

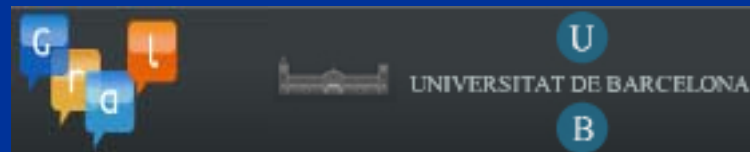
# The role of tasks in CLIL program development

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# Goal

- The goal of this paper is to discuss the **role of tasks** and **task-based research** may play in content and language integrated learning (CLIL) program development.

QUESTION: What are some of the aspects of research into tasks that CLIL can benefit from?

# Some assumptions

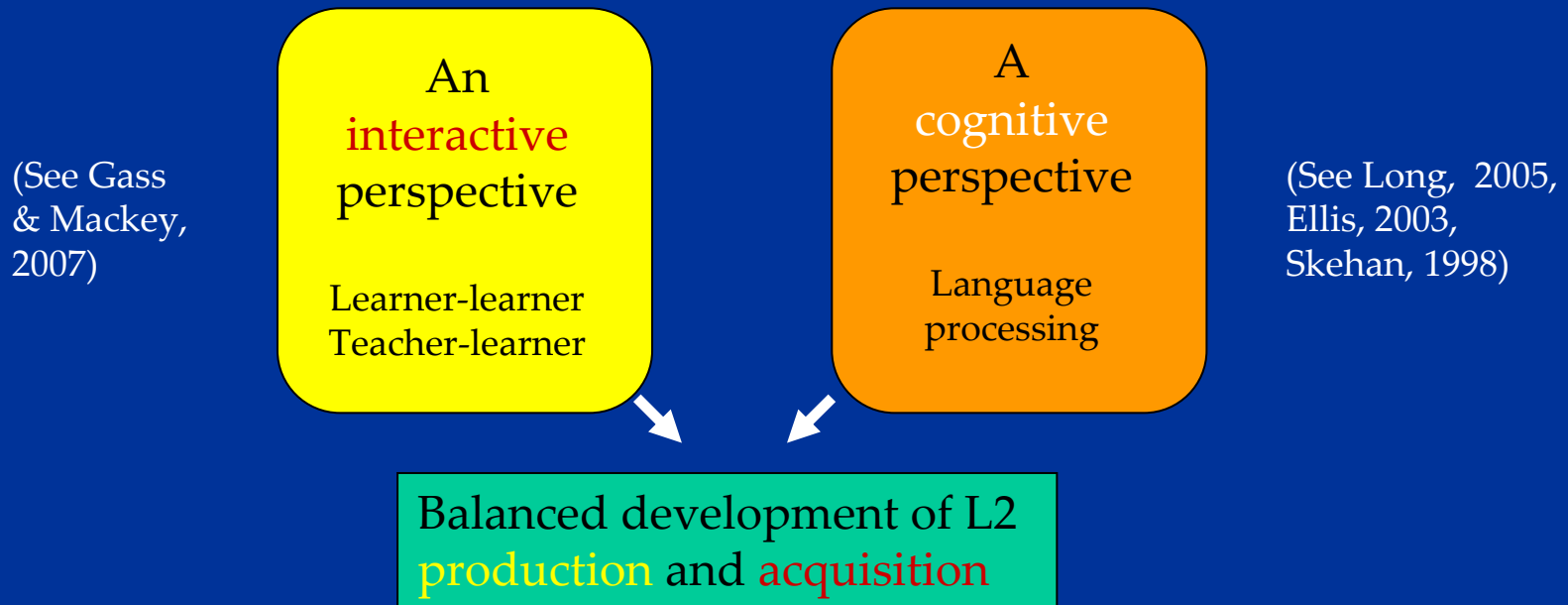
1) Task-approaches and CLIL share common principles:

- They are “**analytic**” approaches to language teaching (i.e. learner analyzes the language)
- Teaching is mainly driven by **meaning** but there is room for “**attention to form**”
- Language learning happens mainly **implicitly**, although there is room for explicit learning.

