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REVIEW

Integrating Blended Learning and Task-Based Language Teaching in EFL: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

This systematic review investigates the integration of Blended Learning (BL) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, synthesizing findings from 20 peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2025. Guided by two research questions, it explores how BL and TBLT have been operationalized in classroom practice and what impacts this integration has had on learners' language proficiency. Anchored in well-established instructional frameworks, the review identifies key patterns in task design, platform use, skill development, and learner engagement. The findings suggest that blended TBLT can enhance speaking, writing, and vocabulary outcomes while fostering learner autonomy, confidence, and motivation. Successful implementation appears to depend on the alignment between digital tools and instructional objectives, the authenticity of communicative tasks, and the quality of teacher facilitation. This review contributes to the evolving field of blended language pedagogy by mapping current integration models and offering practical and theoretical insights for future instructional design and research in digitally mediated EFL environments.

Keywords: Blended Learning; Task-Based Language Teaching; Integration; Systematic Review

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1. Introduction

Amid the rapid advancement of globalization and information technology, approaches to teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have continually evolved to address the diverse demands of 21st-century learners. In particular, pedagogical paradigms that emphasize flexibility, learner autonomy, and communicative competence have gained increasing prominence in both research and practice [1]. Among these, Blended Learning (BL) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) have emerged as two influential frameworks—each with distinct pedagogical contributions and complementary strengths.

BL is commonly defined as the deliberate integration of face-to-face instruction with online learning components, enabling both synchronous and asynchronous engagement with materials, peers, and instructors [2,3]. BL is not merely a technological enhancement of traditional classroom practices; it represents a shift toward learner-centered, multimodal, and self-paced instruction [4]. Moreover, online learning has been introduced not only to extend learning beyond classroom walls, but also to enhance teachers' creativity and transform traditional instruction into more dynamic, technology-driven experiences that better capture students' interest [5]. In EFL settings, it offers extended opportunities for individualized input exposure, interaction beyond classroom hours, and differentiated output tasks—all of which support language development across varied learner profiles [6–8]. Meanwhile, TBLT, is grounded in communicative language teaching and is defined by its focus on meaning-oriented, real-world tasks as the central unit of instruction [9,10]. In the dynamic landscape of language learning, TBLT has emerged as a prominent pedagogical approach. A recent study examined the intersection of task-based instruction and language acquisition, specifically investigating the impact of pre-task explicit grammar instruction on the development of both explicit and implicit knowledge [11]. A pedagogical task is understood as an activity that requires learners to use the target language to achieve specific communicative goals, often involving problem-solving, information exchange, or content creation [12]. The canonical TBLT framework includes three stages: pre-task (schema activation and planning), task-cycle (authentic language use and interaction), and language focus (analysis, form-focused instruction, and reflection) [13]. Rooted in theories of interaction and output (e.g., the research [14]), TBLT prioritizes negotiation of meaning, fluency development, and learner autonomy.

Importantly, BL and TBLT are not merely compatible — they are mutually reinforcing. While BL provides the digital infrastructure and temporal-spatial flexibility needed for sustained task preparation, delivery, and revision, TBLT supplies BL with a pedagogically coherent and communicative orientation. In tandem, they enable technology-supported, task-driven language learning, with meaningful applications in both resource-rich and resource-constrained contexts [15,16]. As such, the integration of BL and TBLT is increasingly recognized as a promising pedagogical approach in EFL instruction [17,18]. Over the past decade, a growing number of empirical studies have investigated the integration of these two approaches, examining their influence on language proficiency, motivation, learner agency, and classroom dynamics [19–21]. However, the existing literature remains fragmented, with most contributions emerging from isolated case studies or context-specific interventions. Notably, prior syntheses have seldom examined the longitudinal impacts of blended TBLT implementations, making it difficult to determine whether observed benefits are sustainable over time. In addition, the focus across language skills has been uneven, with speaking and grammar receiving disproportionate attention, while reading, writing, and integrative skills remain underexplored [22]. Furthermore, issues such as teacher readiness, fidelity of implementation, and technological infrastructure across diverse socio-economic settings have received limited attention . A comprehensive, theory-informed synthesis of integration models, instructional outcomes, and contextual challenges is still lacking [23].

Therefore, this systematic review aims to synthesize recent research on the integration of BL and TBLT in EFL education. In addition to identifying implementation models and evaluating instructional effectiveness, it highlights how BL and TBLT have been combined in various pedagogical contexts. By showcasing integration strategies and examining both the benefits and challenges observed in practice, this review seeks to provide both theoretical insights and practical guidance for future instructional design and research.

Building on this objective, the present review seeks to address the following research questions:

1. In what ways have BL and TBLT been integrated in EFL contexts?

2. What impact does this integration have on EFL learners' language proficiency.

2. Methodology

This systematic review was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines [24] to ensure methodological transparency and rigor. The primary aim was to identify, evaluate, and synthesize empirical studies that examine the integration or co-application of BL and TBLT in English language teaching contexts.

2.1. Search Strategy

To ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant literature, a structured search was conducted across four databases: Web of Science (WOS), Scopus, ERIC and Google Scholar. These sources were selected due to their extensive indexing of peer-reviewed publications in the fields of applied linguistics, educational technology, and second language acquisition [25–28]. Web of Science and Scopus are known for their rigorous indexing standards and inclusion of high-impact journals, while ERIC provides access to education-specific research, including practitioner-oriented studies. Google Scholar was used as a supplementary source to capture potentially relevant grey literature and open-access materials not covered in traditional databases [29].

