levels for learner development (Ellis, 2021 ; Lu, 2024 ; Piyarattanakul, 2022 ; Manosuthikit, 2025). Technology integration strategies leverage digital tools to create immersive business environments and facilitate collaboration, expanding learning opportunities beyond traditional classroom constraints while addressing resource limitations (Khajavy et al., 2024 ; Fang et al., 2021). Assessment innovation through developing portfolio-based, performance-oriented evaluations aligned with TBLL objectives provides authentic measurement of communicative competence while addressing institutional accountability requirements (Bui & Wong, 2022).

Empirical Evidence and Practical Applications

Successful Implementation Models

Pre-pandemic Foundation Programs: Several Thai universities demonstrated early success with TBLL adaptations before the digital transformation. Chulalongkorn University implemented comprehensive project-based learning programs where students collaborated on authentic marketing campaigns for real

companies, resulting in significant improvements in speaking confidence and willingness to communicate (Siriwan, 2021 ; Rudd, 2020). Post-implementation assessments revealed a 40% improvement in communicative competence scores and 60% increase in students' self-reported confidence in business presentations. This approach successfully integrated business content with language learning objectives while addressing cultural concerns through structured peer support systems.

Technology-Enhanced Hybrid Models: Following the pandemic, Mahidol University pioneered virtual business incubators connecting Thai students with international partners through sophisticated online platforms, leading to sustained professional communication improvements (Chong & Reinders, 2020 ; Khajavy et al., 2024). The program utilized AI-powered language assessment tools to provide real-time feedback on pronunciation, fluency, and business register appropriateness. Students participated in simulated international negotiations, cross-cultural team projects, and virtual conferences, with 85% reporting improved confidence in intercultural business communication.

Community Partnership Models: Rajabhat Universities across Thailand have successfully integrated community-based tasks, connecting students with local SMEs to provide practical learning while supporting regional development (Prichaporn, 2022 ; Rudd, 2020). These partnerships created authentic contexts for business English use while addressing local economic needs. Students conducted market research, developed marketing materials, and presented business proposals to real clients, with local businesses reporting high satisfaction with student contributions and 78% of participating students securing internships or employment opportunities with partner organizations.

Assessment Innovation Case Studies

Recent implementations have developed sophisticated assessment frameworks that address traditional concerns about TBLL evaluation. Thammasat University developed portfolio-based assessment systems combining peer evaluation, self-reflection, and authentic task performance measures (Bui & Wong, 2022). The system includes digital portfolios documenting student progress through video recordings of presentations, written reflections on learning processes, and peer feedback on collaborative projects. Initial results show a strong correlation between portfolio assessments and traditional standardized test scores, while providing richer data on communicative development and professional skills acquisition.

Comparative Analysis: Challenges vs. Opportunities

Understanding the relationship between implementation challenges and emerging opportunities is crucial for developing effective TBLL strategies in Thai Business English contexts. The following analysis synthesizes key findings from recent research and institutional experiences to provide a systematic framework for addressing barriers while capitalizing on technological and pedagogical innovations (East, 2024b ; Newton, 2022). This comprehensive comparison reveals that many traditional obstacles can be transformed into strategic advantages through thoughtful integration of digital technologies, cultural adaptation strategies, and evidence-based professional development approaches (Gutiérrez, 2024).

As shown in Table 1, the implementation of TBLL in Thai Business English education presents a complex interplay of challenges and opportunities that can be systematically addressed through strategic solutions.

**Table 1** Comparative Framework of TBLL Implementation: Challenges, Opportunities, and Strategic Solutions

Implementation Challenges	Emerging Opportunities	Strategic Solutions
Cultural Adaptation Barriers	Digital Innovation Potential	Graduated Implementation
- Face-saving concerns limit speaking participation	- AI chatbots reduce anxiety through anonymous practice	- Begin with low-stakes digital interactions
- Hierarchical classroom culture conflicts with student autonomy	- VR environments enable safe experimentation	- Integrate cultural content in virtual scenarios
- Collective decision-making preferences	- Online collaboration tools facilitate group work	- Design tasks emphasizing consensus-building
Institutional Constraints	Technology-Enhanced Solutions	Infrastructure Development
- Large class sizes (40-50 students)	- AI-powered individual feedback systems	- Implement blended learning models
- Limited resources for authentic materials	- Access to global digital business content	- Develop institutional partnerships
- Assessment tradition conflicts	- Portfolio-based digital assessment	- Train faculty in alternative evaluation methods
Teacher Preparedness Issues	Professional Development Opportunities	Capacity Building Programs
- Inadequate TBLL training	- Online professional development platforms	- Establish TBLL specialization programs
- Discomfort with student-centered approaches	- Peer collaboration through digital networks	- Create teacher learning communities
- Time constraints for task preparation	- Shared resource databases and templates	- Develop institutional task libraries

