

# Non-English Majors' Perceptions Towards Using Task-Based Approach in Learning English Vocabulary: A Case Study at Nong Lam University

Nguyen Dinh Nhu Ha<sup>1✉</sup>, Tran Tuyen<sup>2</sup>, Le Thi Thuy Trang<sup>3</sup>,  
Ngo Phan Lan Dung<sup>4</sup>, Huynh Thi Cam Loan<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ha.nguyendinhnhu@hcmuaf.edu.vn  
Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City  
(Vietnam)

<sup>2</sup> ttuyenqb@hcmute.edu.vn  
HCMC University of Technology  
and Education  
(Vietnam)

<sup>3</sup> lethithuytrang.bm@gmail.com  
HCMC University of Technology (HUTECH)  
(Vietnam)

<sup>4</sup> dung.ngophanlan@hcmuaf.edu.vn  
Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City  
(Vietnam)

<sup>5</sup> loan.huynhthicam@hcmuaf.edu.vn  
Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City  
(Vietnam)

✉ Corresponding author

**ABSTRACT:** *The task-based approach (TBA) has emerged as one of the most effective methodologies for teaching English in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. By emphasizing the completion of meaningful tasks, this approach enables learners to use the target language in communicative, contextually appropriate situations. Compared to traditional methods such as grammar-translation or rote memorization, task-based instruction fosters greater learner engagement, autonomy, and long-term language development (Amer & Demirel, 2020). In Vietnam, the adoption of this approach is gradually gaining attention among both English language instructors and university students. This study explores the perceptions of non-English major students toward the use of the task-based approach in learning English vocabulary. Conducted at Nong Lam University (NLU), Vietnam, the research involved a sample of 120 students randomly selected from four first-year classes. A mixed-methods design was employed, incorporating a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The findings reveal that a majority of students reported increased motivation, improved confidence, and greater participation in classroom activities when vocabulary instruction was delivered through task-based methods. Students also appreciated the practical nature of the approach and its relevance to real-life communication. Based on these results, the study offers pedagogical implications for enhancing vocabulary instruction at NLU and informing broader curriculum development in Vietnamese EFL settings.*

**KEYWORDS:** Task-based approach, non-English majors, English vocabulary, perceptions.

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## 1. Introduction

Effective communication is widely recognized as the primary function of language. As Hassan (2014) points out, the ultimate goal of language learning is to enable individuals to convey and interpret messages successfully in a range of social contexts. In alignment with this view, Leong and Ahmadi (2017) assert that the most critical component of foreign language acquisition is the learner's ability to use the language appropriately and fluently across various communicative situations. In response to this need, foreign language educators have continuously experimented with different instructional approaches that not only introduce grammatical and lexical knowledge but also promote the practical application of language in real-life contexts.

One of the more prominent instructional approaches in recent decades is the Task-Based Approach (TBA), which has proven to be an effective method for both language instruction and acquisition. As Elvi (2017) notes, TBA centers on the completion of meaningful tasks that mirror authentic communication scenarios, thereby positioning language use as a tool for achieving real-world goals. Unlike traditional approaches that emphasize rote memorization or decontextualized grammar exercises, TBA encourages learners to actively construct knowledge through collaborative, problem-solving activities. This orientation toward task completion reflects a more dynamic and learner-centered conception of language learning, in which the teacher acts as a facilitator and guide, rather than the sole source of linguistic knowledge.

The theoretical foundation of TBA is grounded in several key principles. First, TBA positions learners at the core of the instructional process, emphasizing their active involvement in constructing meaning through interaction (Yildiz, 2020). This student-centered orientation allows for greater learner autonomy and fosters engagement by connecting classroom activities to the learners' personal goals and interests. Second, TBA structures the learning process around clearly defined objectives, stages, and expected outcomes (Shehadeh, 2020). This includes pre-task planning, task performance, and post-task reflection or analysis, each of which contributes to the consolidation of language skills. Third, task-based activities are often designed to challenge learners cognitively, requiring them to make decisions, solve problems, and engage in authentic communication (Yongping, 2022). As a result, students are not merely learning about language; they are using it in meaningful ways that enhance retention and transfer.