The search was limited to publications between January 2015 and March 2025, written in English. A combination of controlled vocabulary and free-text terms was employed, and Boolean operators (AND, OR) were used to combine two core conceptual domains: (1) blended or hybrid learning, and (2) task-based language teaching. No specific keywords related to "EFL" or "second language learners" were included at the search stage in order to maximize recall and avoid excluding studies that addressed relevant learner populations without explicitly labeling them. Instead, contextual relevance to EFL or functionally equivalent L2 environments was assessed manually during the screening phase.

A representative search string used in Scopus was as follows: TITLE-ABS-KEY(("blended learning" OR "hybrid learning" OR "mixed-mode instruction" OR "blended instruction" OR "online and face-to-face learning") AND ("task-based language teaching" OR "task-based instruction" OR "TBLT" OR "Task-Based Approach" OR "task-based pedagogy")).

Equivalent search strategies were adapted for other databases with appropriate field codes. Reference lists of included studies were also manually screened to identify additional relevant publications.

2.2. Study Screening and Selection

The selection of studies followed the PRISMA 2020 framework [24] to ensure transparency and replicability. All records retrieved from the database search were exported into Zotero for reference management. Duplicate entries were automatically detected and removed.

The screening process was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, titles and abstracts were reviewed to identify studies that made explicit reference to both BL and TBLT. Studies that focused solely on either BL or TBLT, or that mentioned both approaches without any pedagogical connection, were excluded. In the second stage, full texts of potentially eligible articles were retrieved and assessed in detail. Inclusion decisions were guided by predefined eligibility criteria, which were developed to align with the objectives of this review and are summarized in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for study selection.

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Between 2015 to 2025	Earlier than 2015
Focus on BL–TBLT integration in EFL	Focus only on BL or TBLT
Formal educational settings (e.g., primary, secondary, tertiary)	Informal or non-educational settings
Empirical study	Not empirical or primary research

Contextual relevance (e.g., EFL) was manually assessed during full-text review, especially for studies that did not explicitly label the instructional context. Two reviewers independently conducted the screening and selection process, and any discrepancies were resolved through discussion and consensus.

A total of 113 records were identified through database searches: Scopus (26), Web of Science (22), ERIC (16), and Google Scholar (screened from the top 300 results, yielding 49). For Google Scholar, only the first 300 entries sorted by relevance (default setting) were manually screened. Screening decisions were based on title relevance, explicit reference to both BL and TBLT, and academic credibility (e.g., peer-reviewed articles, conference papers). Irrelevant sources (e.g., theses, unrelated citations, non-academic content) were excluded to ensure transparency and reproducibility.

After deduplication, 102 unique records remained. These were screened by title and abstract, and 44 articles were selected for full-text review. Following the eligibility criteria, 20 studies were finally included in the review, as detailed in **Appendix A, Table A1**. In line with PRISMA 2020 guidelines, two reviewers independently conducted the screening and selection process to reduce potential selection bias. Although a formal risk of bias assessment tool (e.g., RoB 2, MMAT) was not applied due to methodological heterogeneity across studies, potential sources of bias were considered during full-text review and data extraction. Discrepancies were resolved through discussion and consensus. The full identification, screening, and inclusion process is summarized in the PRISMA flow diagram (**Figure 1**).

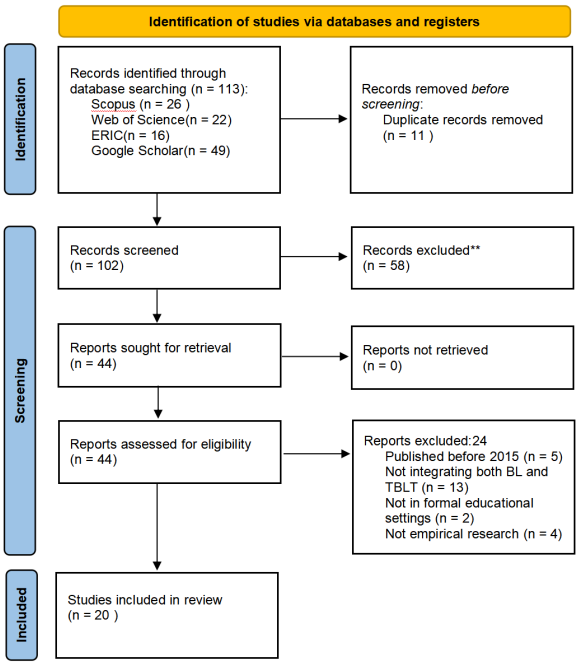

Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram.

2.3. Data Extraction and Synthesis

Key information was extracted from the final set of included studies (n = 20) using a structured coding protocol aligned with the review's research questions. The extracted variables included: study title, author(s), publication year, educational context (e.g., primary, secondary, tertiary), research design, type of BL–TBLT integration model, targeted language skills, and reported instructional outcomes.

To synthesize findings across diverse methodological approaches and educational settings, a thematic synthesis strategy was employed. Studies were grouped inductively based on (1) the models of integration implemented (e.g., flipped classroom, station rotation, mobile-assisted TBLT), (2) the language skills addressed (e.g., speaking, writing, reading, integrated), and (3) recurring instructional effects or challenges (e.g., learner motivation, task authenticity, technological issues). Quantitative findings were descriptively summarized where reported, while qualitative results were analyzed narratively. The synthesis aimed to identify common pedagogical patterns and areas of divergence across contexts.