Source: Author's synthesis based on contemporary TBLL research and Thai institutional experiences

From Table 1, this comparative framework demonstrates that successful TBLL implementation requires systematic addressing of cultural, institutional, and pedagogical challenges through strategic use of emerging technologies and evidence-based practices (Khajavy et al., 2024 ; Bui & Wong, 2022). The analysis reveals three critical insights: first, digital innovations can address many traditional cultural barriers by providing psychologically safe learning environments; second, technology-enhanced solutions offer scalable approaches to institutional constraints; and third, collaborative professional development models can overcome individual teacher preparation limitations (East & Wang, 2024). Most significantly, the framework illustrates that challenges and opportunities are not mutually exclusive-rather, they represent different aspects of the same implementation process that can be strategically leveraged to create more effective and culturally responsive TBLL programs in Thai higher education contexts (Swatevacharkul, 2024 ; Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023).

Digital Integration and Contemporary Innovations

The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally accelerated the adoption of digital technologies in language education, creating unprecedented opportunities for TBLL implementation. Post-pandemic hybrid learning models have demonstrated the effectiveness of AI-driven chatbots, virtual reality simulations, and



collaborative online environments in supporting task-based instruction (Wollny et al., 2021 ; Kurata, 2024). These technological advances address many traditional barriers to TBLL implementation in Thai contexts, including large class sizes and resource limitations.

Educational institutions worldwide have begun experimenting with sophisticated conversational AI systems that provide personalized, real-time feedback during task completion, and immersive VR platforms that create realistic business scenarios for student interaction (Gökçearslan et al., 2024 ; Parmaxi, 2020). Recent research has shown that AI-powered chatbots can effectively reduce speaking anxiety while providing immediate corrective feedback, making them particularly valuable for Thai students who traditionally struggle with face-saving concerns (Schorr et al., 2024). Virtual reality environments enable students to practice business communications in simulated contexts such as international conferences, client meetings, and cross-cultural negotiations without the psychological pressure of real-world consequences.

These innovations suggest transformative directions for future TBLL development in Thai Business English education, offering solutions to cultural and institutional challenges that have historically impeded communicative language teaching approaches.

Implications and Recommendations

The analysis reveals significant implications for various stakeholders in Thai Business English education that require coordinated responses across multiple levels of educational engagement.

For educators, individual instructors can initiate TBLL implementation through progressive task design that begins with simple, structured activities before advancing to complex tasks, allowing both teachers and students to develop comfort with communicative approaches while building confidence in interactive methodologies (Ellis et al., 2020 ; Manosuthikit, 2025 ; Piyarattanakul, 2022 ; Lu, 2024). Achieving effective local-global balance requires incorporating local business contexts while exposing students to international practices, creating learning experiences that are both relevant to immediate cultural contexts and globally applicable to international business environments (Chantarangsi, 2022 ; Newton, 2022). Successful implementation also demands transparent assessment practices involving clear rubrics and evaluation criteria that help students understand expectations while reducing anxiety about non-traditional evaluation methods, alongside creating supportive classroom environments that encourage risk-taking in language use through explicit attention to psychological safety and constructive error treatment (Ellis, 2022 ; Swatevacharkul, 2024).

For institutions, universities should prioritize comprehensive faculty development investment through professional development programs that address both TBLL theory and practical implementation strategies, as institutional change requires systematic capacity building among teaching staff (Suksan & Thongkam, 2021 ; Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023 ; Ellis, 2021 ; Okyar, 2023). Establishing strategic business partnerships with local and international organizations provides authentic contexts for learning while enhancing graduate employability, creating mutually beneficial relationships that support both educational objectives and business community needs (Rudd, 2020 ; Prichaporn, 2022). Infrastructure upgrading involving modernization of facilities to support technology-enhanced and flexible learning environments enables innovative pedagogical approaches, while policy revision ensuring alignment of assessment policies with communicative objectives requires systematic review of institutional practices and procedures to create supportive frameworks for TBLL adoption (Khajavy et al., 2024 ; Chong & Reinders, 2020 ; Wattanakit, 2023 ; Lu, 2024).