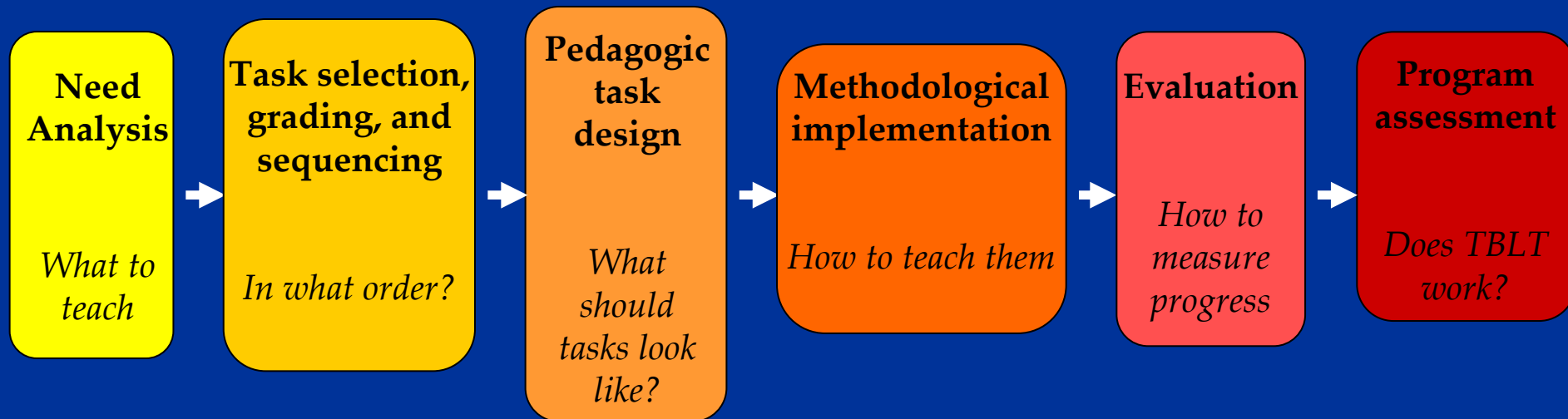
# Some assumptions

2) Evidence from task-based research can be **useful** for and **complementary** to current research into and implementation of CLIL.

In the last three decades...



# TBLT program design



As an illustration of a task-based program:

Blanquerna School of Communication Studies (URL)

(journalism, advertising and P.R. and media studies)

Academic and professional orientation

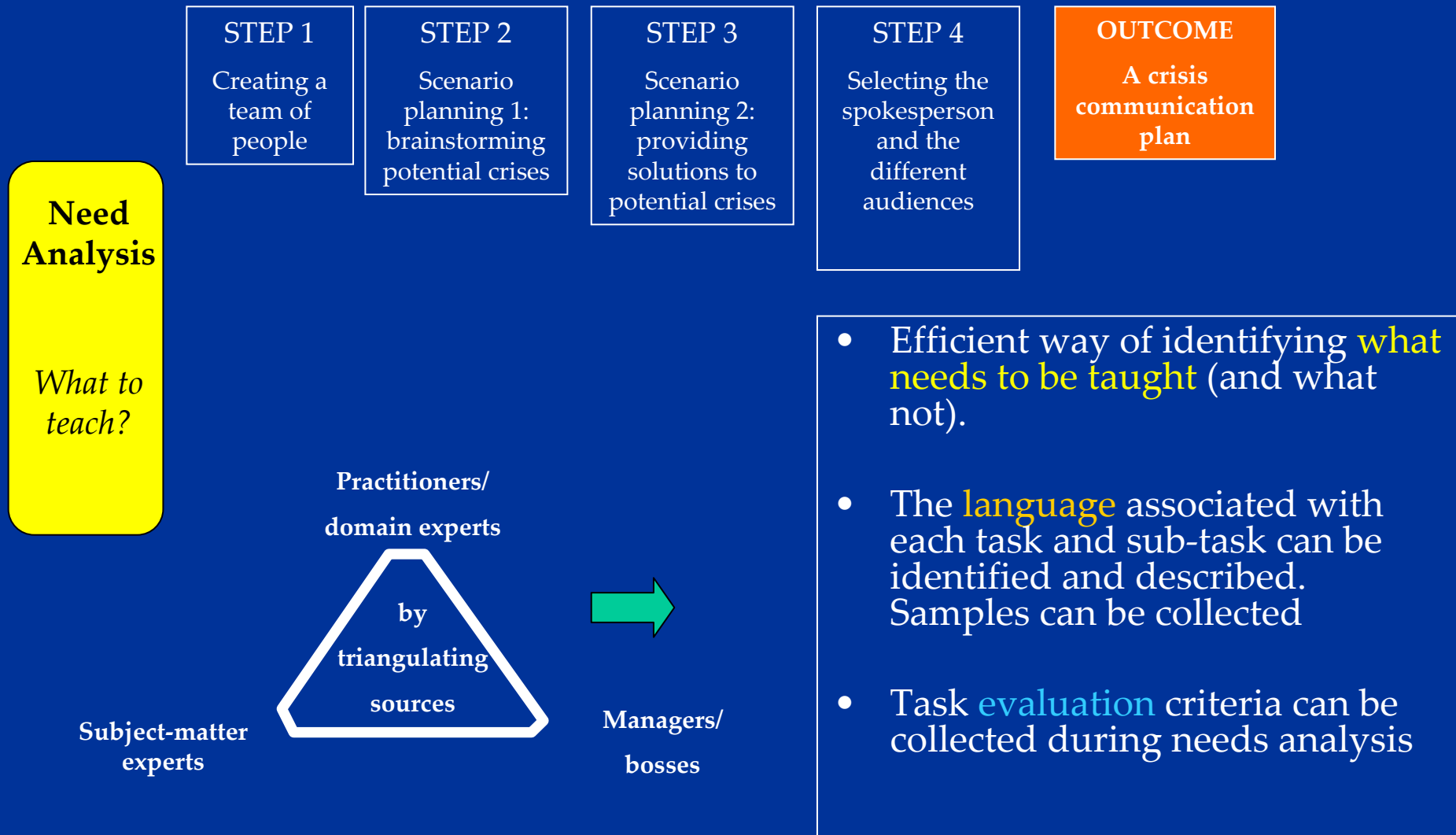
# Task is the unit in all areas of TBLT program design