3. Findings

This section synthesizes evidence from 20 peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2025 that examined the integration of BL and TBLT in EFL contexts. Guided by two research questions, this synthesis is anchored in established theoretical frameworks of task-based instruction [9,10,13,30] and blended learning [3,6].

3.1. Patterns of Integration between BL and TBLT

Across studies, a three-phase TBLT framework—pre-task, task-cycle, and language focus—was commonly adapted for blended learning environments [9,13]. In pre-task stages, learners typically engaged with online input materials, such as instructional videos, reading guides, vocabulary lists, and quizzes. These materials aimed to activate schemata and prepare learners cognitively for language production. For instance, studies have employed teacher-recorded screencasts and scaffolded reading outlines to

support student engagement and comprehension [31,32], while flipped classroom models have been used to allocate more time for interaction during in-person sessions [19].

The task-cycle stage, executed either in the classroom or synchronously online, involved meaning-focused tasks such as debates, collaborative writing, roleplays, and video reporting [17,33,34]. These activities emphasized real-time negotiation of meaning and co-construction of output. During the language focus stage, digital platforms facilitated peer feedback, teacher commentary, and revision. Studies have utilized learning management systems that allow students to submit voice recordings and receive asynchronous formative feedback [35]. In addition, rubric-based peer evaluation has been incorporated as a reflective post-task activity to enhance learner engagement and critical thinking [18].

Task types exhibited notable variation in complexity, modality, and communicative demand. Information-gap and decision-making tasks have been used to foster collaborative problem-solving [36], while collaborative writing tasks using Google Docs have facilitated iterative revision processes [18,31]. Interpreting tasks enriched with code-mixed vocabulary inputs have been implemented to enhance both linguistic and cognitive flexibility [37]. Mobile-assisted video journalism tasks have integrated speaking, writing, and media literacy skills [33]. Additionally, grammar-focused tasks have been creatively gamified using Web 2.0 tools such as Powtoon and Kahoot, aligning with established pedagogical task criteria—goal-oriented, learner-centered, and meaning-driven [12,38]. Vellanki and Bandu further illustrated how a structured sequence of online tasks—grounded in TBLT principles—can be delivered entirely through digital platforms such as Zoom, Google Docs, and YouTube. Their approach preserved the pre-task, task-cycle, and post-task phases through live collaboration, shared writing, and asynchronous video-based input, reinforcing how fully online designs can still support authentic, outcome-driven tasks and interactive language use [39].

A range of digital platforms supported the implementation of blended TBLT. Learning Management Systems (e.g., Google Classroom, Moodle, MS Teams, Xuexitong, SIKOLA) were used for resource sharing, task submissions, and asynchronous communication. Messaging apps such as WhatsApp, LINE, and WeChat extended collaboration beyond the classroom. Mobile-based tools allowed students to create, revise, and submit multimedia outputs on-the-go. or example, mobile-assisted tasks have been found to enhance learner autonomy and vocabulary acquisition [33]. Additionally, the use of Augmented Reality (AR) in grammar instruction has demonstrated motivational affordances that support learner engagement [38].

The choice and affordances of platforms varied across studies. LMS platforms like Moodle and Xuexitong provided structured environments for tracking participation and feedback. In contrast, social apps facilitated informal, real-time communication but lacked archiving or scaffolding features. Studies noted that the effectiveness of these tools largely depended on how teachers structured learning sequences and integrated assessment mechanisms. Few studies explicitly discussed the technological training provided to instructors, suggesting a research gap in teacher readiness for blended TBLT implementation [18,35].

Beyond general classroom settings, several studies have explored specialized adaptations of blended TBLT. Interpreting tasks targeting vocabulary recall and oral fluency have been integrated to develop learners' linguistic and cognitive skills [37]. Critical thinking instruction has been embedded within genre-based writing tasks, emphasizing reasoning, coherence, and argumentation [40]. A curriculum-aligned TBLT model mapped to national standards has also been validated [32]. These cases underscore the adaptability of blended TBLT across academic levels, instructional purposes, and institutional frameworks. Nevertheless, integration depth and sustainability varied. While some studies demonstrated well-sequenced, theory-driven designs, others provided less detailed task implementation procedures. Additionally, few studies reported how these practices aligned with formal curricular goals or assessment systems. Factors such as digital access, teacher expertise, and institutional support were often implied but seldom analyzed, indicating key areas for future inquiry.

3.2. Impacts on EFL Learners' Language Proficiency

All reviewed studies reported positive impacts of blended TBLT on language learning outcomes, though the nature and magnitude of improvement varied across lan-

guage skills and task types.

Speaking was the most frequently targeted skill, often supported by video, peer interaction, and repeated performance. Gains were reported in fluency, vocabulary range, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and pragmatic competence. A particularly compelling example comes from Ramadan and Hassan, whose hybrid TBLT model significantly improved students' speaking proficiency across multiple dimensions—including fluency, appropriacy, and use of discourse markers—alongside notable increases in learner confidence and attitude toward speaking tasks [41]. In addition, video-based speaking tasks have been shown to increase student confidence and interactional fluency [34,36]. Furthermore, technology-enhanced tasks have led to measurable improvements in roleplay performance and listening comprehension [17].

Writing-focused studies reported enhanced coherence, lexical diversity, syntactic complexity, and revision behavior. Collaborative writing via Google Docs has been found to promote learner autonomy and negotiation of meaning [18,31]. Furthermore, the integration of TBLT with critical thinking instruction has resulted in stronger argumentative essays, improved organization, and enhanced audience awareness [40].