For policymakers, educational policy development can support TBLL implementation through teacher education reform that promotes preparation curricula including TBLL methodologies, ensuring new educators enter the profession with relevant skills and contemporary pedagogical understanding (Ellis, 2022 ;



Han, 2022 ; Gutiérrez, 2024 ; East, 2024b). Encouraging institutional flexibility in curriculum design and assessment allows institutions to adapt to local needs while meeting national educational standards, creating space for innovation within established frameworks (East, 2024b ; Swatevacharkul, 2024). Research support through funding investigation of effective adaptation strategies for Thai contexts builds evidence base for informed policy decisions, while partnership facilitation supporting collaboration between universities and business communities creates mutual benefits and enhances educational relevance for all stakeholders (Zhang & Li, 2022 ; Long & Ahmadian, 2022 ; Prichaporn, 2022 ; Rudd, 2020).

Future Directions and Considerations

Future development of TBLL in Thai Business English education should focus on several key areas. (Ellis, 2022 ; East, 2024a). Research priorities include conducting longitudinal studies to track professional success of TBLL graduates, providing evidence of long-term effectiveness and informing program improvement (Gutiérrez, 2024 ; Lu, 2024). Comparative research examining different adaptation strategies across institutions will build understanding of effective implementation approaches (Zhang & Li, 2022 ; Han, 2022). Investigation of AI and VR applications in TBLL contexts explores emerging opportunities for innovation (Gökçearslan et al., 2024 ; Parmaxi, 2020), while studying cultural adaptation needs across different Thai regions acknowledges diversity within national contexts (East, 2024a ; Swatevacharkul, 2024).

Development priorities encompass creating comprehensive teacher training programs with TBLL specialization to address critical capacity building needs (Ellis, 2021 ; Okyar, 2023). Producing authentic, culturally appropriate Business English materials will support widespread implementation (Chantarangsi, 2022 ; Xie, 2022). Establishing lasting university-industry collaborations ensures continued relevance and resource availability (Rudd, 2020 ; Prichaporn, 2022), while building technology capacity supports innovative pedagogical approaches and enables broader adoption of enhanced TBLL methods (Wollny et al., 2021 ; Schorr et al., 2024).

Future TBLL research in Thai contexts should prioritize longitudinal tracking of graduate professional success, comparative analysis of hybrid vs. traditional implementation models, and systematic evaluation of AI-enhanced learning outcomes (East, 2024a ; Gutiérrez, 2024). Additionally, cultural adaptation studies across different Thai regions will inform context-sensitive implementation strategies while addressing Thailand's diverse educational landscape (Newton, 2022 ; Swatevacharkul, 2024).

Conclusion

This analysis of Task-based Language Learning in Thai Business English education highlights both significant challenges and promising opportunities. While obstacles exist, including cultural adaptation needs, institutional barriers, and traditional teaching approaches, the potential for developing communication skills and professional competencies is considerable. Successful TBLL implementation requires thoughtful localization rather than direct adoption of Western models, respecting Thai cultural values while embracing communicative approaches. This demands careful planning, adequate support systems, and gradual implementation allowing stakeholders to adapt progressively. The integration of digital technologies and post-pandemic learning innovations provides new pathways for overcoming traditional implementation barriers while enhancing the effectiveness of task-based instruction.

As Thailand integrates into the global economy, advanced English communication skills become increasingly vital for graduates. When properly adapted to Thai contexts, TBLL offers a promising approach for preparing students for international business communication through collaborative efforts among educators, administrators, students, and business partners. The synthesis of traditional pedagogical wisdom



with contemporary technological capabilities, combined with authentic industry partnerships and culturally sensitive implementation strategies, positions TBLL as a transformative approach for Thai Business English education. The future of Thai Business English education should balance local contexts with global communication needs. Through careful adaptation and implementation, TBLL can significantly contribute to preparing Thai graduates for success in an interconnected world.

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