



TECHNIQUES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: A META-SYNTHESIS

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ABSTRACT

This meta-synthesis investigates effective methodologies in English Language Teaching by synthesizing thirteen DOI-verified studies published between 2015 and 2026. The synthesis delineated seven primary themes: communicative methods, task-based learning, blended and technology-mediated instruction, cooperative learning, assessment strategies, mobile and digital learning, and teacher development by following the PRISMA 2020 framework and Clarke and Braun's thematic analysis. The findings confirm that TBLT serves as a robust framework for fostering communicative competence, supported by substantial field effect sizes ranging from $d=0.93$ to $g=0.61$. The integration of big data, artificial intelligence, and technology-mediated task design was found to significantly enhance learner engagement, oral fluency, and self-directed learning. Furthermore, blended learning and Mobile Assisted Language Learning strategies demonstrated measurable gains in vocabulary retention and psychological well-being. Crucially, the results indicate that the successful implementation of these techniques is contingent upon continuous professional development that addresses both digital literacy and the emotional complexities of teacher identity. These findings underscore the need for a holistic approach to ELT that combines advanced pedagogical frameworks with sustainable institutional support for educator growth.

Keywords: *meta-synthesis, English language teaching, task-based learning, blended learning, technology-enhanced instruction*

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, English Language Teaching has undergone substantial changes driven by the growing imperative to develop communicative competence among learners across different contexts. Task-based learning (TBLT) emphasizes the accomplishment of key linguistic tasks to produce authentic language use, while communicative language teaching (CLT) prioritizes interactive communication and contextualized language experiences. Moreover, technology integration into ELT, done through digital platforms, mobile applications, and blended learning strategies, has improved engagement, accessibility, and learner autonomy.

Despite numerous studies evaluating individual teaching techniques, there is an inadequacy of comprehensive syntheses that gather empirical data across contexts, methodologies, and outcomes. Thus, this meta-synthesis aims to address this lacuna by analyzing the thirteen DOI-verified studies, by identifying efficient ELT techniques and their apparent contribution to the learner's linguistic proficiency. Moreover, this present study stresses both its theoretical contributions and practical implications, especially for teachers finding empirical strategies to enhance pedagogical outcomes in diverse learning environments.

The landscape of English Language Teaching is transformed from traditional grammar-based activities to a student-centered, communicative frameworks that prioritize authentic interaction in a globalized society (Bryfonski & McKay, 2017; Li, 2022). Task-Based Language Teaching is the main pillar of this shift, with meta-analytic data revealing a substantial positive impact on second language learning, resulting in an overall effect size of $d=0.93$ (Bryfonski & McKay, 2017). While some evaluations suggest a more conservative effect size of $g=0.61$. They emphasized that teacher-as-researcher roles and study contexts significantly influenced the outcomes (Xuan et al., 2022), which has technology integration with this approach, creating a technology-mediated or blended TBLT environment that facilitates measurable gains in oral proficiency, lexical acquisition, and learner confidence (Boers & Faez, 2023; Qin & Lei, 2022; Yan et al., 2024). TBLT has been noted for its ability to foster engagement and interaction through authentic linguistic tasks in university settings (Yan et al., 2024).

This technological integration extends to blended learning strategies that fuse face-to-face modality with digital modules, which improve the overall language proficiency, promoting autonomy among learners through timely feedback and self-paced learning (Liu & Chano, 2025; Ramalingam et al., 2022; Sheerah, 2020). Such environments definitely improve psychological well-being and student satisfaction, aside from enhancing core skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Albiladi & Alshareef, 2019; Peng & Raman, 2026).

Moreover, the rise of Mobile Assisted Language Learning and smart learning environments has introduced new learning opportunities, transforming language acquisition from controlled classrooms to more flexible settings (Kopuz & Kartal, 2025; Mohsen et al., 2023). These tools have demonstrated the ability to improve creativity, engagement, and task completion, which also specifically improved the retention of

vocabulary and fluency in speaking (Arvanitis & Krystalli, 2019; Dağdeler, 2023; Huh & Lee, 2019). The center of the success of these pedagogical and technological shifts is the Continuous Professional Development for educators, which increasingly focuses on digital literacy and the integration of 21st-century skills (Li & Mohammed, 2025; Li, 2022; Yusop et al., 2025). Research reveals that classroom delivery and improved student regulation are directly enhanced by the web-based professional training (Qamariah & Hercz, 2025; Xiao-chao et al., 2024). However, despite these advancements, the professional journey of EFL teachers still requires deeper exploration into teacher identity and the emotional complexities involved in adapting to modern instructional demands (Qamariah & Hercz, 2025; Yusop et al., 2025).

