

TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING

Nilufar Yuldashova

Senior lecturer Journalism and Mass Communications
University in Uzbekistan Tashkent, Uzbekistan
yuldashova-n@mail.ru

Abstract: This article is devoted to the study of TBLT approach and its usage and effectiveness in improving students' productive skills. It also deals with such issues as the definition of a task by scholars, principles of TBLT. Additionally, the article provides a lesson plan with task-based activities to teach students to discuss environment related topics and to write a proposal letter.

Keywords: TBLT, a task-based curriculum pedagogical technology, pragmatically, productive, receptive, oral or written skills, cognitive processes, communicative task.

For the past 40 years, the task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach has attracted foreign language researchers, curriculum developers, teacher trainers, and language teachers' attention around the world. The term was coined and developed by second language learning (SLA) researchers and language teachers, mainly in response to empirical evidence about teacher-dominated and form-oriented foreign language teaching practices.

TBLT (Task-based Language Teaching) is derived from the CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) approach and is a subcategory of it. Teachers adopted this approach for a variety of reasons. While some have moved to a task-based curriculum to develop students' ability to express meaning, others see language in the classroom as truly communicative rather than pseudo-communication arising from classroom activities that are not directly related to real-life situations.

As we mentioned above, task-based language teaching approach has been the focus of attention of many researchers, and scholars have studied and tried to define the task as an educational activity. For instance, Ellis defines it as a plan of action that requires language learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of the correct and appropriate delivery of content. The task requires learners to focus primarily on meaning and use their linguistic resources, although the task design requires learners to use specific forms. The task involves using language that is directly or indirectly similar to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language exercises, the task may involve productive or receptive, oral or written skills, as well as various cognitive processes.

Pedagogically, D. Nunan argues that task-based language teaching has strengthened the following principles and practices:

- needs-based approach to content selection;
- attach importance to learning to communicate by interacting in a foreign language;
- inclusion of authentic texts in educational situations;
- giving students the opportunity to focus not only on the language, but also on the teaching/learning process itself;
- to improve the student's personal experiences as elements that contribute significantly to learning in the classroom;
- connecting language learning in the classroom with real life.

Moreover, S. Izadpanah writes that TBLT is based on the following principles:

- step-by-step learning from simple to complex;
- each task must be based on previous tasks, that is, it represents a chain of tasks;
- regular return to learned language and speech materials;

INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

SJIF 2019: 5.222 2020: 5.552 2021: 5.637 2022:5.479 2023:6.563 2024: 7,805
eISSN :2394-6334 <https://www.ijmrd.in/index.php/imjrd> **Volume 11, issue 05 (2024)**

- systematic study of a foreign language;
- attracting students to active participation in the process of learning a foreign language;
- integrated teaching of grammar and speaking;
- reflective education;
- authenticity (relationship of the studied material with a real life situation);
- person-oriented approach;
- tasks planned and carefully thought out by the teacher, their solution includes the format of dialogue between students.

In the following table some task-based activities are presented:

Bangalore Project	Pattison's typology of tasks	Richards' typology of pedagogical tasks
information gap; reasoning gap; opinion gap.	question and answer; dialogue and scene presentation; matching tasks; communication strategies; pictures and picture stories; problems and puzzles; discussion and decisions.	Jigsaw tasks; Information exchange tasks; Problem-solution tasks; Decision making tasks; Opinion exchange tasks.

In order to improve productive skills of foreign language learners we designed the following task-based activities.

Target Audience and Context: 2 nd year students Learner Level: B2+/C1 Class size: 12-15 students Class length: 80 minutes
Topic: The best Invention Ever (Proposal letter) Objectives: SWBAT 1) discuss environment related topics 2) write a proposal letter Materials and resources: Websites: 1. https://youtu.be/lfiEviiuSvA 2. https://youtu.be/IUoqbk7Yu2Q

Time & Materials	Procedures
	(Important. Both assignments should be given a week ago) 1. Divide students into groups and tell them to prepare a presentation on

	<p>topic “The best Invention Ever” for solving problems related to pollution.</p> <p>2. Give the following links for watching videos on YouTube and tell students to make notes on writing a proposal.</p> <p>a) https://youtu.be/lfiEviiuSvA</p> <p>b) https://youtu.be/TUoqbK7Yu2Q</p>
(50 minutes)	<p>Main Part</p> <p>1. Invite groups to do their presentations. Students should ask and answer the questions and give comments to each other’s inventions.</p> <p>2. Form 3-4 groups of students and ask them to have a discussion on proposal (letter) using their notes that they have made watching 2 You Tube videos at home. Tell them to develop a guideline for writing a proposal letter.</p> <p>3. When students finish the assignment hold a whole group discussion and ask them to agree on one complete guideline.</p>
(30 minutes)	<p>Practice</p> <p>1. Give students the following scenario and ask them to write a proposal letter in pairs using the ideas from the presentations. “Imagine, on social media you came across with a call for proposals on the topic “<i>Save our Planet</i>”. Ecological Party of Uzbekistan is holding a competition to launch a project totally funded by the government. The first stage of the competition is to send a proposal about your invention”.</p> <p>2. When pairs finish their proposal letters, ask them to exchange their letters and review them and give feedback</p>
(10 minutes)	<p>Review & Wrap Up</p> <p>Ask students to reflect on what they have learned after the lesson. Give students feedback</p>
	<p>Homework:</p> <p>Students should rewrite their proposal letters individually considering their peers’ feedback and submit it.</p>

In conclusion, in task-based language teaching, the focus of instruction is on using language to perform meaningful tasks that are similar to the type of activities that students have to perform in real life. In this approach, the correct use of language is important, and while this is expected to develop gradually, the priority is for students to convey meaning in a way that they can understand the intended message despite their limited knowledge of the language.

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