



# Effectiveness of task based learning in the teaching of language

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**Abstract:** Through this study it has been aimed to show how effective is activity or task based learning (TBL). Class activities can be generously used to enhance the teacher- student co- ordination in a classroom and is efficient to boost up the enthusiasm among students. Through this paper the endeavour is to show how communication skills of students can be enhanced to satisfactory levels. With an activity or task the teacher or facilitator engages the students wholly in the classroom. Task-based language (TBL) teaching, also popular as task-based instruction (TBI) , concentrates on the use of authentic language to complete meaningful tasks in the target language. Such tasks can include role playing on topics such as visiting a doctor, conducting an interview, or calling customer service for help. Group activities are very effective to keep the students invigorated. In groups students can work together and help each other and in the process learning gets maximized and the tasks outcomes are very effective. They also create and increase bonding among the students. Audio based tasks can be efficiently used for teaching foreign languages.

Task –based teaching heads onto setting a goal for students and then following with the three steps of pre-task, task and review. The goal can be either a report or a video or presentation. This way the students learn the target topic or language in an interesting way. In task based language learning (TBLL) learning is stimulated and cultivated through a plethora of activities. The students are taught in a non –conventional manner and this way they learn the language in the context of the real world.

**Keywords:** Activities, Task- based, Language, Skill

## I. INTRODUCTION

Task based learning is a teaching approach which focuses on a target language through which students can finish the assigned tasks. TBL can be advantageous in engaging the students to develop their skills on language. The students can achieve their goal by using language as a tool.

Task based language teaching (TBLT) was first used by N. Prabhu, a teacher and researcher in Bangalore, India. He believed that students would learn something better if they conduct that through tasks instead of just concentrating on the language. He is one of the pioneers in the teaching of English language. He had conducted a project in Bengaluru in an Indian high- tech area. The project was headed out with numerous tasks to be completed by students and eventually learn some target language. This project achieved a lot of success and in the process drew a lot of public attention in the field of language learning. TBT can be performed in classrooms by assigning tasks in the form of activities to the students. The activities can range from the solving of simple worksheets of grammar to complex tasks like problem solving, decision making, oral presentation, role playing etc.

## II. DISCUSSION

### MEANING

Task is an activity which is assigned by the teacher or facilitator to the students, which they must finish within a specific time. There has to be a desirable outcome after the completion of the task. Susan Gass, an American linguist has recommended that tasks should be divided into three segments namely pre- task, task- cycle and post – task.

1. Pre-task is the time before the commencement of the activity when the facilitator introduces and explains how to conduct a particular task. This can also be referred to as the stage of acquisition.
2. Task- cycle is the total duration of the task which is actually the body of the task when the activity is performed by the students. This is designed in a manner to create a communicative context. The students should be able to exchange ideas in order to accomplish the given task. Here the learners are supposed to make brief reports and then share their findings with the class.
3. Post task is after the completion of the task when the teacher critically analyses the task completed by students. She may come up by explaining the new words which the students have come across while performing the activity.

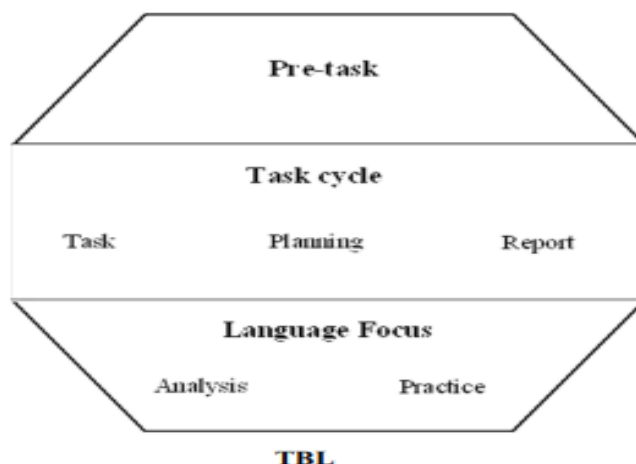


Fig. 1 TBL

### IMPORTANCE

Learning something through tasks enhances the interaction between students and teachers, eventually increasing the performance levels of the students. Learning gets maximised and marvellous outcomes are achieved. The bonding between students also increases as the tasks facilitate the students to exchange ideas and feelings. Most importantly students learn the real life language needs due to the tasks. For e.g. if the task is a mock interview then the students can relate it easily to how to crack real life interviews. Tasks keep the students invigorated. Finally, task based teaching and learning is very effective in learning foreign languages where audio activities can be assigned to students.

Choice of the topics of tasks should be rationally thought out. Through a target task students should be able to relate them to real life situations. They should be adept at handling real life situations like appearing for an interview, preparing a C.V, ordering food online, booking a hotel room etc. Nunan (2004 p. 4) opines that target tasks should not only be restricted inside the classroom but also carried out outside. A task like market survey can be effectively carried outside where students can visit a few houses in their respective localities and conduct the survey. This way they can learn how to interact with and ask sensible questions to future clients.

Willis (1996:35-6) in his book had come up with the following purposes of task based teaching-learning.

1. TBL facilitates learners to use the target language with efficacy and they can use it purposefully.
2. The learners can carry on with several experiments through the tasks and develop their communication skills in the process.
3. The activities help install confidence in the students as they can communicate among themselves efficiently.
4. Tasks make room for the learners to learn and practice negotiation skills.
5. Skills like team building, listening, use of appropriate body language, along with speaking can be developed with expertise through the tasks.

According to Willis (1996) the several kinds of tasks can be audio based, brainstorming sessions, problem solving, listening and so on.

Lopez (2004) had carried on with a project based on TBL where he conducted an experiment in a Brazilian school and as desired he found that the kids reciprocated more towards TBL than traditional teaching methods.

Tanasarnsanee (2002) tried to use the 3ps method (present, practice, production) and TBL approach both while teaching Japanese language where the learners responded more to TBL methods.

### III. ADVANTAGES OF TASK BASED TEACHING

1. TBL enables the learners to showcase their talents and skills.
2. Learners actively participate in the activities and try to share their inputs actively.
3. The interactions among the students help to build excellent bonding among them. Learners supplement and complement each other.
4. According to Nunan (2004), TBL concentrates solely on the communicative part which is an integral part of the tasks and learners get to know authentic texts in the classroom.
5. As TBL focuses genuinely on the communicative part, learners get the opportunity to learn vocabulary.
6. Language use by the learners flows freely and as a result they communicate spontaneously.



TABLE 1 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TBL AND TRADITIONAL TEACHING METHODS

TRADITIONAL TEACHING	TBL
1. Rigid structure.	1. Flexible structure.
2. Topic is controlled by the teacher.	2. Students can control the flow of the topic.
3. Time of response is time bound.	3. Students get the opportunity to explore the various aspects of the task.
4. Classroom is teacher centric.	4. Classroom is student centric and the teacher becomes the facilitator.
5. Learning process is lengthy.	5. Learning takes place spontaneously.

**IV. CONCLUSION**

From the findings of this paper and the class activities conducted by me, it can be concluded that tasks are very effective in enhancing the motivation of learners and TBL methods excellently enhance the vocabulary power of students. The students who are inefficient in communication really open up while interacting in the enjoyable task sessions and eventually emerge out as effective communicators. Through TBLT students can learn the language which can be related to real life situations. Finally to conclude I can say that TBLT facilitates students to communicate effectively and it installs confidence, self-esteem and fluency among the students.

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