Listening, though less studied, showed promising outcomes when embedded in integrated task cycles. Audiovisual input incorporated into speaking tasks has been associated with improved comprehension and note-taking ability [35,42]. Video modeling and pre-listening scaffolds (e.g., vocabulary previews, graphic organizers) were key contributors to success.

Reading gains have been primarily associated with vocabulary acquisition and summarizing skills. Task-based digital reading has been shown to improve inferencing and strategy use [20], while multimodal input has been linked to enhanced lexical recall [37].

Studies have associated integrated-skill tasks with broader cognitive and affective benefits. For instance, mobile reporting projects have supported simultaneous development in speaking, writing, and digital literacy [33]. Other studies have shown that interpreting tasks enhance both fluency and vocabulary retrieval [37], while the design of grammar-focused instructional videos contributes to improved metalinguistic awareness [38].

Beyond linguistic outcomes, affective and motivational impacts were frequently emphasized. Learners consistently reported higher engagement, enjoyment, and confidence when participating in collaborative, technology-supported tasks [33,40]. Studies noted reductions in speaking anxiety and greater willingness to communicate [35,38,43]. Studies have identified strong positive correlations between task design qualities—such as richness, adaptability, and timeliness—and perceived learner engagement [43]. While task-based assessment in blended environments was generally accepted by students, lower ratings for authenticity revealed a disconnect between classroom task design and real-world language use [44].

Despite overall gains, several limitations emerged. Listening and pronunciation were underrepresented in assessment-focused studies. Few studies addressed long-term retention or delayed post-testing. Additionally, task design often privileged productive skills (speaking, writing), while receptive and metacognitive skills were less frequently targeted. Learner variables (e.g., proficiency level, digital literacy) were seldom analyzed as moderating factors [17,31,45].

Collectively, the reviewed studies demonstrate that integrating TBLT within blended learning environments can enhance EFL learners' linguistic competence, strategic behavior, engagement, and confidence [39–41]. Effectiveness was most notable when tasks were authentic, collaborative, digitally supported, and aligned with clear feedback mechanisms. However, variability in task types, platform use, teacher mediation, and skill coverage points to several areas where research remains nascent. These themes will be further explored in the following discussion section, which critically examines pedagogical implications, research limitations, and future directions for blended TBLT in EFL.

4. Discussion

This section critically reflects on how the integration of BL and TBLT in EFL contexts enhances language proficiency, learner engagement, and pedagogical design. Drawing on the synthesized findings, it connects observed outcomes to established theoretical frameworks, identifies implementation challenges, and outlines areas for further research and practice.

4.1. Reconceptualizing TBLT in Blended Environments

The transition from traditional classroom-based TBLT to digitally supported, blended implementations represents more than a shift in modality — it signals a broader pedagogical transformation. Classic models proposed by the researches [9,13] emphasized meaning-focused interaction and real-world communicative tasks. In blended settings, these principles are increasingly embedded within asynchronous input delivery, multimodal scaffolding, and recursive feedback cycles.

Several studies reinterpreted the pre-task stage as a space for learner-controlled, technology-mediated exploration [18,35], aligning with Community of Inquiry (CoI) model [3]. This model highlights the interplay between teaching, cognitive, and social presence—elements increasingly visible in task designs that blend synchronous and asynchronous interactions. Meanwhile, Long's strong version of TBLT [10], which emphasizes real-world task orientation and meaning negotiation, was evident in studies where learners produced videos [38], simulated interpreting [37], or engaged in collaborative media production using mobile tools [33]. These examples demonstrate how the affordances of blended learning platforms can reinforce, rather than dilute, core principles of TBLT.

4.2. Language Skill Development: Beyond Fluency and Accuracy

Across the reviewed studies, speaking emerged as the most frequently addressed skill. Learners demonstrated improvements in fluency, pronunciation, lexical diversity, and pragmatic competence, particularly through video-recorded tasks and collaborative dialogues. These outcomes support Swain's Output Hypothesis [43], which posits that language production promotes syntactic processing and error awareness. Recursive feedback cycles, as seen in researches [34,35], further echo Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) [46], where peer interaction and teacher guidance scaffold language growth.

Writing skills have shown significant improvement when collaborative drafting and revision were integrated. Studies have used platforms such as Google Docs to facilitate co-construction, peer evaluation, and iterative refinement [31,40]. The integration of critical thinking instruction [40] further extended TBLT beyond language acquisition to support higher-order cognitive development, aligning with the concept of reflective learner agency [47].

Listening and reading received comparatively less emphasis. However, studies that embedded these skills within task cycles—especially using audiovisual input [35,42]—demonstrated gains in comprehension, inferencing, and vocabulary retention. Reading-based models [32] that employed genre-specific pre-task input contributed to enhanced textual engagement. Study [37] effectively linked vocabulary learning with interpreting fluency, reinforcing the argument in [48] that vocabulary acquisition is maximized through meaningful, context-rich tasks. Despite these promising results, the overall skill focus across studies remains unbalanced. Listening, pronunciation, and pragmatic awareness were underrepresented, suggesting the need for more inclusive, multi-skill task designs in future blended TBLT implementations.

4.3. Task Design and Technological Scaffolding: The Core of Effectiveness

Task design surfaced as the central mediating factor in blended TBLT efficacy. As Breen notes, task authenticity is not inherent in content alone but is shaped by learner purpose, context, and interactional dynamics [49]. Studies employing roleplay, real-world simulations, or scenario-based tasks (e.g., news broadcasting, guided tours) reported higher engagement and output quality [36,38].