A number of studies have documented the practical benefits of TBA in language classrooms. For example, Prabhu (1987), one of the early proponents of TBA, demonstrated that students engaged in problem-solving tasks were able to improve their language proficiency without explicit grammar instruction. Subsequent research by Leaver and Willis (2004) and Zhu and Shu (2017) confirmed that TBA supports the development of communicative competence by simulating real-world language use. More recently, Ha et al. (2021) applied TBA in Vietnamese university contexts and found that it led to significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition, oral fluency, and learner motivation. These findings reinforce the view that TBA can bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-life communication, offering a more holistic and practical approach to language education.

Despite the growing body of evidence in support of TBA, many language educators continue to rely on traditional teaching methods and textbook-driven instruction. As Chomsky (1959) observed, structuralist approaches tend to neglect the communicative function of language, focusing instead on formal properties

and pattern drills. This limitation persists in some contemporary classrooms, where students may perform well on written grammar tests but struggle to use the language effectively in spontaneous interactions. In these settings, learners often report feeling unprepared for real-life communication, which highlights the need for more functional, task-oriented approaches to language teaching.

At Nong Lam University (NLU), Vietnam, the task-based approach is still relatively novel to many students, particularly those majoring in non-English disciplines. While some students exhibit strong foundational knowledge of English, they often encounter difficulties when required to apply this knowledge in practical situations, such as giving presentations, engaging in group discussions, or participating in project-based work. These challenges suggest a disconnect between what is taught and how it is applied. Although the university has introduced innovations in English instruction, including the integration of more interactive classroom practices, the extent to which students are comfortable with and benefit from TBA remains underexplored.

Therefore, the current study seeks to examine the perceptions of non-English major students at NLU regarding the use of the task-based approach for learning English vocabulary. The focus on vocabulary is particularly relevant, as lexical knowledge is a foundational component of language proficiency and is essential for successful task completion. This study aims to address the following research question: What are non-English majors' perceptions of using the task-based approach in learning English vocabulary? By exploring this question, the study hopes to shed light on the practical applicability of TBA in Vietnamese EFL contexts and contribute to the development of more responsive and effective language teaching strategies.

## 2. Literature review

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), tasks serve as the organizing principle in task-based approach, taking precedence over traditional structures of language instruction.

Within this pedagogical orientation, the primary objective of a lesson is not simply the delivery of linguistic forms, but the completion of communicative tasks that simulate real-world language use. This outcome-based orientation emphasizes learner performance and the practical application of language in authentic contexts. Willis and Willis (2007) support this notion by arguing that the assessment of language learning should be closely linked to the successful completion of meaningful tasks.

Nunan (2004) similarly contends that tasks form the core of curriculum design, instruction, and assessment in language learning. From this perspective, tasks are not isolated exercises but integrated units that guide pedagogical planning and learner development. They provide learners with opportunities to negotiate meaning and apply their linguistic knowledge toward clearly defined goals. In terms of function, Willis (1996) highlights that tasks encourage learners to use the target language purposefully, thus enhancing both fluency and accuracy in communication.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) further suggest that tasks provide essential conditions for second language acquisition by generating both input and output opportunities. Learners are exposed to meaningful language (input) while simultaneously engaging in language

production (output), a dual process that facilitates internalization and long-term retention. When students are successful in completing tasks, they also experience a sense of accomplishment, which contributes to increased motivation - an essential factor in language learning. As numerous scholars have noted (Pintrich et al., 1993; Harmer, 1991; Dörnyei, 2002), motivation not only sustains learners' engagement but also influences their academic outcomes. Therefore, designing tasks that are purposeful, engaging, and challenging is fundamental to successful language instruction.