## A definition

A task is a differentiated goal-oriented process, with a number of steps, which draws on a series of cognitive and communicative procedures, and that has a defined outcome. Additionally, tasks are sequenceable and can be subject to pedagogical intervention.

When organized into a syllabus, their goal is to prepare speakers/learners for real-life performance.

# Task-based NEEDS ANALYSIS has shown that the “task” is a useful unit of analysis: example of a crisis communication plan (P.R.)



# Conclusion about Needs Analysis

- CLIL can benefit from research conducted within task-based needs analysis (e.g. task as a unit of analysis).
- Subjects which are taught through CLIL (e.g. chemistry, physics, gymnastics, etc.) may be described in terms of tasks.
- However, can all subjects be taught through tasks? How do we integrate tasks and texts?



# Traditional grammar-based programs have relied on general consensus to sequence units

## TBLT program design

Skehan (1998): task sequencing by **difficulty**

*language task difficulty learner factors*

balanced  
development  
of fluency,  
accuracy and  
complexity

Robinson (2007): sequencing by **complexity**

*cognitive* *interactive learner factors*

language  
development  
and  
acquisition

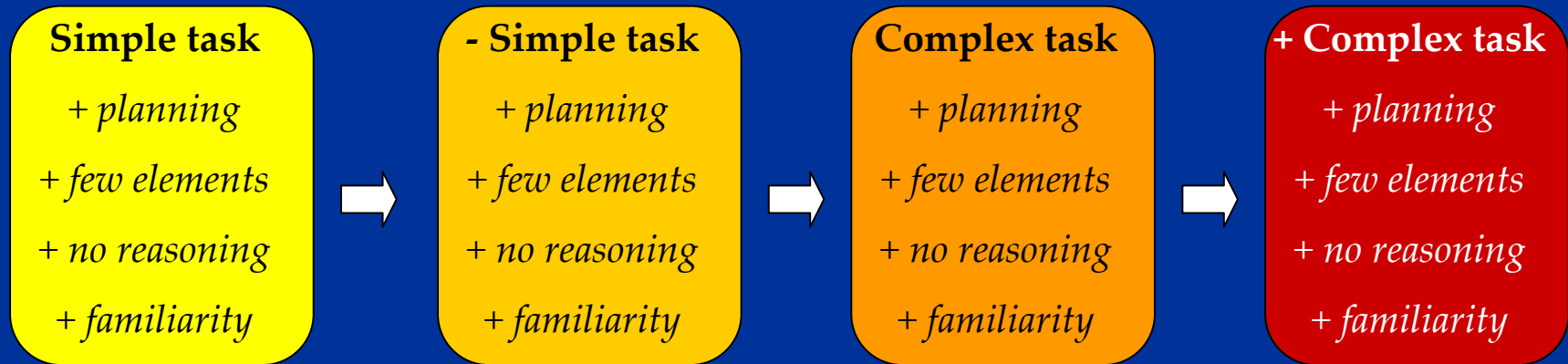
Van den Branden (2006): sequencing by  
**intuition**