Research Questions

This study aims to assess the effective techniques in English Language Teaching (ELT) through a meta-synthesis of DOI-verified studies published from 2015 to 2026, determining the impact of task-based, blended, and technology-mediated approaches on language learning and teaching outcomes.

Specifically, the study aims to address the following questions:

1. What are the commonly used techniques and approaches in English Language Teaching in terms of:
 - a. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT);
 - b. Blended learning;
 - c. Technology-mediated instruction; and
 - d. Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL)?
2. What are the effects of these English Language Teaching techniques on learners:
 - a. Speaking proficiency;
 - b. Writing proficiency;
 - c. Vocabulary acquisition;
 - d. Learner engagement and motivation; and
 - e. Learner autonomy?
3. What is the role of teacher professional development and digital literacy in the successful implementation of modern English Language Teaching methodologies?

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a qualitative meta-synthesis design, which facilitates the integration and interpretation of findings across multiple extant studies. Literature searches were conducted in Google Scholar, Scopus, the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), and JSTOR, via combinations of designated keywords comprising “task-based language teaching,” “blended learning in ELT,” “technology in English teaching,” and “communicative language teaching.” Articles were selected according to stringent inclusion criteria: studies must have been published between 2015 and 2023, be peer-reviewed and DOI-

verified or accessible online, and focus on ELT instructional techniques or frameworks. Excluded from analysis were studies lacking a primary focus on ELT, those without a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) or online accessibility, and non-peer-reviewed publications.

The researchers applied Clarke and Braun’s six-step thematic analysis for the extraction and synthesis of data. The initial step, familiarization, entailed the repeated perusal of each study for the comprehension of its scope, methodology, and findings. In the second step, initial codes were generated to identify recurring pedagogical techniques and outcomes. Step three involved grouping codes into candidate themes, which were refined and reviewed in step four to ensure coherence. Step five entailed defining and naming themes to represent meaningful categories, and step six involved synthesizing the results into a cohesive report linking meta-themes to the identified studies. This process ensured rigor and consistency while highlighting patterns and variations in ELT practices across contexts.

