TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND CLASSROOM OUTCOMES

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ABSTRACT

This article explores Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as a learner-centered approach within modern foreign language education. The paper examines the main theoretical principles underlying TBLT and considers its practical application in classroom contexts. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of tasks in promoting communicative competence, learner motivation, and spoken fluency. The study also reflects on classroom outcomes associated with task-based instruction and discusses the significance of TBLT for contemporary language teaching practice.

Introduction

In recent decades, foreign language teaching has shifted from traditional teacher-centered methods toward approaches that prioritize communication and real-life language use. One of the most influential approaches emerging from this shift is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Unlike form-focused methodologies, TBLT emphasizes the use of meaningful tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction. Language is viewed not as an end in itself, but as a tool for achieving communicative goals[1].

The growing interest in TBLT can be explained by the limitations of traditional approaches such as Grammar-Translation and Presentation–Practice–Production (PPP), which often fail to prepare learners for authentic communication. Learners taught through form-heavy instruction may demonstrate grammatical knowledge, yet struggle to use language spontaneously in real situations. TBLT addresses this gap by engaging learners in purposeful interaction that mirrors real-world language use.

This article aims to explore the theoretical background of TBLT, analyze its classroom implementation, and examine the results of task-based instruction in language

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1. Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

learning contexts. The relevance of TBLT for modern educational settings is also discussed.

Theoretical Background of TBLT

Task-Based Language Teaching is rooted in communicative language teaching and second language acquisition theories. Scholars such as Prabhu, Long, and Ellis argue that language is most effectively acquired when learners are focused on meaning rather than explicit linguistic forms[2]. According to this view, tasks provide natural contexts for language use, allowing learners to negotiate meaning and develop communicative competence.

A task in TBLT is commonly defined as an activity in which learners use the target language to achieve a non-linguistic outcome. This outcome may involve solving a problem, sharing information, or making a decision. Key characteristics of tasks include a primary focus on meaning, the presence of a clear goal, and the use of learners' own linguistic resources.[3]The standard TBLT lesson structure typically consists of three stages: the pre-task phase, the task cycle, and the post-task or language focus stage. During the pre-task phase, learners are introduced to the topic and task requirements. The task cycle allows learners to perform the task collaboratively, while the teacher observes and supports. In the post-task stage, attention is drawn to useful language forms that emerged during the task.

Methodology and Classroom Implementation

In classroom practice, TBLT encourages learner autonomy and interaction. Tasks are often completed in pairs or groups, promoting collaboration and negotiation of meaning. The teacher's role shifts from direct instruction to facilitation, monitoring learners' performance and providing feedback after task completion.

Examples of commonly used tasks include role-plays, problem-solving activities, information-gap tasks, and project-based assignments. These tasks are designed to resemble real-life communicative situations, such as planning a trip, conducting an interview, or discussing social issues. Such activities help learners develop fluency and confidence in using the target language.

To examine the effectiveness of TBLT, observations were made during task-based lessons in a language learning context. Learners were encouraged to complete communicative tasks without immediate correction. Feedback was provided after the task, focusing on common errors and useful expressions.

Results and Discussion

The implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching produced several notable outcomes related to learners' engagement, communicative performance, and language development. One of the most visible results was a significant increase in student participation during lessons. Learners were more actively involved in speaking tasks, group discussions, and collaborative problem-solving activities. Unlike form-focused lessons, task-based activities encouraged even lower-proficiency learners to contribute,

2. Long, M. H. (2015). *Second language acquisition and task-based language teaching*. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell.
3. Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

as success was measured by task completion rather than grammatical accuracy alone. Another important result was the improvement in learners' communicative fluency. During repeated task cycles, students demonstrated greater ease in expressing ideas, using longer stretches of speech and fewer pauses. Although grammatical errors were still present, communication breakdowns decreased over time. This finding supports the view that fluency develops effectively when learners are given opportunities to use language meaningfully without constant interruption or correction.In addition, task-based instruction positively influenced learners' motivation and classroom attitudes. Students reported feeling less anxious and more confident when completing tasks in pairs or groups. The collaborative nature of tasks reduced fear of making mistakes and promoted peer support. As a result, learners became more willing to take risks and experiment with new vocabulary and structures.

From a pedagogical perspective, the post-task phase played a crucial role in balancing fluency and accuracy. Analysis of classroom observations showed that focused feedback after task completion helped learners notice gaps in their language use. When teachers highlighted common errors and useful expressions emerging from the task, learners were more receptive to form-focused instruction. This suggests that TBLT does not ignore grammar, but rather integrates it at a more meaningful and effective stage of learning.

Despite these positive outcomes, certain limitations were identified. Some learners initially expressed uncertainty due to the reduced emphasis on explicit grammar teaching. This challenge was particularly evident among students accustomed to traditional methods. However, as learners became familiar with the task-based format, resistance gradually decreased. This indicates that successful implementation of TBLT requires careful scaffolding and clear explanation of lesson objectives.

Overall, the results indicate that Task-Based Language Teaching contributes to improved communicative competence, higher learner motivation, and a more interactive classroom environment. These findings reinforce the value of TBLT as a practical and theoretically grounded approach to foreign language teaching.

Conclusion

Task-Based Language Teaching represents an effective and learner-centered approach to language education. By prioritizing meaningful communication, TBLT helps learners develop fluency, confidence, and practical language skills. The findings discussed in this article indicate that task-based instruction fosters active participation and supports communicative competence.

Despite certain challenges, TBLT remains highly relevant for modern language classrooms. When carefully planned and adapted, it can complement traditional instruction and meet the demands of contemporary language learning contexts.

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