The relationship between task completion and motivation has been widely documented in language education research. Studies by Badalyan (2014), Chua and Lin (2020), Nugrahaeni (2022), and Nursyahbandi (2023) confirm the positive influence of task-based instruction on learners' motivation, especially in foreign language classrooms. These studies have shown that learners are more likely to participate actively and persist through learning difficulties when instruction is structured around meaningful tasks. Dörnyei (2002) explains that such tasks reduce learner anxiety and create opportunities for success, both of which contribute to more positive attitudes toward language learning.

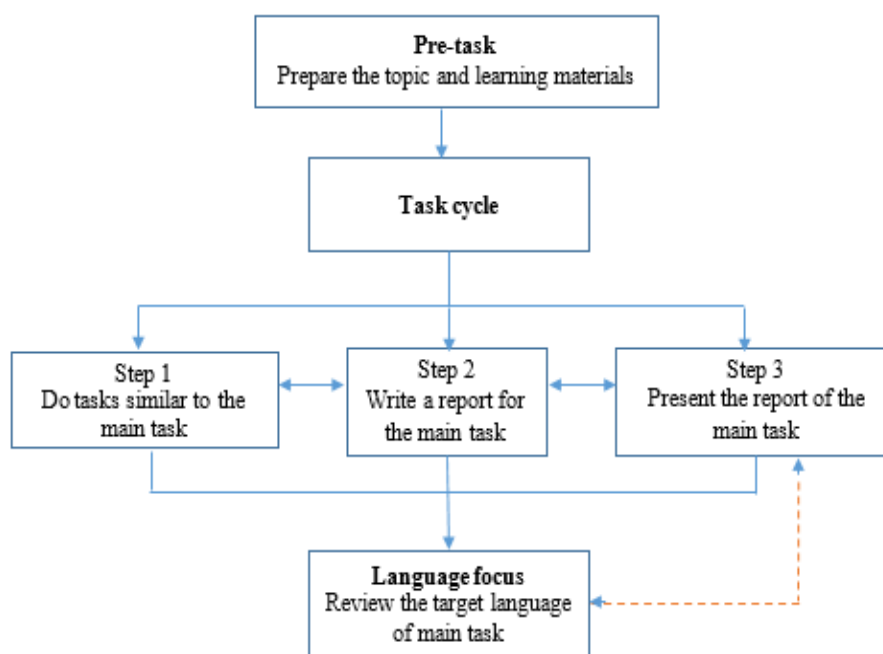


Figure 1. The model of task-based approach in learning English vocabulary

In order to apply TBA effectively to the teaching of English vocabulary, a structured model is essential. The model proposed in this study (see Figure 1) outlines the key stages of task-based instruction, specifically designed to facilitate vocabulary learning among EFL students.

*1. Pre-task stage:* This initial phase involves introducing the topic and preparing learners with the necessary background knowledge and vocabulary. Teachers may use images, short texts, or brainstorming activities to activate prior knowledge and introduce key lexical items. The aim is to scaffold learner understanding and establish clear expectations for the main task.

*2. Task cycle:* This central stage is divided into three sequential steps.

+ Step 1: Do tasks similar to the main task. In this phase, students engage in guided activities that replicate the communicative goal of the final task. These may include pair work, matching exercises, or categorization tasks using target vocabulary.

+ Step 2: Write a report for the main task. Learners are required to apply the vocabulary in writing, summarizing what they have learned or narrating a scenario based on task input. This step encourages productive use of language and reinforces new vocabulary through written output.

+ Step 3: Present the report of the main task. Students share their work orally, either individually or in groups. This provides additional opportunities for spoken interaction and consolidates vocabulary acquisition through repetition and peer feedback.

*3. Language focus stage:* In the final stage, learners reflect on the vocabulary used during the task and receive focused feedback from the teacher. This may involve reviewing correct forms, pronunciation, collocations, or usage in different contexts. The language focus stage is essential for reinforcing accuracy and helping students internalize the new vocabulary.