Technology was most effective when pedagogically embedded. Google Docs enabled version tracking and synchronous editing; LMS platforms supported resource sequencing and asynchronous feedback; tools like Kahoot and Powtoon gamified grammar and vocabulary; video platforms allowed task recycling and fluency development. However, mismatches between tool functionality and task objectives were common. Learners expressed frustration with lagging uploads and unclear task sequences, highlighting the need for careful alignment between technological tools and pedagogical goals [33,43]. The Technological–Pedagogical Fit (TPF), therefore, should be a guiding design principle in blended TBLT. Additionally, the studies revealed that technology alone does not ensure learner success. Meaningful integration depends on structured task

progression, accessible instructions, and responsive feedback. Studies with well-sequenced scaffolding—consistently showed superior outcomes compared to those with minimal teacher mediation [18,35].

4.4. Engagement and Learner Perception: Cognitive, Emotional, and Motivational Dimensions

Almost all reviewed studies reported increases in learner engagement, motivation, and confidence. These affective gains stemmed from several factors: low-anxiety digital spaces for rehearsal [50], learner agency in content creation [38], and visible progress through peer and teacher feedback [40]. Heutagogical principles, which emphasize self-directed and self-determined learning [51], were particularly evident in tasks that allowed learners to generate media, manage pacing, and select resources. Recursive revision processes, especially those mediated by digital platforms, enabled learners to perceive and internalize progress, reinforcing Dörnyei's claim that motivation is sustained by a sense of competence and growth [52].

Nevertheless, authenticity perceptions remained a concern. While instructors intended to simulate real-life communication, some learners still viewed tasks as academic exercises. Akbulut & Mirici found that while students appreciated task-based assessment, they rated authenticity lower than other dimensions, pointing to a disconnect between task design and learners' expectations [45]. This suggests that transparent task framing and meaningful scenario construction are essential to bridging the classroom–real world divide.

4.5. The Evolving Role of Teachers in Blended TBLT

Blended TBLT implementations require teachers to operate in multifaceted roles: designers, facilitators, feedback providers, and digital mediators. Studies showed how teacher-led scaffolding—through prompts, examples, rubrics, and reflective questions—was central to student task success [35,40]. Other studies highlighted the teacher's role in guiding learners through cognitively demanding code-mixed interpreting tasks [37], and emphasized their responsibility in developing students' digital literacy [20]. These evolving responsibilities mirror Garrison and Vaughan's (2008) CoI model [3], where teaching presence is not limited to content delivery but extends to instructional design and discourse facilitation.

However, few studies examined how teachers develop these competencies. This points to a critical research gap in professional development for blended TBLT, particularly in low-resource or rapidly digitizing contexts. Future implementation success will depend on institutional support for ongoing teacher training in task design, digital pedagogy, and assessment literacy. Without adequate support, even well-designed models may fail in practice due to teacher discomfort or implementation inconsistency. A promising framework to guide such professional development is Mishra and Koehler's Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) model [53]. TPACK emphasizes the interconnected knowledge domains teachers need to effectively integrate technology into pedagogy and subject content. Applying TPACK to blended TBLT would support educators in aligning digital tools with task-based goals and linguistic content, while also addressing learner variability and institutional constraints. Structured training programs informed by TPACK can enhance teacher readiness by building confidence in digital task design, promoting pedagogical flexibility, and fostering reflective teaching practices. This framework is especially relevant for preparing educators to navigate the pedagogical demands of blended TBLT across diverse educational and technological contexts.

5. Pedagogical Implications

The integration of BL and TBLT presents significant opportunities for innovation in EFL instruction. However, its success depends not only on technological adoption, but on pedagogical intentionality, instructional design, teacher development, and institutional alignment.

Effective blended TBLT requires that pedagogical tasks be thoughtfully sequenced across digital and face-to-face environments, ensuring coherence between each phase of the task cycle and the functions of digital tools. For example, pre-task video input can activate schemata and reduce cognitive load [35], while post-task peer review and reflection via asynchronous platforms foster deeper metalinguistic awareness and autonomous revision [18,34]. This

principle is further exemplified in recent implementations of web-based educational escape rooms, which integrate grammar instruction into narrative-driven, problem-solving tasks and support both linguistic accuracy and learner engagement through immediate feedback and contextualized repetition [54]. Aligning tasks with platform affordances—rather than using technology for its own sake—is essential to maximizing learner engagement and learning outcomes [3].

Equally critical is the design of authentic, role-based tasks that simulate real-world communication. Tasks that involve learners acting as reporters, interviewers, or interpreters—using tools like Google Docs, collaborative LMS platforms, or mobile applications—have been shown to enhance linguistic performance and promote 21st-century competencies such as digital literacy, creativity, and teamwork [33,37,38]. When students perceive the communicative relevance of what they are doing, they are more likely to invest cognitively and emotionally in the task [47].

The evolving role of the teacher in blended TBLT environments underscores the need for targeted and sustained professional development. Teachers must develop both technical proficiency and pedagogical agility—the ability to design, facilitate, and assess tasks within complex digital ecosystems. This involves more than software training; it calls for a deep understanding of how technology can support meaning negotiation, learner autonomy, and formative assessment [22,40]. Garrison and Vaughan's concept of teaching presence—encompassing instructional design, facilitation, and direct instruction—provides a useful framework for structuring teacher training. Professional learning communities, peer mentoring networks, and reflective teaching journals may support this transition effectively.

