

TASK-BASED LEARNING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

Eshtemirova Gulsanam G‘ulom qizi

Student of Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages

E-mail: gulsanameshtemirova0@gmail.com

Annotation. *Task-Based Learning (TBL) is a student-centered approach that emphasizes meaningful language use through engaging and authentic tasks. In English language classrooms, TBL fosters communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking (the 4Cs), while promoting learner autonomy and motivation. This paper explores the theoretical foundations of TBL, its implementation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, practical strategies for teachers, and the benefits for both learners and educators.*

Key words: *Task-Based Learning, English language teaching, EFL, communicative approach, learner autonomy, critical thinking, writing skills, classroom strategies.*

INTRODUCTION

Traditional approaches to English language teaching often focus on grammar drills, memorization, and repetitive exercises. While these methods may improve linguistic accuracy, they frequently fail to engage students in meaningful communication or develop higher-order thinking skills. Task-Based Learning (TBL), also known as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), is an instructional approach that addresses these limitations by centering learning around tasks that mirror real-life language use (Willis & Willis, 2007; Nunan, 2004).

TBL emphasizes student engagement, communicative competence, and the integration of language skills in authentic contexts. This approach is particularly effective in English language classrooms, where learners can practice language in purposeful, interactive, and collaborative ways.

Theoretical Foundations of Task-Based Learning. TBL stems from Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles developed in the 1970s, emphasizing meaning over form and communication over rote learning (Ellis, 2003).

Scholars define tasks in various ways:

- Activities reflecting real-life actions (Long, 1985);
- Goal-oriented activities leading to specific outcomes (Willis, 1996);
- Completed work plans that can be assessed (Ellis, 2003).

A typical TBL lesson follows a three-phase cycle: **pre-task, task, and post-task** (Willis & Willis, 2007).

1. Pre-task: The teacher introduces the topic, provides instructions, and activates prior knowledge. Students are prepared for the task with vocabulary, examples, or multimedia input.

2. Task: Students perform the task in pairs or small groups while the teacher monitors and facilitates. The emphasis is on communication and task completion rather than linguistic perfection.

3. Post-task: Students present or report their results, receive feedback from peers and the teacher, and reflect on their performance.

Task-Based Learning in English Language Classrooms. TBL in English classrooms encourages learners to use language authentically. Tasks can include:

- Writing a persuasive email or letter;
- Creating a travel itinerary or poster;
- Conducting surveys and reporting results;
- Drafting a blog post or business proposal.

Benefits of TBL in English Classrooms:

1. Meaningful and authentic language use: Learners use English to achieve communicative goals, enhancing motivation and engagement (Dauletova, 2023).

2. Integration of skills: Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are practiced in context, promoting holistic language development (Bygate, 2001).

3. Critical thinking and problem-solving: Students analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information while completing tasks (Skehan, 1998).

4. Learner autonomy: TBL empowers learners to make choices regarding topic, content, and presentation, fostering self-regulation (Nunan, 2004).

5. Fluency and accuracy: Focus on meaningful communication supports fluency, while feedback and revisions enhance accuracy.

6. Motivation and engagement: Authentic, relevant tasks increase intrinsic motivation and classroom participation.

Implementation Strategies. Teachers can implement TBL effectively by considering the following strategies (Dauletova, 2023; Willis & Willis, 2007):

1. Task selection: Choose tasks that are authentic, relevant, and aligned with learners' interests and needs.

2. Pre-task preparation: Introduce key vocabulary, model tasks, and provide scaffolding.

3. Task performance: Encourage collaboration, monitor progress, and provide guidance.

4. Post-task reflection: Conduct peer review, teacher feedback, and self-assessment to promote improvement.

5. Integration with other skills: Link writing tasks with speaking and listening activities, e.g., presentations and discussions.

6. *Differentiation*: Adapt tasks to accommodate different proficiency levels, offering additional support or extensions as needed.

7. *Authentic assessment*: Evaluate students based on task completion, content, language use, and learner reflection.

CONCLUSION

Task-Based Learning provides a dynamic and student-centered approach to English language teaching. By engaging learners in authentic, purposeful tasks, TBL promotes language proficiency, critical thinking, and learner autonomy. Its structured task cycle—pre-task, task, and post-task—ensures that learners are supported, motivated, and able to apply English in real-life contexts. Implementing TBL in English classrooms not only develops linguistic competence but also prepares learners for effective communication beyond the classroom.

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