This model not only supports vocabulary retention but also integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing in an interactive learning process. Ha et al. (2022) emphasize the increasing

recognition of tasks in second language acquisition research, noting that vocabulary instruction through task-based methods aligns with contemporary trends in language pedagogy. While task-based vocabulary learning is widely practiced in many countries, its application in Vietnam remains limited. Vietnamese learners, particularly those in non-English majors, often have minimal exposure to task-based learning environments. This unfamiliarity may result in passive learning habits and difficulty in applying vocabulary in real-life contexts.

Consequently, there is a pressing need to explore students' perceptions of the task-based approach in Vietnamese EFL settings. By understanding how learners respond to task-based vocabulary instruction, educators can refine instructional strategies to better align with student needs and promote more active, communicative, and engaging learning experiences. The proposed model in Figure 1 serves as a pedagogical guide to structure such instruction effectively and is a central focus of the current study.

### **3. Methods**

#### **3.1. Research context and research participants**

This study was conducted at Nong Lam University (NLU), a leading public institution located in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Established in 1955, NLU has evolved over more than six decades into a comprehensive, multidisciplinary university offering a wide range of academic programs and research activities. The main campus spans approximately 118 hectares in Thu Duc City and is complemented by two additional sub-campuses located in Gia Lai and Ninh Thuan provinces, which support regional development and outreach.

Currently, NLU provides 62 undergraduate programs, 16 master's degrees, and 12 doctoral programs across various fields including agriculture, biotechnology, economics, information technology, environmental science, and foreign languages. The university serves a student population of approximately 20,000 and is recognized for its strong emphasis on applied research, community engagement, and international collaboration. NLU has established



over 140 formal partnerships with universities, research institutes, and non-governmental organizations across countries such as the United States, Japan, Australia, Taiwan, and members of the ASEAN community. These collaborations have supported joint research initiatives, student exchange programs, curriculum development, and professional training.

The research was conducted during the second semester of the 2022–2023 academic year. The sample included 120 first-year students who had completed the General English 1 course. These participants were selected for their foundational exposure to English instruction at the university and their familiarity with its learner-centered teaching methods, making them suitable for investigating task-based vocabulary learning approaches.

### **3.2. Research instruments**

The questionnaire and semi-structured interview were employed to collect data. The questionnaire included two parts: Part A was about general information of participants and Part B consisted of 11 items which investigated non-English majors' perceptions towards the use of TBA in English vocabulary learning. The design of the questionnaire was based on the five-point Likert scale with '5' for Strongly Agree, '4' for Agree, '3' for Neutral, '2' for Disagree and '1' for Strongly Disagree. The Cronbach's Alpha for all 11 items on the questionnaire was (.88), indicating its overall reliability. It indicates how trustworthy the questionnaire was.

The purpose of the semi-structured interview was to learn more about the participants' perspectives on using TBA to acquire vocabulary in English. This tool allowed the researcher to concentrate on the subject of study while saving time (Cohen et al., 2000). The interview consisted of five questions. To make it easier for the participants to voice their ideas, the interview was also done in Vietnamese. After that, an English translation of the interview responses was made.

### **3.3. Data collection and procedures**

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to gather comprehensive

data on students' perceptions of the task-based approach (TBA) in English vocabulary learning.

The questionnaire was administered over a one-week period during regular class hours. Prior to distribution, students received a brief orientation on how to complete the questionnaire and were informed of the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. Each student was given approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. To ensure ethical conduct, the researcher refrained from discussing the content of individual responses and ensured a respectful environment where students' privacy was maintained. The questionnaire consisted of 11 items rated on a five-point Likert scale. The scale ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree/Never) to 5 (Strongly Agree/Always), with interpretation intervals defined as follows: 1.00–1.80 (Strongly Disagree), 1.81–2.60 (Disagree), 2.61–3.40 (Neutral), 3.41–4.20 (Agree), and 4.21–5.00 (Strongly Agree). Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS software to generate descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, which allowed for the identification of general trends in student perceptions.

To complement the quantitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven participants selected from the original sample. Each interview lasted approximately 10 minutes and was conducted in Vietnamese to ensure clarity and encourage open responses. Interviews were carried out in quiet classrooms and were audio-recorded with participant consent. The interview data were transcribed and translated into English for analysis. A thematic content analysis approach was applied. The process involved open coding to identify initial concepts, followed by axial coding to categorize recurring themes. Themes were interpreted in relation to the research questions. To enhance the credibility of the findings, member-checking was employed, allowing participants to review and confirm the accuracy of their responses.

This dual-method strategy enabled the researcher to explore both the measurable attitudes and the nuanced perspectives of learners engaging with TBA in vocabulary learning.

#### 4. Results

The results of the questionnaire revealed a generally positive perception among non-English major students regarding the use of the task-based approach (TBA) in learning English vocabulary. As shown in Table 1, the overall mean score across all 11 items was  $M = 4.49$  with a standard deviation of  $SD = 0.60$ , indicating a strong level of agreement with the effectiveness of TBA in vocabulary acquisition.

Among the individual items, the highest level of agreement was observed in Item 3, which stated that the task-based approach enhances students' confidence in using English vocabulary in speaking activities ( $M = 4.82$ ;  $SD = 0.36$ ). This suggests that students perceive TBA as an effective method for improving oral vocabulary use, potentially due to the interactive and communicative nature of task-based activities.

In addition, students strongly agreed that TBA plays a crucial role in facilitating vocabulary learning (Item 1:  $M = 4.68$ ;  $SD = 0.48$ ), and that it helps them expand their English vocabulary (Item 5:  $M = 4.65$ ;  $SD = 0.59$ ). These findings indicate that students not only value the approach for its immediate instructional outcomes but also recognize its contribution to long-term vocabulary development.

The responses also reflected students' perceptions of TBA's ability to foster beneficial learning habits. For instance, Item 4 received a high mean score ( $M = 4.46$ ;  $SD = 0.62$ ), showing that students believe TBA encourages them to form effective and independent vocabulary-learning strategies. Similarly, students acknowledged that TBA facilitates their understanding of lexical items within conversational contexts (Item 6:  $M = 4.56$ ;  $SD = 0.72$ ), which supports the idea that learning vocabulary through meaningful use enhances comprehension and retention.

Students' affective responses to TBA were also positive. A large proportion of respondents agreed that TBA helps reduce learning pressure and increases enjoyment in vocabulary learning (Item 7:  $M = 4.32$ ;  $SD = 0.71$ ). This reflects the motivational benefits often associated with task-based instruction, as students are more engaged when tasks are interactive and meaningful.

In terms of communicative competence, students reported feeling more comfortable expressing their ideas in English when vocabulary was learned through task-based activities (Item 8:  $M = 4.59$ ;  $SD = 0.63$ ). Although the standard deviation here was relatively higher, suggesting some variation in responses, the mean remains high and reflects a generally favorable view.

Engagement and participation were also key areas where TBA was positively evaluated. Students reported being more inclined to participate in vocabulary-related classroom activities (Item 9:  $M = 4.62$ ;  $SD = 0.77$ ) and indicated that they often adopted new words from peers during collaborative tasks (Item 11:  $M = 4.31$ ;  $SD = 0.54$ ). These findings highlight the social and collaborative benefits of the TBA model.

Finally, Item 10 indicated that students also develop personal strategies for using TBA to acquire vocabulary ( $M = 4.21$ ;  $SD = 0.59$ ), suggesting that task-based instruction promotes learner autonomy and the adaptation of learning techniques based on individual needs.

Overall, the data suggest that students not only perceive TBA as an effective instructional strategy for vocabulary development, but also appreciate its motivational, cognitive, and social benefits. These findings reinforce the value of task-based learning environments in promoting vocabulary acquisition among non-English majors in EFL settings.

