



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES

MASTER OF ARTS

LALS 519 SPECIAL TOPIC: TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING

15 POINTS

TRIMESTER 2 2015

Important dates (ON-CAMPUS STUDENTS)

Trimester dates: 13 July to 15 November 2015

Teaching dates: 13 July to 9 October (10 classes spread over the 12 teaching weeks)

Mid-trimester break: 24 August to 6 September 2015

Last assessment item due: 19 October 2015

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

Important dates (DISTANCE STUDENTS)

Trimester dates: 13 July to 15 November 2015

Teaching dates: 27 July to 16 October (10 classes spread over the 12 teaching weeks)

Mid-trimester break: 24 August to 6 September 2015

Last assessment item due: 26 October 2015

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

Class times and locations

Monday 4-6pm, 24 Kelburn Parade, Room 103

Names and contact details

Dr Jonathan Newton (Coordinator)

Office: Room 418, von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade

Phone: (04) 463 5622

Office hours: By appointment

Email: jonathan.newton@vuw.ac.nz

Post: Victoria University of Wellington
P O Box 600
Wellington 6140
New Zealand



Janet Attrill (Course Administrator)

Office: Room 210, von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade

Phone: (04) 463 5894

Email: janet.attrill@vuw.ac.nz

Post: As above

Communication of additional information

Additional information about this course and information about any changes will be posted on the course site in Blackboard and emailed to course members.

Prescription

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) has been extensively researched and adopted. This course draws on research and classroom perspectives to explore teaching through tasks. It covers the areas of task-based course design, methodology, and assessment as well as the design of tasks for beginners and children through to advanced learners and adults.

Course content

In the course we will draw on research and classroom perspectives to explore teaching through tasks, including a focus on the design of tasks, TBLT methodology and on the practical and contextual issues that teachers face when implementing tasks in specific learning contexts. Course members will have opportunities to apply ideas from the course to their particular teaching context whether it be teaching beginners or advanced learners, children or adults, ESOL/EFL or other second languages.

Week beginning (Dates for distance students in red)	Module Topic	Weekly readings
Class 1 13 July 27 July	1. When is a task a <i>task</i> ? 2. Why TBLT?	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 1 Skehan (2003)
Class 2 20 July 3 Aug	Theoretical foundations & responding to critics of TBLT	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 2 Ellis (2009)

Class 3 27 July 10 Aug	Input-based tasks	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 3 Shintani (2012)
Class 4 3 Aug 17 Aug	Production tasks (Planning time & the complexity, accuracy and fluency (CAF) of task-based oral performance)	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 4 Ellis (2003) Foster & Skehan (1999)
Class 5 10 Aug 7 Sept	Task-based interaction, negotiation of meaning and collaborative discourse	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 5 Nakahama, Tyler, & van Lier (2001). Seedhouse & Almutairi (2009)
Class 6 17 Aug 14 Sept	Tasks and focus on form	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 6 Batstone (2012) Boston (2008)
Class 7 7 Sept 21 Sept	Global perspectives on TBLT	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 7 McDonough & Chaikitmongkol (2007) Adams & Newton (2009)
Class 8 Time tba 28 Sept	Sequencing tasks	Romanko & Nakatsugawa (2009) Robinson (2011)
Class 9 Time tba 5 Oct	TBLT from the teacher's perspective	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 8 Andon & Eckerth (2009) Carless (2004)
Class 10 5 October 12 Oct	Assessing with tasks Overview: where to from here for TBLT?	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 9 & 10 Carless (2012) Klapper (2003) Weaver (2012)

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. Understand the rationale and research support for task-based language teaching and critically evaluate different theoretical positions taken in controversies concerning TBLT
2. Critically analyse published teaching tasks and task-based lessons
3. Apply TBLT principles to the planning and design of task-based units of work for teaching in particular settings and for addressing the four skill areas (listening, speaking, reading and writing)
4. Identify the language learning opportunities afforded by different types of tasks and different phases in task-based lessons with specific reference to the accuracy, complexity and fluency dimensions of language proficiency

Teaching format

The course is delivered in two modes: on campus and by distance. On-campus classes are run as lecture-workshop sessions. Distance classes are run asynchronously via Blackboard, Victoria's online teaching and learning system (<http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>). Students in both teaching modes are expected to contribute weekly on-line blogs.

Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

1. obtain at least 40% in each piece of assessment in order to demonstrate the achievement of all CLOs in the course;
2. contribute on time to eight of the 10 weekly group blog discussions on Blackboard in order to share understandings and practical applications of set readings and related topics. If a course member is prevented from meeting this requirement by illness or other unexpected events, exemptions should be negotiated with the course lecturer.

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

Workload

Course members are expected to spend 150 hours on this course or about 10-15 hours a Module for each of the teaching Modules, as well as time outside the teaching Modules completing assessment tasks. While the course requires a lot of independent work, course members are also encouraged to study cooperatively by forming study or discussion groups, or, in the case of distance students, using the Blackboard discussion boards and e-mail to share ideas and resources. Around 80-90 hours should be allocated to assessment on the course. Of this, around 10-15 hours may be required for assignment 1, around 30 hours for assignment 2, and up to 40 hours for assignment 3.

Assessment

Details of each of these assessment tasks will be provided on Blackboard in the Assessment folder.

Assessment items	Due date	Due date	Word length	%	CLO(s)
	ON-CAMPUS	DISTANCE			
1 A critical analysis of a unit from an EFL textbook from a TBLT perspective	Friday 14 Aug	Monday 24 Aug	1000 wds	15%	1, 2, 4
2 A review of the research literature on implementation of TBLT in a particular context or educational sector.	Friday 11 Sept	Friday 25 Sept	2000 wds	40%	1, 4
3 An original task-based unit of work designed for 4-6 hours of instruction/learning in a specified learning context accompanied by a commentary on the lesson design	Monday 19 Oct	Monday 26 Oct	1500 wds (Commentary)	45%	1, 3, 4

Marking criteria

Marking criteria will be provided on the feedback sheet for each assignment. These feedback sheets will be available on blackboard in advance of the due dates for the assignments to which they apply.

