

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES

**MASTER OF ARTS
LALS 519 TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING
15 POINTS**

TRIMESTER 2 2014

Important dates

Trimester dates: 14 July to 16 November 2014

Teaching dates: 28 July to 17 October 2014

Mid-trimester break: 25 August to 7 September 2014

Last assessment item due: 24 October 2014

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

Tuesday 1-3pm, 22KP 104

Names and contact details

Dr Jonathan Newton (Coordinator)

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School of Linguistics and Applied Language
Studies

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PO Box 600

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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	Module Topic	Weekly readings
Module 1 28 July	1. When is a task a <i>task</i> ? 2. Why TBLT?	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 1 Ellis (2009)
Module 2 4 August	Theoretical foundations	Robinson (2011) Skehan (2003)
Module 3 11 August	Task-based sequences in the classroom	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 2 Romanko & Nakatsugawa (2009)
Module 4 18 August	Input-based tasks	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 3 Shintani (2012)
Mid-term break, 25 August – 5 September		
Module 5 8 September	Production tasks	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 4 Ellis (2003)
Module 6 15 September	Task-based interaction, negotiation of meaning and collaborative discourse	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 5 Seedhouse & Almutairi (2009) Nakahama, Tyler, & van Lier (2001).
Module 7 22 September	Tasks and focus on form	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 6 Batstone (2012) Boston (2008)
Module 8 29 September	Global perspectives on TBLT	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 7 Mcdonough & Chaikitmongkol (2007) Adams & Newton (2009)
Module 9 6 October	Planning time effects on the complexity, accuracy and fluency (CAF) of task-based oral performance	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 8 Foster & Skehan (1999)
Module 10 15 October	Curriculum and assessment in TBLT	<i>Doing TBT</i> , Chpt 9 & 10 Readings tba

References

- Adams, R. & Newton, J. (2009). TBLT in Asia: Opportunities and constraints. *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching*, 19, 1-17.
- 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
- Ellis, R. (2003). Tasks, production and language acquisition. Chapter 4 in *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2009) Task-based language teaching: sorting out the misunderstandings. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19(3), 221-46.
- 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
- 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* Amsterdam: John Benjamins: 3-37
- 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

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 Blackboard¹, Victoria's

¹ Further information about Blackboard is available under 'Frequently Asked Questions'
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/study/faq>

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. Complete all four assessment tasks
2. Attend all classes or contribute on time to each discussion board/blog on Blackboard unless prevented from doing so by illness or other unexpected events. Exemptions to this requirement should be negotiated in advance with the course lecturer.

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

Assessment items	Due date	Word length	%	CLO(s)
1 Five written reflections	5 Aug 16 Aug 30 Sept 14 Oct	1000 wds (200 wds each)	15%	1, 2, 3, 4
2 A critical analysis of a published unit of classroom materials from a TBLT perspective	22 Aug	1000 wds	15%	2
3 A task-based unit of work designed for approximately three hours of instruction/learning in a specified learning context accompanied by a commentary on the lesson design	26 Sept	1200 wds (Commentary)	30%	3, 4
4 An analysis of a task in action by a learner, small group or class of learners	24 Oct	1500 wds	40%	4

Further details of each of these pieces of assessment will be supplied via Blackboard at the beginning of the course.

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 2.5cms. 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).

Hardcopy submissions

- Printing on both sides is encouraged.
- Staple pages together (top left corner only please).
- If possible, avoid presenting assignments in bulky folders or sleeves.
- Do not insert individual pages in clearfile sleeves.
- Posted assignments/tasks should be addressed to the relevant lecturer and sent to the following address:

School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies
Victoria University of Wellington
PO Box 600
Wellington 6140

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 texts

The set text for the course is:

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 two extra readings for each week of the course.

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