The results of the semi-structured interviews further support the quantitative findings and offer deeper insight into how non-English major students at Nong Lam University perceive the use of the task-based approach (TBA) in English vocabulary acquisition. Overall, students expressed favorable attitudes toward the TBA model, highlighting its relevance to real-world communication, its capacity to foster learner confidence, and its ability to increase classroom engagement.

One of the most prominent themes emerging from the interviews was the perceived usefulness of TBA in helping students apply vocabulary in everyday interactions. Students consistently indicated that task-based learning

Table 1. Students' perceptions towards the use of TBA in learning English vocabulary

Items	N=120	
	M	S.D.
1. TBA is crucial for acquiring vocabulary in English.	4.68	.48
2. Utilizing TBA can improve language learners' acquisition.	4.17	.47
3. TBA gives students greater self-assurance when speaking English terminology.	4.82	.36
4. TBA assists students in forming virtuous vocabulary-learning habits.	4.46	.62
5. TBA aids students in expanding their vocabulary in English.	4.65	.59
6. TBA makes it easier for students to understand every word in a conversation.	4.56	.72
7. I have more fun and feel less pressured when I use TBA to study English vocabulary.	4.32	.71
8. I find it simple to communicate my thoughts in English when I use TBA to practice my vocabulary.	4.59	.63
9. In task-based learning environments, I am more inclined to participate in vocabulary-based activities.	4.62	.77
10. I use TBA in my own unique methods to acquire vocabulary in English.	4.21	.59
11. I adopt my classmates' words when we take part in task-based activities.	4.31	.54
Total	4.49	.60

made vocabulary acquisition more practical and contextually meaningful. As Student 1 (S1) explained:

*"Practicing task-based learning activities has helped me use English vocabulary in most situations. Additionally, I feel more comfortable conversing with strangers."*

This comment reflects how the task-based model facilitates not only vocabulary recall but also functional usage in authentic communication scenarios. The emphasis on interaction, particularly with peers and instructors, helped students overcome hesitation and build confidence in speaking.

Another recurring theme was the role of TBA in helping students organize and retrieve vocabulary effectively during communication. Student 3 (S3) noted:

*"For me, organizing ideas in English was one of the most exhausting tasks. However, when my teacher uses the task-based approach to assist me in learning, I find it simple to organize English terminology into my spoken communications effectively."*

This response suggests that the structure

provided by TBA, especially through its staged model (pre-task, task cycle, and language focus) supports cognitive processes such as lexical organization and retrieval, which are critical for spoken fluency.

Several students appreciated how TBA fostered problem-solving skills and independent language use. The model's scaffolded stages helped them engage with tasks more meaningfully. As Student 4 (S4) shared:

*"Following each stage in the TBA's model, I become familiar with solving problems in my target language easier."*

This aligns with the constructivist principles underlying TBA, wherein learners actively construct knowledge through meaningful tasks that replicate real-life challenges. The reference to "each stage" also indicates that the model's design contributed to the learner's sense of progression and mastery.

Participants also emphasized the importance of reinforcement activities included in the TBA model. Student 5 (S5) remarked:

*"My teacher helps me consolidate the target language with various kinds of exercises. It helps*

*me feel more confident to use vocabulary for each situation in life."*

This observation underscores the value of the post-task phase in consolidating learning. It also illustrates how reinforcement through diverse task types builds students' confidence in using new vocabulary appropriately across different contexts.

The motivational benefits of TBA were mentioned by several students, who described the learning process as engaging and enjoyable. Student 6 (S6) stated:

*"My classmates and I never feel bored with TBA's model. We like to take part in solving learning tasks in each phase."*

This indicates that TBA not only facilitates learning but also enhances the affective dimension of the classroom. The collaborative nature of tasks and the opportunity to work through phases collectively contributed to higher participation rates and classroom enthusiasm.