*Task sequencing should be decided on  
by teachers*

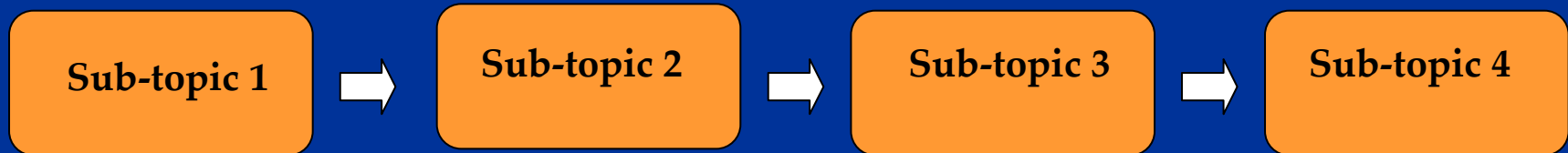
learning

# Current research on task sequencing

## Sequencing by complexity



## Sequencing by topic

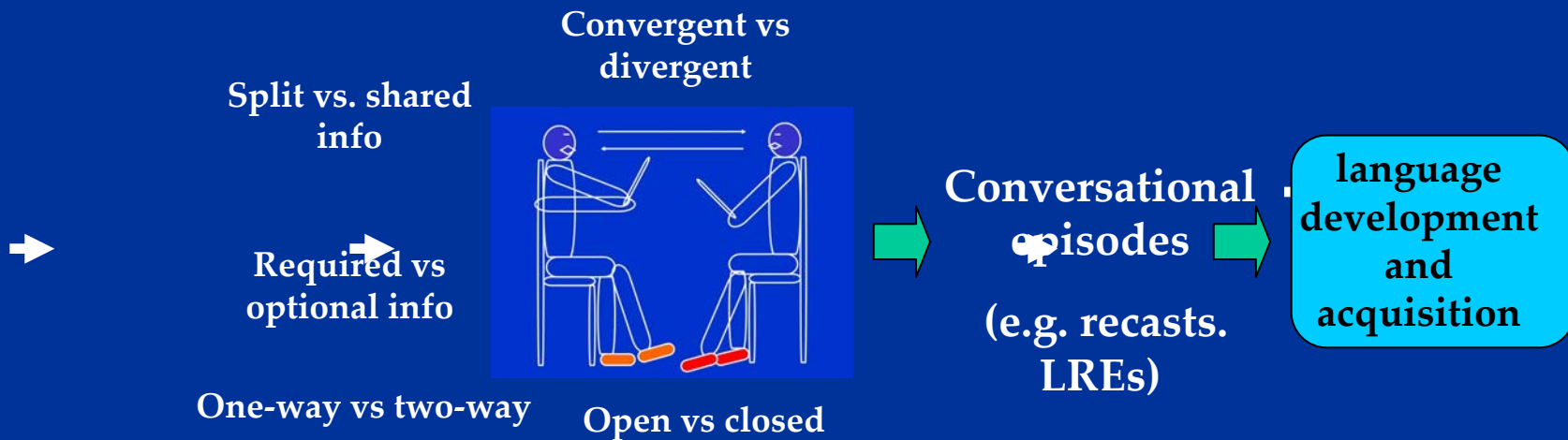


# Conclusion about sequencing

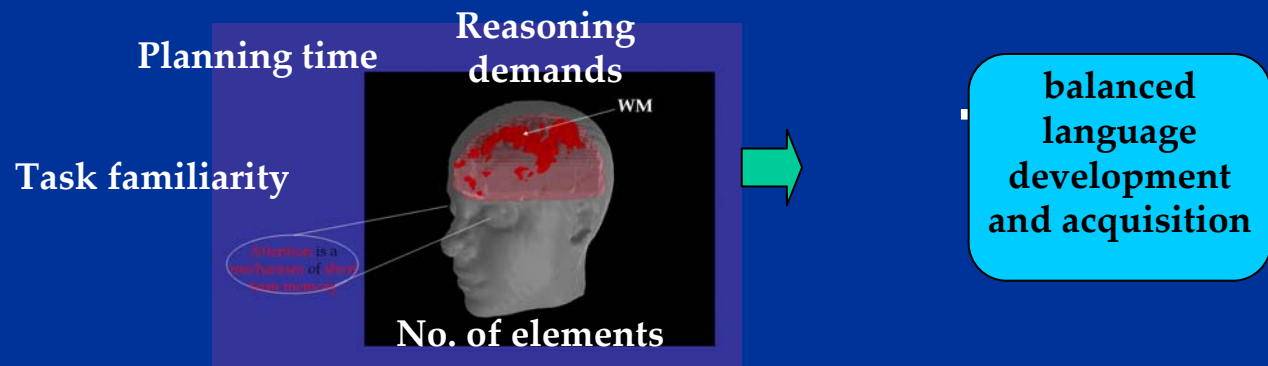
- Research into sequencing is of utmost importance since it may contribute to L2 development (i.e. it may draw attention to form).
- Research into sequencing is minimal. There are many suggestions but very few findings, so it's an unresolved issue.
- What provisions is CLIL making for sequencing content/units/tasks?

# This is the area that has received **TBLT program design** most of the attention

Research agenda interested in how **INTERACTION** may lead to acquisition  
 (See Gass & Mackey, 2007 for a summary)



Research agenda interested in how **COGNITION** may lead to balanced development of fluency, accuracy, and complexity and acquisition

