

THE EFFECT OF TASK- BASED LEARNING (TBL) APPROACH IN TEACHING LANGUAGE

Sultonov Temurbek Uyg'un o'g'li

Master student of Uzbekistan State World Languages University

*Scientific adviser: **Kattabaeva Dilrabo Kattabaevna***

Senior teacher of Uzbekistan State World Languages University

Abstract: As global language teachers who want to stay up to date with recent developments in education (and also stay competitive when it comes to getting that dream job), we have to constantly evolve as educators and include modern ways of teaching in our lesson planning and our teaching methods. One such method that all EFL teachers should know about is task-based approach (TBA), also referred to as task-based language teaching.

Key words: Language teaching, methods, methodology, communicative methodology, tasks, task based approach, process approach, language learning.

Changes and shifts in language teaching have been present throughout the history of this discipline. At the basis of this apparently unending uncertainty about the efficiency of methods at specific historical moments there is also a permanent search and striving to find better ways of teaching and learning languages, which implies acknowledging dissatisfaction with ongoing methods and procedures. In the second half of the 20th century those changes in methodology were more frequent and pressing for teachers and learners. The need for communication among people of different cultures and languages, triggered by travelling and globalization, puts pressure on people to learn languages more quickly and efficiently. Learning a new system of communication is also substantially different from what it used to be in previous centuries: we have more need to communicate orally (not only in writing and reading) and we cannot wait for years before we engage in real communication. This urgency to learn languages is felt everywhere within society all over the world. The search for new and more efficient methods is a consequence of our social organization and the requirements for fluid communication.

Methodological changes follow each other within short periods of time. Even though the majority of educational innovations end in failure positive effects can be expected from most of them. But it is true that new methods do not appear all of a sudden or disconnected from the world into which they are born. They overlap for some time with current methodological practices. This 'incubation' period is a real test for new ideas: some of them pass the test, others do not. Many discussions, arguments and counterarguments are exhibited in the process. But sometimes what was considered a

decisive gain against existing practices at a given moment, proved to be wrong a few years later, and a new theory or method replaced it in its turn. Once more? Where will the end lie. if there is to be one? The methods which prevail are usually those that are best suited to the challenges, demands and needs of the time.

The Task Based Approach (TBA) must be placed within this context, at the end of the 20th Century. It is not an isolated or 'unique' methodological event. TBA can only be fully understood if you contrast it with preceding methods and analyses it within mainstream communicative methodology.

During task-based learning, students solve tasks that are relevant and interesting to them. In order to solve the task, they need to use the target language they're learning to communicate with their peers. They use authentic language instead of answering grammar or vocabulary questions about the language. Students — especially younger learners — don't actually feel that they're studying a language at that moment because they're engrossed in the task they're working on.

- Task-based learning is especially conducive to group learning. Learning a language as a group is also a very important contributor to effective retention. Collaborating with others and becoming confident with the language within a group is a key step in acquiring that language. Also, receiving positive feedback from peers and teachers increases confidence and motivation to learn and to communicate with others.

- Students' understanding of the language also deepens because the realistic context in which they're learning the language is relevant to their personal lives. It's a good idea to ask your students about their hobbies and preferences at the beginning of a course so that you can include their interests in the tasks you set.

- In addition to the benefits for students, solid knowledge of this method will also increase your job prospects as a teacher. Some job ads specifically ask for task-based language teaching experience!

- The task-based teaching approach is one of many modern [ESL teaching methods](#) and focuses on setting a goal for students — this could be a report, a video, or a presentation — and then following three main steps to achieve that goal.

1. The pre-task

- During this stage, which can take up a whole lesson if needed, the teacher introduces the task to the students and gets them motivated to solve it. Once everyone is engaged, the teacher should explain what is expected for the task.

- Verbal explanations can be supported by an example from the teacher or by showing a previous student's work. The teacher can then give further instructions if needed and offer advice on how to approach the task.

2. The task

- This is the main stage of task-based learning, where students start working on the task, usually in groups or pairs. This stage is done in the target language so that students feel the need to use the language they want to learn in order to solve the task.

- The teacher doesn't usually join in the work process. Instead, he or she will monitor the students and offer hints if students really need support.

- [Find out about teaching English online to groups.](#)

3. The review (or post-task)

- Once the students have completed the task and have something to present, the review stage, also known as the post-task, starts.

- It's a good idea to let students evaluate each other's work and only offer a teacher review of frequently-made errors during the task. Peer correction could be carried out in the form of comments, feedback discussions, or a checklist with additional room for free commentary.

- The review stage offers students the opportunity to reflect on their work and analyze it in order to improve their skills for the future.

The TBA must be included within the inductive methods: learners are supposed to internalize the linguistic system through practice. The Direct Method, the Audio-lingual Method and approaches generically called 'communicative' are also inductive. Much has been written on the advantages or disadvantages of both ways of learning. But experimental research on methods reveals that deductive methods or their variants produce better results than inductive ones. These findings may already introduce a caveat to the TBA. A

second factor that is relevant here is the role of formal instruction in language learning. Process approaches –and the TBA is to be placed within this mainstream- are well known because they stress the role of the students and marginalize or assign a secondary role to the action of the teacher and instruction. In so doing, research on the positive effects of deductive methods is, deliberately or not, simply stranded. Since formal instruction is connected to deductive methodologies, it has to be underestimated, as indeed it is in the TBA.

Since teaching language and developing language skills of language learners by using TBL approach has a significant effect, it is suggested that:

1. English teachers can apply TBL approach to overcome his or her students' problem in teaching language through pre-task, task-cycle and language focus.

2. It is expected that the finding of the study will provide some valuable information particularly for further research on teaching language and developing language skills of the language learners.

The list of used literature:

1. Brown, H.D. 2001. Teaching by Principles An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy. 2nd ed. New York: Englewood Chiffs.
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