Finally, students acknowledged the role of the instructor in clearly explaining and guiding task-based lessons, which they felt contributed to improved vocabulary development. As Student 7 (S7) expressed:

*"My teachers thoroughly explain the task-based lessons. I'm becoming better at employing lexical structures."*

This highlights the importance of teacher scaffolding in maximizing the benefits of TBA, particularly in ensuring that students can connect task content with specific lexical forms and structures.

In summary, the qualitative data reveal that students viewed TBA not only as an effective tool for vocabulary learning but also as a method that enhanced their confidence, motivation, and ability to apply language in real-life situations. The model's structure and emphasis on active participation resonated positively with learners, offering evidence of the pedagogical value of TBA in the context of Vietnamese higher education.

## **5. Discussion and conclusion**

The findings of this study offer meaningful insights into non-English major students' perceptions of the task-based approach (TBA)

in learning English vocabulary. Overall, the data demonstrate a consistently positive student attitude toward TBA, suggesting that this pedagogical method plays a valuable role in vocabulary development and learner engagement. The results underscore the importance of implementing contextually appropriate, learner-centered approaches to vocabulary instruction in tertiary EFL settings.

A central finding of this research is that students at Nong Lam University (NLU) widely agreed that TBA facilitated their vocabulary learning in English. Participants emphasized that the task-based approach not only enriched their vocabulary knowledge but also enhanced their confidence and comfort in using new lexical items across various communicative contexts. These results are particularly notable given that the participants were non-English majors, many of whom had limited exposure to English outside the classroom. This indicates that TBA may be particularly effective for students who lack immersion opportunities and require structured, interactive classroom environments to build language proficiency.

Comparing the outcomes of TBA with more traditional teaching approaches such as the grammar-translation method or rote memorization helps to contextualize its effectiveness. Unlike conventional methods that prioritize form over meaning, TBA focuses on purposeful language use in real-life situations. This emphasis on communication fosters learner autonomy and engagement while promoting deeper cognitive processing and meaningful vocabulary retention. As students actively participate in tasks that require language production and interaction, they are more likely to internalize vocabulary through use rather than repetition. The high mean scores observed in the questionnaire and the richness of the interview responses both support the view that TBA promotes not only vocabulary acquisition but also long-term learner motivation and active participation.

One of the noteworthy outcomes of the study is that students perceived TBA as instrumental in developing good vocabulary-learning habits. Many respondents reported that task-based



activities enabled them to integrate vocabulary into their spoken communication more effectively. This aligns with the notion that contextualized language use such as that provided through TBA supports vocabulary acquisition by reinforcing words within meaningful linguistic and situational frameworks. Furthermore, students indicated that they began to adopt lexical items used by their peers during collaborative tasks. This peer modeling and vocabulary imitation reflect a positive social dimension of TBA, which encourages incidental learning and collaborative scaffolding.

These findings resonate with prior research in the field. Shehadeh and Coombe (2012) emphasized that, when implemented appropriately, task-based learning significantly enhances student outcomes in foreign language instruction. Similarly, Wen et al (2021), Xuan et al (2022), and Ha et al (2024) observed that task-based learning supports both language acquisition and learner engagement when contextualized within communicative and interactive classroom practices. The present study affirms these conclusions by demonstrating that task-based vocabulary instruction is not only well-received by students but also associated with observable improvements in communicative competence. Additionally, the study's results are consistent with the findings of Khaneghah et al (2016), who found that student participation in task-based activities contributed to notable gains in vocabulary acquisition and language use.

The qualitative findings further reinforce the value of TBA. Students reported that the task-based structure helped them express themselves more easily and use vocabulary more effectively in practical situations. Despite the novelty of TBA for many learners at NLU, interview responses suggested that the model was quickly embraced, particularly due to its interactive and scaffolded design. Students appreciated the clarity of the task stages and acknowledged the benefits of receiving guidance and feedback from their instructors throughout the process. Their comments also revealed increased confidence and a sense of ownership over their learning.