At the institutional level, systemic support is essential for sustainable implementation. Access to stable internet, digital devices, and technical support must be guaranteed to ensure that blended TBLT does not exacerbate existing inequities [24]. Institutions should conduct needs analyses to identify resource gaps and tailor their support accordingly. In under-resourced settings, scalable solutions such as mobile-based learning, offline-compatible platforms, and low-bandwidth tools (e.g., WhatsApp, audio messaging) may offer viable alternatives. In under-resourced settings, specific tools and task formats can make blended TBLT feasible without requiring high-speed internet or advanced devices. Offline-compatible mobile apps (e.g., Kolibri, Smart Recorder), downloadable audio/video input, and low-data communication tools like WhatsApp or Telegram allow learners to access tasks, submit recordings, and engage in reflection asynchronously [55,56]. Teachers can assign voice-based speaking tasks, peer-reviewed writing, or reading tasks using PDF annotations. These approaches preserve the core principles of TBLT—authenticity, interaction, and learner autonomy—while adapting to local constraints. To ensure broader adoption, teacher training programs should incorporate low-tech strategies, and institutions should endorse flexible curricular pathways that allow such adaptations to thrive [57].

Furthermore, curricular flexibility and policy alignment are necessary to allow teachers the time, autonomy, and curricular space to develop and implement blended TBLT models [26]. In addition to institutional alignment, policy-level action is needed to address structural inequities and support the long-term scalability of blended TBLT. National and regional education authorities should invest in digital infrastructure (e.g., broadband access, device provision), allocate funding for ongoing teacher training in digital and task-based pedagogy, and integrate blended learning models into curricular policy frameworks. Public–private partnerships and open-access national platforms may also support implementation at scale. Without coordinated policy support, even well-designed pedagogical models risk remaining isolated or unsustainable—particularly in low-resource settings where digital divides are most pronounced. Strategic educational planning and systemic investment are therefore essential to achieving equitable and inclusive blended TBLT [55].

Finally, pedagogical inclusivity must remain a core priority. While most existing models were tested with university learners in technologically advanced contexts, future applications should adapt blended TBLT for diverse learners—including young learners, adult migrants, or students with limited access. This calls for differentiated task design, culturally responsive materials, and low-tech implementation pathways that preserve core TBLT principles.

In short, the pedagogical promise of blended TBLT lies not in technology itself, but in how educators leverage digital affordances to design tasks that are purposeful, engaging, and contextually responsive. For meaningful adop-

tion, innovation must be matched by equity, reflection, and institutional vision.

6. Conclusions

This systematic review affirms that the integration of Blended Learning (BL) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in EFL education offers a pedagogically powerful approach to fostering not only linguistic proficiency but also learner motivation, autonomy, and engagement. By synthesizing findings from 20 empirical studies across diverse educational settings, this review highlights how blended TBLT, when supported by well-sequenced task design and strategically aligned technologies, can create rich opportunities for authentic communication, reflective practice, and sustained language development [3,9].

The evidence underscores that effective blended TBLT hinges on the alignment between pedagogical goals, technological affordances, and learner needs. Meaningful outcomes are most likely when instructional design integrates multimodal input, collaborative output, and iterative feedback, and when teachers are empowered as facilitators, designers, and mediators of digital tasks [3,49]. At its best, blended TBLT supports contextualized language use and learner-centered engagement, aligning closely with contemporary theories of second language acquisition and instructional scaffolding [10,30,46].

However, the full promise of blended TBLT remains contingent upon addressing several implementation challenges. Task authenticity must be grounded in learners' communicative realities [12,47]; platform choice must serve pedagogical intention, not the reverse; and teacher roles must evolve through continuous professional development [3,58]. Furthermore, the field must broaden its focus to include underrepresented skill areas such as listening, pronunciation, and pragmatics [37,42], as well as diverse learner populations and low-resource environments [43,45].

Future research should prioritize longitudinal, multicontextual, and equity-oriented investigations that explore how blended TBLT can be scaled, sustained, and adapted to evolving global needs. As technology becomes increasingly embedded in education, the challenge is not whether to blend, but how to do so meaningfully, inclusively, and with pedagogical integrity.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, Q.G. and N.E.M.S.; methodology, Q.G.; software, Q.G.; validation, N.E.M.S. and N.H.A.; formal analysis, Q.G.; investigation, Q.G.; resources, Q.G.; data curation, Q.G. and N.E.M.S.; writing—original draft preparation, Q.G.; writing—review and editing, N.E.M.S. and N.H.A.; visualization, Q.G.; supervision, N.E.M.S. and N.H.A.; project administration, N.E.M.S.; funding acquisition, Q.G. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement

No new data were generated or analyzed in this study. All data supporting the findings of this systematic review are derived from previously published studies, which are fully cited in the references.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results.

Appendix A

Table A1. Summary of Reviewed Research.