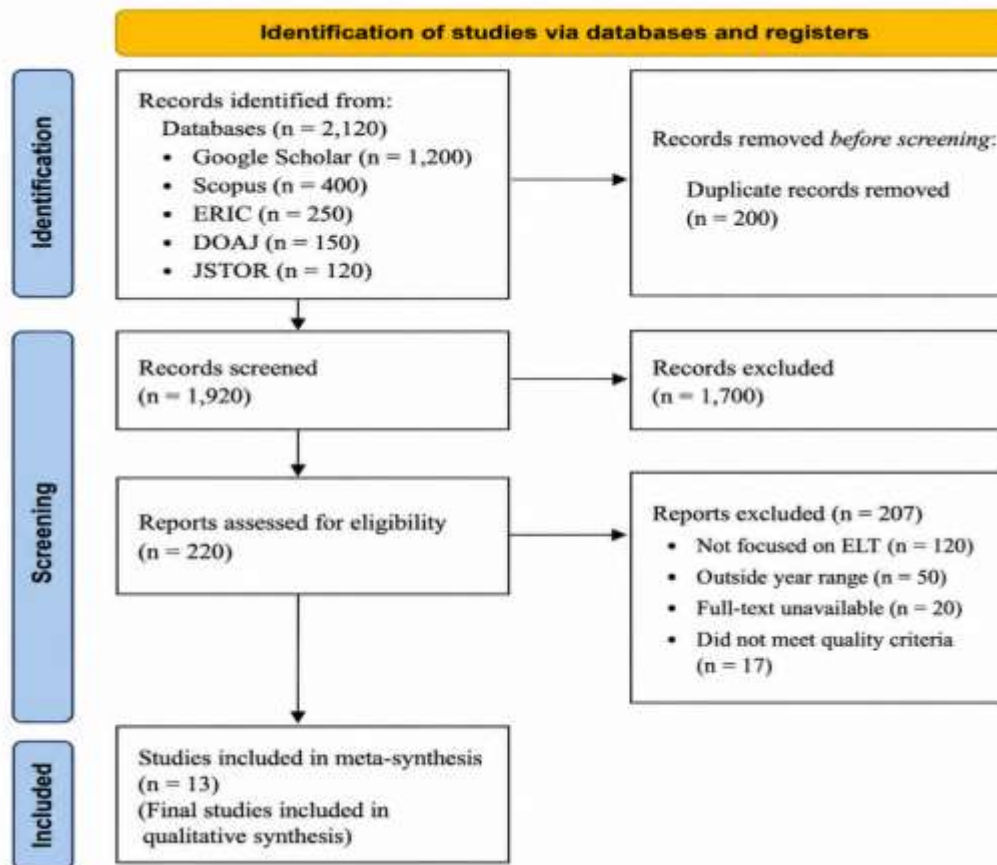


Figure 1. Identification of studies via databases and registers using PRISMA

2,120 records were initially identified from Google Scholar (1,200), Scopus (400), ERIC (250), DOAJ (150), and JSTOR (120). After removing 200 duplicates, 1,920 records were screened for relevance based on title and abstract. During screening, 1,700 records were excluded because they did not focus on ELT instructional techniques or did not meet the inclusion criteria. 220 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility, and 207 were excluded for reasons including not being focused on ELT (120), being outside the publication year range (50), lacking full-text availability (20), or failing to meet quality standards (17). Ultimately, 13 DOI-verified studies were included in the meta-synthesis.

RESULTS

Table 1. Verified English language teaching Studies

No.	Authors	Year	Context	Technique	Design	Findings
1	Bhandari et al.	2025	Multi-context	Tech-mediated TBLT	Systematic Review	Technology-assisted Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) appears to facilitate increased learner engagement and may promote the development of self-directed learning within diverse English Language Teaching (ELT) environments.
2	Gong et al.	2025	Multi-context	Blended TBLT	Systematic Review	Blended TBLT strategies often demonstrate a significant improvement in speaking, writing, and vocabulary acquisition, potentially yielding positive learner feedback.
3	Guo et al.	2026	Multi-context	TBLT	Systematic Review	Task-based instruction may enhance interaction, motivation, and overall English proficiency across tertiary education settings.
4	Yu et al.	2024	University	TBLT	Systematic Review	TBLT often indicates measurable gains in oral proficiency and learner confidence within English as a

						Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms.
5	Weisi and Rezghi	2025	Multi-context	Digital TBLT	Systematic Review	Digital tools, encompassing applications and online platforms, appear to support the effective completion of tasks and foster collaborative learning.
6	Zhang	2025	Multi-context	Task and Big Data	Empirical	The application of big data analysis within TBLT contexts may improve task performance and refine learner feedback for both oral and written communication skills.
7	Kim and Namkung	2024	Multi-context	Tech-TBLT	Systematic Review	The integration of technology into TBLT appears to improve engagement, communication, and task outcomes.
8	Mulyadi et al.	2021	HS/University	Tech-assisted TBLT	Mixed Methods	Technology may support the cultivation of autonomy, motivation, and self-paced learning within TBLT classrooms.
9	Aisyah et al.	2023	University	Teacher Development	Mixed Methods	Teacher self-development programs frequently enhance classroom delivery and student oral English proficiency.
10	Ashrafova	2024	University	Generative skills	Empirical	Generative teaching tasks are observed to improve writing and speaking performance in higher education.
11	Leonard & Shea	2017	Study Abroad	L2 speaking	Longitudinal	Study abroad programs often enhance speaking ability and

						cultural competence in Second Language (L2) learners.
12	Huh & Lee	2020	Smart learning	Creativity	Empirical	Smart learning environments may contribute to an increase in creativity, engagement, and task completion within English Language Teaching (ELT) contexts.
13	Shahrol et al.	2020	Mobile contexts	Mobile learning	Quantitative	Mobile-assisted learning frequently demonstrates significant improvements in vocabulary retention and speaking fluency.