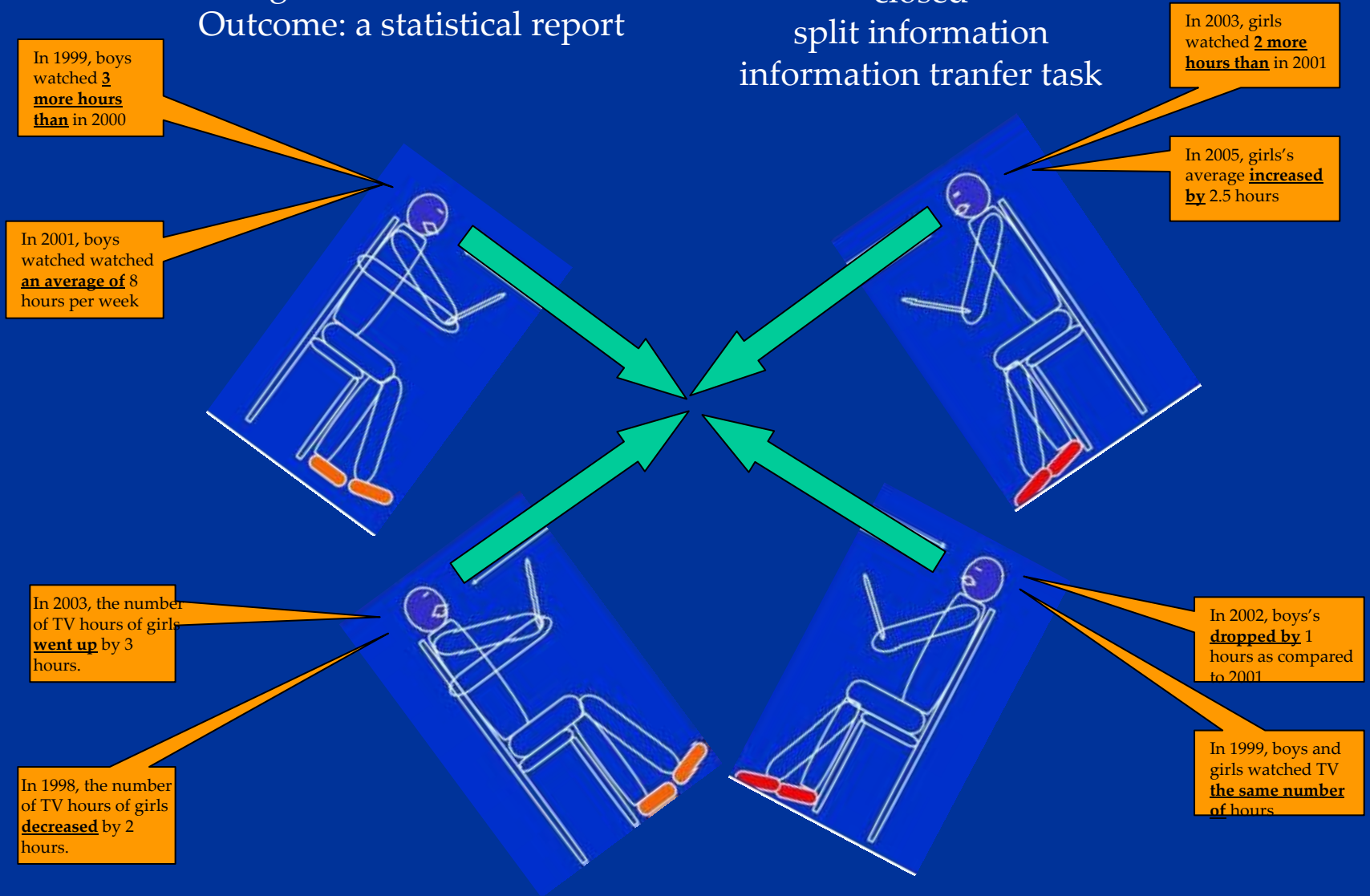


## TASK GOAL and OUTCOME

Goal: To gather, share, and organize information about TV-watching habits of boys and girls around the world.  
Outcome: a statistical report

## TASK FEATURES

multiple-way  
convergent  
required  
closed  
split information  
information transfer task



# Some advantages of such a task design

Evidence shows that:

- Main focus is on processing **meaning**
- It guarantees **balanced participation** of all members
- Certain **linguistic features** can be targetted, so it encourages **focus on form**
- It generates **interactional episodes** (e.g. clarification requests, recasts, LREs) that draw attention to form
- It's **challenging** and **motivating**