Title	Author(s) and Year	Educational Level	Research Design	Integration Model	Language Skills	Major Findings
Utilizing a Blended Strategy based on Task-Based Language Learning to Develop Primary Stage Pupils' EFL Oral Communication Skills	El-Boraie (2022) [42]	Primary (6th grade pupils, Egypt)	Quasi-experimental (pre-post test, control vs. experimental)	Blended Learning + TBLT + Situational Approach	Oral Communication (speaking & listening)	Blended TBLT significantly improved pupils' oral communication skills. Post-test scores of the experimental group were statistically higher than the control group. TBLT tasks increased confidence, fluency, and accuracy.
The Impact of Integrating Blended Learning with Task-Based Language Learning on Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL Learners	Elahi and Mashhadi Heidar (2021) [20]	Secondary/ Language Institute (Teenage intermediate EFL learners in Iran)	Quasi-experimental (4 groups: male/female experimental vs. control, with pre/post tests)	Station Rotation Model (Staker & Horn, 2012) + TBLT (Ellis, 2017)	Reading comprehension	Blended TBLT significantly improved reading comprehension in both genders; no significant gender difference in outcomes. Learners developed critical thinking, autonomy, and reading strategies.
Development of Basic English Reading and Writing Course Based on Task-based Learning Combined with Blended Learning	Mei et al. (2025) [31]	First-year university (English majors, Xi'an International Studies University)	Quasi-experimental (one-group pre-post design)	Three-stage TBLT + Blended Learning via Superstar Platform	Reading & Writing	Post-test scores (M = 70.92) significantly higher than pre-test (M = 55.04); students showed improved reading strategies, writing accuracy, task engagement, and satisfaction (M = 3.89/5).
Task-based Language Teaching for EFL Students Based on Blended Learning	Meng and Feng (2019) [19]	University (China, general college-level EFL learners)	Theoretical-practical paper (descriptive, not empirical)	TBLT + Flipped Classroom Model in Blended Learning	Integrated skills (focus on speaking, writing, and communication)	Describes how TBLT can be embedded in a flipped-class blended model to foster autonomy, participation, and communicative competence. Highlights the need for clear task design and phased task implementation: pre-task (online), during-task (class), and post-task (reflection).
Effects of Technology Enhanced Task-Based Language Teaching on Learners' Listening Comprehension and Speaking Performance	Mulyadi et al. (2021) [17]	University (ESP learners – nursing students in Indonesia)	Quasi-experimental (pre-post, control vs. experimental group)	Technology-enhanced TBLT (LMS + WhatsApp + Zoom + YouTube; adapted from Willis & Nielson et al.)	Listening and Speaking	Significant improvement in listening and role-play speaking in the experimental group. No significant gains in online presentation or group discussion tasks. Pre-task input, video modeling, and task structure contributed to outcomes.
Online Task-Based Language Teaching and Face-to-Face TBLT Utilizing SIKOLA in Writing Class: How Does It Affect EFL Students' Writing Performance and Attitude?	Radjuni (2023) [34]	Undergraduate (Indonesia, writing class)	Mixed-methods (pre/post tests + interviews)	Online TBLT via LMS (SIKOLA) vs. face-to-face TBLT (both follow TBLT phases)	Writing	Both online and face-to-face TBLT significantly improved writing. No significant difference between modes. Learners showed positive attitudes toward online TBLT (motivation, revision benefits), but noted low participation and confusion as challenges.

Table A1. *Cont.*

Title	Author(s) and Year	Educational Level	Research Design	Integration Model	Language Skills	Major Findings
A Model of Task-Based Blended Learning for the EFL Writing Classroom	Sitawati et al. (2022) [18]	University (Bali, Indonesia)	Design-based research (Model development + validation)	Task-Based Blended Learning Model: Online (Google Classroom) + Offline (collaborative writing workshops)	Writing	Developed and validated a three-phase TBLT-BL model (pre-task, task, post-task) showing enhanced writing performance, motivation, and collaboration. Effective integration of Google Classroom for scaffolding and task sequencing.
Engaging Students Online with Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Teaching	Vellanki and Bandu (2021) [39]	University (Oman & Saudi Arabia; advanced EFL learners)	Design-based reflection (lesson design + model adaptation)	Online TBLT via Zoom, Google Docs, LMS, YouTube; Based on Willis & Ellis frameworks	Writing & Speaking	Tech-mediated TBLT promotes student engagement, collaboration, and language production. Collaborative tasks via breakout rooms and shared docs led to improved fluency and vocabulary. Highlights teacher creativity, peer interaction, and task recycling as critical for success.
The Effectiveness of the Integration of Blended Learning and Task-Based Learning Instructional Model on English Reading Skills of Undergraduate Students in Guangxi Province	Xiaoqi and Iamsa-ard (2025) [32]	University (China, English majors)	Three-phase design-based research (Needs analysis → Model development → Pre/post-test effectiveness)	Structured instructional model: online-offline integration with task-based reading stages	Reading	Statistically significant improvement in reading skills (pre: 40.13 → post: 101.33, $p<.05$); RDS = 58.37 ("High" development). Integration model validated on utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy. Students showed positive attitudes and increased motivation.
A Hybrid Task-Based Learning Program for Developing Higher Education Students' EFL Speaking Skills and their Attitude	Ramadan and Hassan (2021) [41]	University (First-year students, Egypt)	Quasi-experimental (control vs. experimental, pre/post tests)	Hybrid TBLT using Microsoft 365 (Teams, Forms, PPT, OneDrive)	Speaking	Significant improvement in fluency, accuracy, appropriacy, and use of discourse markers. Attitudes toward speaking and hybrid TBLT improved significantly ($r > 0.89$ effect size). Model based on ADDIE design & social constructivism.
Implementing Collaborative Pre-task Planning with Intermediate Arab EFL Learners in a Blended, Task-Based Environment: A Mixed Methods Study	Anonymous (Ampersand, 2024)	University (Intermediate Arab EFL learners)	Mixed-methods (quasi-experimental + interviews)	Collaborative Pre-Task Planning + TBLT (Blended: Google Docs, LMS + F2F)	Writing (focus on complexity, accuracy, fluency)	PTP group outperformed control group in writing fluency and lexical complexity. Learners found collaboration motivating. Challenges included timing, platform use, and uneven participation.