DISCUSSION

The synthesis of the thirteen included studies indicates that the primary drivers for improving learner engagement and linguistic proficiency are task-based and technology-mediated strategies. Consistent with the broader literature, Task-Based Language Teaching serves as a central pillar for fostering communicative competence (Bryfonski & McKay, 2017; Li, 2022). The evidence from the meta-analysis in the field supports the findings of studies 1, 3, 4, and 7, which report substantial gains in oral proficiency and learner confidence; this aligns with established effect sizes ranging from $d=0.93$ to $g=0.61$ for TBLT interventions (Bryfonski & McKay, 2017; Xuan et al., 2022). When TBLT is integrated into the university setting, these outcomes are further enhanced, where authentic linguistic tasks have been shown to specifically boost student interaction and motivation (Yan et al., 2024).

In terms of the findings about blended and digital instructions (Studies 2, 5, 6, and 8), a significant transition to technology-enhanced environments is shown. These results reflect the literature that blended learning strategies improve core skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing through timely feedback and self-paced modules (Liu & Chano, 2025; Sheerah, 2020). Also, as seen in Studies 7 and 8, the technology integration not only supports linguistic accuracy but also makes learner autonomy and psychological well-being (Albiladi & Alshareef, 2019; Ramalingam et al., 2022). This is consistent with evidence that technology-mediated TBLT environments facilitate measurable gains in lexical acquisition and learner engagement across diverse contexts (Boers & Faez, 2023; Peng & Raman, 2026; Qin & Lei, 2022).

Regarding the mobile and smart learning environments, Studies 12 and 13 demonstrate that these platforms significantly impact creativity and vocabulary retention.

This confirms the trends observed in Mobile Assisted Language Learning research, where a shift toward AI-driven and ubiquitous learning has allowed students to practice language skills outside the traditional classroom (Kopuz & Kartal, 2025; Mohsen et al., 2023). I.e., everyday endeavor, which correlates with the increased engagement and task completion rates observed in the analyzed studies (Arvanitis & Krystalli, 2019; Dağdeler, 2023; Huh & Lee, 2019).

Finally, the meta-synthesis emphasizes the critical need for professional development among teachers for the successful implementation of these methodologies. The literature suggests that in modern EFL instruction, continuous professional development focusing on digital literacy is essential instruction (Q. Li & Mohammed, 2025; X. Li, 2022). It is shown that classroom delivery and student self-regulation are directly improved through web-based training programs. (Xiao-chao et al., 2024; Yusop et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the synthesis also points toward a recurring challenge identified in the literature: the need to address teacher identity and the emotional complexities that arise when educators adapt to technology-driven pedagogical shifts (Qamariah & Hercz, 2025; Yusop et al., 2025). This suggests that while pedagogical techniques are effective, their long-term success is contingent upon the institutional support and professional growth of the educators involved.

Conclusions

This synthesis confirms that for modern language acquisition, the interactive, technology-driven methodologies are essential. Among language teaching methods, Task-Based remains a premier framework with meta-analytic evidence showing a high effectiveness rate of $d=0.93$. Integrating blended learning and Mobile Assisted Language Learning further enhances proficiency and learner autonomy while supporting psychological well-being. Ultimately, the successful adoption of these tools depends on professional development that addresses both technical skills and the emotional complexities of teacher identity.

Recommendations

The study recommends prioritizing Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and technology-mediated tasks to improve learners' oral proficiency and vocabulary acquisition. Educators should also utilize Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and smart learning environments to promote flexible and personalized learning. In addition, teacher professional development should strengthen digital literacy and emotional support for educators adapting to modern teaching methods. Schools are encouraged to invest in blended learning infrastructure and support future research on artificial intelligence and teacher adaptation in digital classrooms.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

This study observed ethical principles by ensuring transparency, objectivity, and academic integrity throughout the meta-synthesis process. Informed consent and ethical approval were not required since the study utilized only published, peer-reviewed, and

DOI-verified literature and did not involve direct participation from human subjects. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied consistently. Personal bias was minimized through a systematic thematic analysis process, and intellectual contributions of original authors were properly cited.

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