



THE IMPORTANCE OF TASK-BASED LEARNING IN DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS

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Annotation

This article investigates the role of task-based learning to improve student's oral communication skills. Task-based language teaching, or TBLT is a method that gives students a genuine context for language use through communicative activities. Nowadays, task-based language learning is rather popular as a component of the broader communicative approach. As opposed to some of the more traditional techniques like grammar-translation or the audio-lingual approach, this emphasizes the need for students to be proficient communicators.

Keywords: task-based language teaching (TBLT), speaking skills, oral communication, tasks to develop speaking, features of TBLT.

A language class that is organized around a task or objective has many advantages. The learning community has been discussing task-based learning since the 1980s. Different people have different ideas about how effective it is, but there is no denying the advantages. Additionally, studies have demonstrated that overall task-based learning benefits kids more than it hurts.

Task-based language teaching, or TBLT is a method that gives students a genuine context for language use through communicative activities. The challenges are designed to encourage genuine conversation in the target language. In the TBLT, students prepare for the task, complete the work, report their findings, and then study the language that naturally emerges during the task cycle (Willis, 1996).

Nowadays, task-based language learning is rather popular as a component of the broader communicative approach. As opposed to some of the more traditional techniques like grammar-translation or the audio-lingual approach, this emphasizes the need for students to be proficient communicators. From the typical presentation practice production kind of class or the test teach test approach, it's a wonderful change of pace.

For big classrooms, task-based language learning can be a great option. If it's a teacher-centered classroom, it's impossible for students to obtain enough speaking time in a class of 20 or more.





To help both teachers and students to practice the speaking skill in their teaching/learning program, they need to be convinced with the importance of the speaking skill as well as to practice this skill in a way far from the traditional methods that compel students to practice the language they do not like in the way they do not like either. In other words, both teachers and students need to teach and learn, respectively, out of the pattern.

The features of language such as grammar and vocabulary support meaning. The use of appropriate sentence structure helps the students understand and respond the message transferred. The communication will keep on going if the students use their sufficient knowledge of vocabulary and their background knowledge of the topic being said. They can develop the topic into many different fields. The students will produce proper pronunciation if they can notice the rules of how to sound the language, for instance, an English word has two syllables, the stress is usually on the first syllable for nouns and adjectives, and the second syllables for verbs. In other words, to be able to speak fluently is not easy[6].

Real life experiences have also proved that human beings learn well when they are involved in the activities they are interested in. Students are not away from such real experiences. Students do not learn by attending classes where teachers fill in their minds with information while they are taking notes, but by becoming involved in the content to be learned. Prensky echoing the views of Dewey and Lindeman among others, asserts that people learning by doing and experience is the basis of all learning. The link between learning and experience is a recurring theme in learning theories [1,3,5].

It takes a lot of effort to learn a new language. Speaking is the language ability that both foreign language instructors and students regard to be the most challenging, hence it is commonly ignored or performed insufficiently in English language classrooms. English language instructors frequently emphasize drills, reading materials, and writing assignments but very infrequently involve their pupils in speaking exercises. Speaking is a more efficient way to learn English than listening or reading is.

Ali Alsagheer A. Hasan on his research namely “The effect of using task - based learning in teaching English on the oral performance of the secondary school students” reviewed several research works to investigate the role of task-based learning in speaking skills. According to the literature review, Torkey conducted a study with the aim of investigating the effectiveness of a task- based instruction program in developing the English language speaking skills of Egyptian secondary stage students [7]. The study provides evidence for the effectiveness of using communicative





interactive tasks in developing first year secondary students' speaking skills. These tasks can increase their motivation and positive attitudes towards learning to speak. Moreover, they help them take risks. As a result, students' ability to speak fluently and correctly increases.

The complete task-based implementation follows certain phases which are pre-task, during the task, and post-task [2].

Pre-task is the initial stage, during which the lecturer presents the subject and provides the students with guidance on how to complete the tasks. The instructor goes over some of the vocabulary that will be utilized when performing the exercises (Frost: 2004). After this phase, the pupils engage in more learning "during the work," which is the next phase. The lecturer's function changes from that of an educator to that of a facilitator. Students work together in groups or pairs to negotiate vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The pupils can practice utilizing the language in brief role plays or little dialogs (Frost: 2004). In the third phase, known as "post-task," the students report to the class as a whole through discussion. The lecturer serves as an advisor, providing input on word or form usage based on context. The lecturer might ask the class to expand upon or repeat the previous assignment.

Each student will be able to share their thoughts and connect with the rest of the class by making comments on probable responses. The teacher's job is to provide input, assist pupils with their expressive requirements, and create a low-anxiety environment [2].

Willis (1996) suggests 6 different types of tasks for TBI instruction. They are as follows:

1. Listing tasks: For example, students make a list of necessary items for a holiday preparation.
2. Sorting and ordering: Students may complete the task in sub-groups choosing the most important items for an ideal holiday and less important thing that may be excluded.
3. Comparing: Students make comparison between the facilities range by two different hotels.
4. Problem-solving: Students read about a problem of a freshman student abroad and present a solution to the problem.
5. Sharing personal experience: Students debate moral values in their community.
6. Creative tasks: Students offer plans for scheduling a university meeting.

Tasks promote language learning by predominantly utilizing the target language for meaning communication. By giving them opportunities to "freely and meaningfully utilize the target language," it helps learners gain confidence [8]. They are free to





combine their limited grammatical knowledge with their current linguistic expertise to complete the assignment, which eventually results in confident usage of the target language. According to Willis, the majority of the activities are taken from common language; real-world tasks and pedagogical tasks are extremely intertwined. It is interesting to learn a language when one has the opportunity to employ one's own knowledge and observations while carrying out a task.

Five characteristics of the task-based approach are listed by Nunan: a focus on communication through interaction in the target language, the inclusion of authentic texts in the learning environment, the enhancement of learners' own personal experiences as significant contributors to classroom learning, and a connection between classroom language learning and language activation outside of the classroom. Therefore, the assignment serves as a facilitator, providing chances and testing language learners at different levels. It also serves as a motivator since it gives learners practical experience utilizing language in the actual world through instructional activities. Pedagogical assignments give students the chance to use language in a real-world setting that is relevant to and combines with their own experiences [4].

Learners communicate and negotiate while performing a task, and they have the power to manage their language. Language is more naturally produced by learners when they are actively involved in tasks since there is less pressure and more room to express themselves.

In conclusion, as the students work in pairs and groups, it is intended that the task-based materials created to help them improve their speaking abilities will yield a favorable response. This will boost vibrant debate, the exchange of ideas, and their confidence. The contents must also be modified concurrently to meet the needs of learners in light of their environments. Learners who practice these tools may think and communicate more creatively and innovatively. A more accurate evaluation of learner performance would eventually result from the development of critical thinking. Therefore, every teacher in the language classroom needs to create and use task-based resources.

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