Table A1. *Cont.*

Title	Author(s) and Year	Educational Level	Research Design	Integration Model	Language Skills	Major Findings
Using TBLT Framework in Technology-mediated Environments to Enhance Students' Vocabulary Retention and Interpreting Skills	Dinh (2022) [37]	University (Vietnam, senior students majoring in Business English)	Experimental (3 groups, pre-/post-tests, LMS activity logs)	TBLT + LMS (Business Interpretation course, code-mixing quizzes, online vocabulary tasks)	Vocabulary + Interpreting	TBLT-based vocabulary quizzes significantly improved vocabulary retention (avg. from 6.5 to 7.4); task design helped reduce reliance on translation apps and enhanced learners' processing speed. Code-mixing strategy promoted real-world relevance.
The Implementation of the Blended Learning Model with a Speaking Task-Based Design on Thai EFL Students' English Speaking Ability	Kamsa-ard and Khampusaen (2021) [36]	University (Thailand)	Quasi-experimental (control vs. experimental, pre-post, interviews)	Blended Learning + TBLT (Station Rotation Model; Google Classroom + video tasks)	Speaking	Experimental group (BL+TBLT) significantly outperformed control in fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, pronunciation, interaction, task completion ($p<.01$). Students had positive attitudes toward blended learning and reported more confidence, motivation, and engagement.
Correlational Study of Factors Affecting Students' Perceived Engagement in Task-Based Learning Under Blended English Learning Environment	Zhang and Goh (2023) [43]	University (China)	Correlational survey-based study	TBLT within Blended Learning (tasks before, during, and after class)	Not skill-specific (focus on engagement)	Timeliness, richness, accuracy, and adaptability of tasks all showed strong positive correlations with students' engagement ($r > .83$, $p < .01$). Students reported higher motivation when tasks were relevant, well-timed, and adaptive.
Enhancing L2 English Learning through Mobile-Assisted TBLT: EFL Learners' Perspectives	Chen and Lin (2018) [33]	University (Taiwan, integrated English course)	Mixed-methods (survey + open-ended responses)	Mobile-Assisted TBLT (campus reporting task using smartphones, video recording, Moodle)	Integrated skills (focus on speaking, writing, collaboration)	Learners reported strong engagement and perceived gains in vocabulary, writing, and digital literacy. Most favored scripting and group interaction. Challenges included tech issues, time limits, and unequal group participation.
Construction and Application of Task-based Blended Learning Model in a University EFL Listening and Speaking Course	Lu (2022) [35]	University (China, freshmen EFL learners)	Mixed-methods (online records + surveys + open-ended questions)	Three-phase model: Pre-task (online), Task-cycle (in class), Language focus (online + in class) via Xuexitong LMS	Listening and Speaking	Students showed significant perceived gains in listening/speaking, motivation, confidence, participation, and peer interaction. 90.9% reported more practice opportunities; feedback and digital support enhanced engagement. Task-based video/news activities enriched the experience.

Table A1. *Cont.*

Title	Author(s) and Year	Educational Level	Research Design	Integration Model	Language Skills	Major Findings
Task-Based Language Teaching Based on Computer-Assisted Language Learning	Si Li (2021)	University (theoretical + implementation suggestions)	Theoretical-conceptual with practical application design	CALL-based TBLT + Blended Learning (DingTalk, QQ, Tencent Meeting, MOOCs)	Speaking, Listening, Writing (multi-skill)	Highlights strong version of TBLT integrated with CALL. Emphasizes real-world tasks, autonomy, and pre/during/post-task structure. Recommends tech-enhanced scripting, group messaging, and task uploads for increased learner motivation and flexibility.
The Effect of Hybrid Task-Based Language Teaching and Critical Thinking on Writing Performance in Indonesia	Tusino et al. (2020) [40]	University (Indonesia, genre-based writing course)	2x2 Factorial Experimental Design	Hybrid TBLT + Critical Thinking; Blended: Google Classroom + F2F	Writing	Students taught with Hybrid TBLT outperformed traditional group (78.39 vs 72.29, $p<.05$); students with higher critical thinking also performed better (79.72 vs 74.93). Hybrid TBLT increased engagement, motivation, and revision quality.
The Use of Web 2.0 Technology Tools and Beyond in Enhancing Task-Based Language Learning: A Case Study	Annamalai (2019) [38]	University (Malaysia, undergraduate ESL learners)	Qualitative case study (interviews + reflective journals)	TBLT + Web 2.0 + AR (Moodle, WebEx, Powtoon, Kahoot, AR tools)	Grammar (writing, speaking, collaboration)	Students gained deeper understanding of grammar rules through collaborative TBLT tasks supported by Web 2.0 and AR tools. Tools increased engagement, collaboration, motivation, and autonomous learning. Issues included tech limitations, group conflict, and lack of presentation skills.
An Investigation on EFL Students' Perceptions of Task-Based Language Assessment in the Blended Learning Environment	Akbulut and Mirici (2024) [45]	University (Turkey, prep class)	Cross-sectional survey (SPAQ + MANOVA)	TBLA in BLE: 6 hrs blended teaching via MS Teams + F2F; weekly speaking/writing tasks	Speaking, Writing (assessment-focused)	Students had overall positive perceptions of TBLA (M = 3.24/4.0). No significant gender or proficiency differences. Low score on authenticity suggests gap between classroom and real-life contexts. TBLA encouraged reflection and classroom engagement.

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