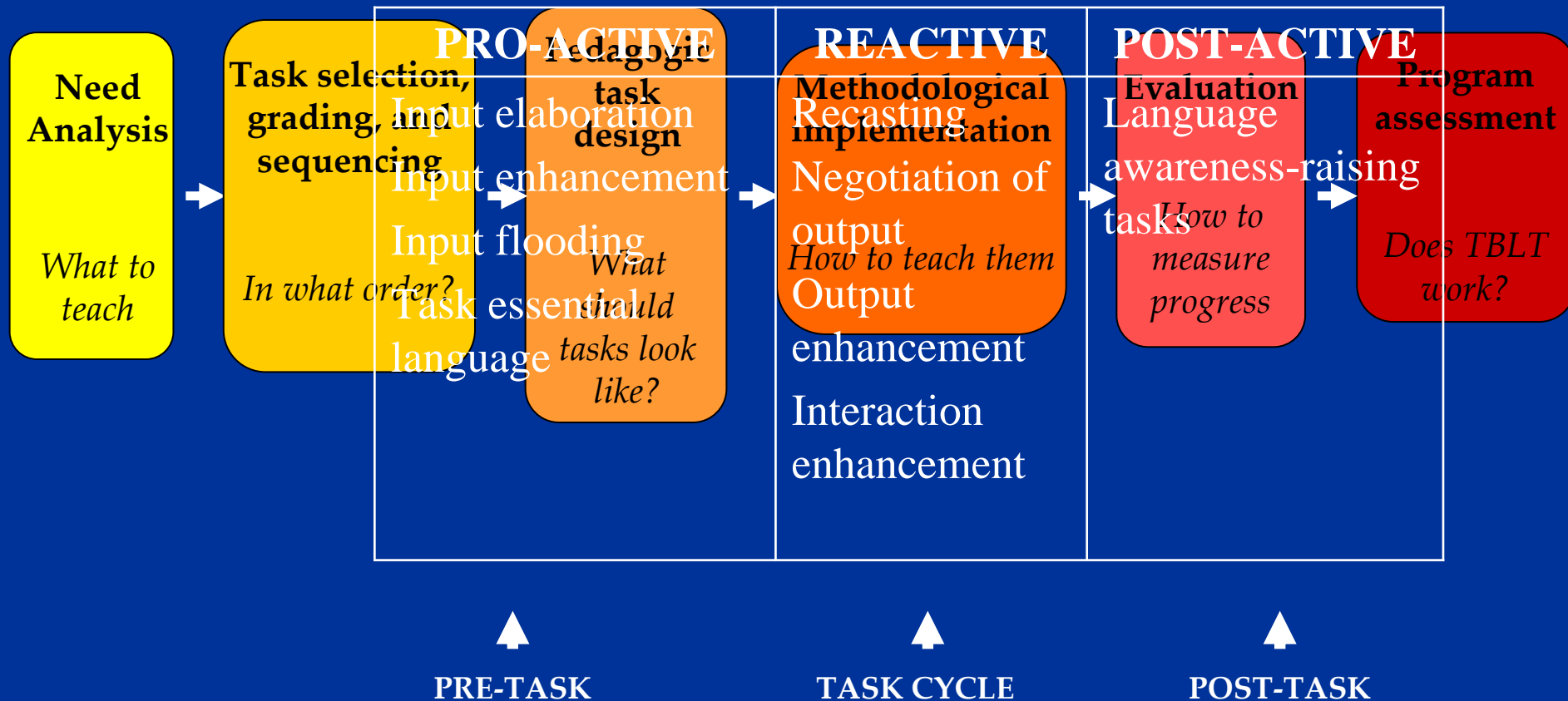
# Conclusion on pedagogical task design

- Research into task design, both from an interactive and a cognitive perspective, can inform material/task design within CLIL by promoting focus-on-form during interaction and task performance.
- Small changes in task design can make a world of a difference.

# This is the area in which TBLT and CLIL most clearly share some techniques

## TBLT program design

focus-on-form techniques





**Methodological  
implementation**

*How to teach them*

<b>PRO-ACTIVE</b>	<b>REACTIVE</b>	<b>POST-ACTIVE</b>
Input elaboration Input enhancement Input flooding Task essential language	Recasting Negotiation of output Output enhancement Interaction enhancement	Language awareness-raising tasks



**PRE-TASK**



**TASK CYCLE**



**POST-TASK**

The story begins when Norman Bates, who is an employee in a motel, is looking through a hole in the wall of his motel office. In the other room, a woman is going to take a shower. She undresses. She then starts taking a shower. She likes it a lot. Suddenly, behind the shower curtain, you can see the silhouette of a person near her. The person pulls the shower curtain

The story begins when Norman Bates, who runs a small a not-very-busy motel, is peeping through a hole in the wall of his motel office. In the other room, a beautiful blond woman, who is a guest at the motel, is getting ready to take a shower. She slowly takes off her clothes. She actually takes off her nightgown. She then starts taking a shower which she seems to

The story begins when Norman Bates, who runs a small a not-very-busy motel, is peeping through (or looking through) a hole in the wall of his motel office. In the other room, a beautiful blond woman, who is a guest at the motel (that is, someone who is staying at a hotel or motel), is getting ready to take a shower. She slowly takes off her clothes (or she undresses). She

The story begins when Norman Bates, who is an employee in a motel, is looking through a hole in the wall of his motel office. (*simplified text*)

The story begins when Norman Bates, who runs (or is responsible for) a small and not-very-busy motel, is peeping through (or looking through) a hole in the wall of his motel office. (*elaborated text*).

horrified when he sees the woman's body. He even covers his mouth with his left hand. Norman pulls the dead woman's body out of the bathtub. He then sees his hands are blood-stained and washes them. He finally mops the floor before he takes her body into the trunk of his car.

is out of) the bathroom. The blond woman is dead. She's laying face down on the bathroom floor. After that, Norman Bates runs down from a nearby house and is horrified when he sees the woman's dead body. He even covers his mouth with his left hand. Norman pulls (or takes) the dead woman's body out of the bathtub. He then sees his hands are blood-stained (or covered in blood) and washes them. He finally mops (or cleans) the floor before he takes her body into the trunk of his car.

The story begins when Norman Bates, who runs (or is responsible for) a small, not-very-busy motel, is peeping through (or looking through) a hole in the wall of his motel office.

**Methodological implementation**

*How to teach them*

PRE-TASK	REACTIVE	POST-ACTIVE
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▲  
PRE-TASK

▲  
TASK CYCLE

▲  
POST-TASK

Corrective reformulations of students' erroneous utterances.

Student: "and then he said he *go* there."

**Teacher:** "OK, and then he said he *went* (with emphasis) do it"  
(implicit)

**Methodological  
implementation**

*How to teach them*

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PRE-TASK

TASK CYCLE

POST-TASK

# Conclusion on methodological techniques

- Research into techniques that may draw learners attention to FORM before, during, and after task performance will be beneficial for both TBLT and CLIL programs.

Thank you !