Although TBA remains relatively underutilized

in Vietnamese higher education, particularly among non-English majors, the findings of this study suggest that its broader application holds promise. The positive responses from participants indicate that the model is adaptable and well-suited to learners who may otherwise be disengaged in more traditional instructional settings. The study contributes to a growing body of evidence supporting the incorporation of TBA into English language programs in Vietnam, particularly in contexts where communicative competence and practical language use are prioritized.

In sum, the investigation reveals that the task-based approach, when implemented thoughtfully, serves as an effective and motivating strategy for teaching English vocabulary. It fosters learner autonomy, enhances communicative performance, and promotes meaningful engagement in language learning activities. These findings point to the importance of ongoing efforts to integrate task-based instruction into EFL curricula and to provide teachers with the training and resources necessary to adopt this approach effectively.

## 6. Implications and limitations

The findings of this study offer several pedagogical implications for both non-English major students and English language lecturers at Nong Lam University (NLU). Given the consistently positive perceptions expressed by participants, it is recommended that English lecturers at NLU incorporate the task-based approach (TBA) more extensively into their instructional practices, particularly in the area of vocabulary instruction. TBA has the potential to provide students with frequent and meaningful opportunities to engage with English vocabulary in authentic and communicative contexts. As the results have demonstrated, students respond well to interactive tasks that allow them to apply vocabulary in speech, writing, and collaborative learning scenarios.

To maximize the effectiveness of TBA, lecturers must be intentional and thoughtful in designing diverse and contextually appropriate tasks that align with students' needs, interests,

and proficiency levels. Well-structured tasks not only promote deeper cognitive engagement but also enhance students' motivation and willingness to participate in language learning activities. Moreover, teachers should encourage learners to take ownership of their vocabulary development by promoting self-directed learning strategies within the task-based framework. Explicitly highlighting the value of TBA and modeling its benefits may further encourage students to view vocabulary learning as an active and rewarding process.

For students, it is equally important to recognize the advantages of TBA in expanding their lexical knowledge and improving their communicative competence. Increased awareness of the approach and its benefits can encourage learners to participate more confidently and consistently in classroom tasks. As the data indicate, students who engage fully in task-based activities are more likely to develop effective vocabulary learning habits and apply new words across a range of communicative situations. Therefore, fostering a classroom culture that values experimentation, peer collaboration, and reflection is essential to promoting learner autonomy and vocabulary retention.

Despite the study's contributions, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the relatively small sample size of 120 students limits the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of non-English majors at NLU or other institutions. While the sample provided valuable insight into student perceptions, caution should be exercised in extrapolating these results to different academic contexts or student demographics.

Second, the study relied solely on a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews as data collection instruments. While these tools captured students' self-reported attitudes and

experiences, they did not allow for objective measurement of vocabulary gains. Future research would benefit from the inclusion of pre- and post-tests to assess the tangible effects of TBA on students' vocabulary acquisition. Such quantitative data would provide stronger empirical support for the effectiveness of the approach.

Additionally, some participants in the interview phase were hesitant to express their views in detail, which may have limited the richness of the qualitative data. Expanding the sample of interviewees and ensuring more open and supportive interview conditions may enhance the depth of future analyses.

Third, the study adopted a cross-sectional design, capturing students' immediate perceptions at a single point in time. This approach, while useful for exploring short-term attitudes, does not account for the long-term effects of TBA on vocabulary acquisition. Vocabulary learning is a cumulative process that benefits from sustained practice and reinforcement. As such, future research should consider implementing longitudinal designs to evaluate the enduring impact of TBA across semesters or academic years. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how task-based methods influence vocabulary retention and overall language development over time.

In conclusion, while the current study provides promising evidence for the effectiveness of TBA in vocabulary instruction among non-English majors, further research using larger samples, diverse data sources, and long-term assessment tools is necessary. Such work will deepen our understanding of how TBA can be systematically and sustainably integrated into EFL curricula to support both linguistic competence and learner engagement.

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