Submission and return of work

All course members should submit assignments through the Blackboard (BB) system. Instructions on how to use the BB assignment tool are on the BB website. Assignments are usually marked and grades and feedback provided within 2-3 weeks of the submission date. Feedback and a grade are provided on a grade sheet for each assignment and sometimes also in the body of the assignment. Assignment grades are all provisional until the course and course assessment has been subject to moderation by an external moderator. This usually occurs by the end of the month after all assessment is complete and prior to final grades being entered into the Victoria University grade centre.

General guidelines

- Ensure left/right margins are set to at least 3cm, and top/bottom margins to at least 2.5cm. This allows space for margin comments on the text.
- Set line spacing to 1.5 and font size to 12 point.
- Number the pages.
- Include an assignment title page (please use the template available in the assessment folder in the LALS 510 Blackboard site).
- Give your assignment a **title** that captures what it is about (i.e., not just 'Assignment 1'). Consider, for instance, what title you would give it if you were submitting it to a journal or presenting it at a conference.
- Provide a word count for the assignment (the word count does not include the reference section or appendices).

Extensions and penalties

Extensions

If you require an extension for good reasons, ask the course coordinator ahead of the due date for handing in the assignment for an extension, providing reasons for the request.

Penalties

In line with School (LALS) policy, assignments handed in after the due date without an extension will receive one grade less (5%) per working day and comments may not be provided. After one week, no grade will be given, but the assignment can still count for mandatory course requirements if submitted by the end of the teaching period for the trimester. Note that if no work is submitted for assessment before the last three weeks of teaching, there will be nothing on which to base an aegrotat consideration.

Set text

Willis, Dave & Jane Willis. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This is available from vicbooks: www.vicbooks.co.nz or via on-line retailers of your choice (e.g. Book Depository <http://www.bookdepository.com/>).

In addition there will be one to three extra readings from the following list for each week of the course as specified in the schedule of classes on pp 2-3 above.

Readings

- Adams, R. & Newton, J. (2009). TBLT in Asia: Opportunities and constraints. *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching*, 19, 1-17.
- Andon, N., and Eckerth, J. (2009). Chacun à son gout? Task-based L2 pedagogy from the teacher's point of view. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19, 286-310.
- Batstone, R. (2012). Language form, task-based language teaching, and the classroom context. *ELT Journal*, 66 (4), 459-467. doi:10.1093/elt/ccs058
- Boston, J. S. (2008). Learner mining of pre-task and task input. *ELT Journal*, 62 (1), 66-76. doi:10.1093/elt/ccm079
- Carless, D. (2012). TBLT in EFL settings: looking back and moving forwards. In A. Shehadeh & C. A. Coombe (eds.), *Task-based language teaching in foreign language contexts: Research and implementation*. (pp. 354-359). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Carless, D. (2004). Issues in teachers' reinterpretation of a task-based innovation in primary schools. *TESOL Quarterly*, 38, 639-662.
- Ellis, R. (2009). Task-based language teaching: sorting out the misunderstandings. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19 (3), 221-46.
- Ellis, R. (2003). Tasks, production and language acquisition. Chapter 4 in *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Foster, P & P. Skehan. (1999). The influence of source of planning and focus of planning on task-based performance. *Language Teaching Research*, 3 (3), 215-247. doi: 10.1177/136216889900300303
- Klapper, J. (2003). Taking communication to task? A critical review of recent trends in language teaching, *The Language Learning Journal*, 27 (1), 33-42. DOI: 10.1080/09571730385200061. To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0957173038520>
- McDonough, K. & W. Chaikitmongkol (2007). Teachers' and Learners' Reactions to a Task-Based EFL Course in Thailand. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41 (1), 107-132.
- Nakahama, Y., Tyler, A., & Lier, L. v. (2001). Negotiation of Meaning in Conversational and Information Gap Activities: A Comparative Discourse Analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35 (3), 377-405.
- Robinson, P. (2011). Second Language Task Complexity, the Cognition Hypothesis, language learning and performance. In Robinson, P. (ed.), *Second Language Task Complexity: Researching the Cognition Hypothesis of language learning and performance*. (pp. 3-37). Amsterdam: John Benjamins
- Romanko, R., & Nakatsugawa, M. (2010). Task sequencing based on the Cognition Hypothesis. In A. M. Stoke (Ed.), *JALT2009 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo: JALT.
- Seedhouse, P. & S. Almutairi (2009). A holistic approach to task-based interaction. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19 (3), 311-338.
- Shintani, Natsuko. (2012). Input-based tasks and the acquisition of vocabulary and grammar: A process product study. *Language Teaching Research*, 16 (2), 253-279. DOI: 10.1177/1362168811431378
- Skehan, P. (2003). Task-based instruction. *Language Teaching*. 36, 1-14. DOI: 10.1017/S026144480200188X
- Weaver, C. (2012). Incorporating a formative assessment cycle into task-based language teaching in a university setting in Japan. In A. Shehadeh & C. A. Coombe (eds.), *Task-based language teaching in foreign language contexts: Research and implementation*. (pp. 287-312). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Recommended reading

References for links for additional recommended readings will be provided via Blackboard.

Class representative

A student representative for the MA programme will be elected early in the trimester, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. This person provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students. You can find out more information on Class Representatives on the VUWSA website.

Student feedback

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will be covered during the course. Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz