

**SOME CONCERNS ON APPROPRIATENESS OF TASK BASED  
LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR MONOLINGUAL CLASSES**

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***Abstract.*** *This study investigates the perceptions of English teachers in a secondary in Mumbai concerning the application of the Task – Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach in their teaching contexts. The research specifically focuses on how teachers perceive the principles and benefits of the TBLT approach, their assessment of potential challenges, and to find the desired factors for the successful adoption of TBLT in their teaching contexts. The study employs an online interview method, which garnered the participation of five teachers who offered their perspectives and beliefs on the TBLT approach. The findings reveal that the majority of the teachers demonstrated a good understanding of the main features of TBLT and exhibited positive beliefs regarding its potential benefits in enhancing learning acquisition among their students. However, some teachers identified managing large class sizes, inadequate teaching materials, and time constraints as primary obstacles to implementing TBLT effectively in their respective contexts.*

**Keywords:** *Language teaching, process approach, task – based language teaching, communicative approach, grammaticality judgment test*

**INTRODUCTION**



Task based language teaching (TBLT) is an approach that focuses on the use of meaningful tasks as the central unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. Unlike traditional methods that often emphasize grammar and vocabulary in isolation, TBLT encourages learners to use the language actively through tasks that reflect real – world language use. This approach is rooted in the belief that language learning is most effective when learners are engaged in authentic communication. In TBLT, tasks are designed to be relevant and engaging, often mirroring activities that learners might encounter outside the classroom. These tasks can range from simple activities like ordering food in a restaurant to more complex ones such as negotiating a business deal. The goal is to create a learning environment where students can practice language skills in a context that is both meaningful and practical.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

By focusing on tasks, TBLT aims to develop learners' communicative competence, which includes not only linguistic skills but also the ability to use language appropriately in different contexts. While task based language teaching offers numerous benefits, it also presents several challenges that educators must navigate. One of the primary challenges is the need for careful design to ensure they are both engaging and aligned with learning objectives. This requires a deep understanding of the learners' needs, interests, and proficiency levels. Another challenge is the assessment of language learning in a TBLT framework. Traditional assessment methods, which often focus on discrete language skills, may not adequately capture the holistic language use promoted by TBLT. Educators must develop new assessment strategies that evaluate learners' ability to use language effectively in real – world tasks. Additionally, implementing TBLT can be resource – intensive. It requires access to materials and technology that support task – based activities, as well as professional development for teachers to effectively design and facilitate tasks. To successfully implement task based language teaching, educators must adopt strategies to overcome the associated challenges. One effective approach is to invest in professional development that equips teachers with the skills and knowledge needed to design and



facilitate effective tasks. This includes training in task design, classroom management, and assessment strategies that align with TBLT principles.

Advantages of task – based learning:

- Student interaction is built in to the lesson, as they need to communicate to complete the task.
- Students' communication skills improve.
- Students' confidence can improve as tasks can mimic real life.
- Students' motivation can improve due to the same reason.
- Students' understanding of language can be more profound as it's used in realistic contexts.

Disadvantages of task – based learning:

- Tasks have to be carefully planned to meet the correct criteria.
- It can take longer to plan.
- It's also time – consuming adapting PPP -style coursebook lessons.
- Too much scaffolding in the early stages can turn a TBL class into a PPP class.
- Students can avoid using the target language to complete the task if:
- Tasks aren't well – designed.
- Students aren't motivated.
- Students are too excited.
- Students feel lazy.

I believe there are more ways for a task – based learning class to fail than a presentation, practice, production class. I'd recommend that a teacher grasp the basics before starting to experiment with TBL classes.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Task-Based Language Teaching is a pedagogical technique employed by instructors of foreign or second languages to involve learners in authentic communicative tasks that simulate real-life language use, corresponding to situations they may encounter beyond the classroom setting (Candlin, 1987). It is an approach to language instruction that focuses on communication and language acquisition through





the use of tasks. As described by Ellis (2003) and Nunan (2004), this method employs various activities or assignments to help learners engage in real-life language use and improve their language skills. A significant amount of scholarly discourse revolves around the definition and categorization of tasks, and these have been extensively examined in works like Van den Branden (2006). Various scholars and researchers have provided distinct conceptualizations of the term "task" in academic literature. According to Nunan (2004), a task can be defined as an instructional activity conducted within the classroom setting, wherein learners engage in activities encompassing comprehension, manipulation, production, or interaction in the target language. Importantly, during the task, learners primarily direct their attention toward conveying meaning rather than concentrating on linguistic form. According to Prabhu's (1987) definition, a task refers to an educational activity that necessitates learners to achieve a specific outcome based on provided information through a cognitive thought process. Moreover, the design - 15 - of the task empowers teachers to effectively oversee and manage the learners' cognitive processes throughout the task execution. While Samuda and Bygate (2008) articulate a task as an all-encompassing activity that incorporates language utilization to accomplish a non-linguistic objective while concurrently encountering a linguistic challenge. The primary objective of such tasks is to foster language learning, either through the process of task engagement or the resultant product, or even through a combination of both aspects. According to Candlin (2001), tasks are perceived as having the inherent potential to exhibit varying levels of complexity for learners, encompassing cognitive load, language intricacy, and conceptual content. Furthermore, tasks may necessitate different amounts of time for completion and can be undertaken in diverse contexts and under various conditions. Within the classroom environment, educators purposefully devise pedagogical tasks aimed at optimizing language acquisition and honing particular linguistic components, as asserted by Skehan (1996). These tasks are thoughtfully crafted by teachers with the intention of fostering language learning opportunities and providing a platform for targeted linguistic practice to enhance students' overall language proficiency. On the other hand, real-life tasks exemplify genuine language utilization in authentic, non-



classroom contexts, as elucidated by Ellis (2003). These real-life tasks constitute an essential facet of language learning pedagogy as they offer learners opportunities to engage with language in its natural, uncontrived form, as encountered in real-world scenarios beyond the confines of the educational setting. Through such tasks, individuals are exposed to a wide array of linguistic expressions, cultural nuances, and communicative intricacies, enabling them to develop practical language skills that transcend mere theoretical knowledge. Thus, the incorporation of real-life tasks in language learning curricula is pivotal in nurturing learners' communicative competence and bolstering their ability to effectively navigate real-world communication scenarios with confidence and aptitude. In the realm of language education, pedagogical tasks frequently adopt a strategy of tailoring language complexity to align with the proficiency levels of learners and meticulously concentrate on designated linguistic aspects, as explicated by Ellis (2009). These carefully constructed tasks serve as a pivotal instructional tool, whereby language instructors consciously simplify linguistic intricacies, facilitating better understanding and assimilation among learners. Through this strategic approach, educators adeptly pinpoint specific language focal points, crafting purposeful learning experiences that enable students to attain a deeper grasp of the targeted linguistic elements within their individual cognitive capacities. Such an instructional approach fosters a supportive and conducive learning environment, effectively catering to learners' diverse linguistic needs and propelling them toward heightened language acquisition and mastery. Real-life tasks encompass authentic language employment in its inherent intricacy, encompassing colloquialisms, idiomatic phrases, and culturally contextual references, as emphasized by Skehan (1998). In this context, real-life tasks represent a pivotal pedagogical approach that aims to immerse language learners in genuine communication scenarios, devoid of artificial simplifications. Within such tasks, learners encounter a rich tapestry of linguistic nuances that mirror the diverse and dynamic nature of language usage in real-world contexts. By confronting the intricacies of slang, idiomatic expressions, and culturally embedded references, learners are bestowed with invaluable opportunities to enhance their communicative competence, grasp social nuances, and effectively navigate the



subtleties of language interactions. This immersive exposure to natural complexity empowers learners to attain a comprehensive and authentic language proficiency that transcends the boundaries of conventional classroom instruction, ultimately fostering a deeper and more profound appreciation of the language and culture under study. In the context of pedagogical tasks, educators furnish focused feedback and rectifications to facilitate learners' language skill enhancement (Ellis, 2003). Within this instructional framework, teachers deliver specific and tailored guidance to students, aiming to pinpoint areas of improvement and offer constructive suggestions for refining their language proficiency. Such deliberate and individualized feedback serves as a fundamental component of the learning process, enabling students to recognize their strengths and areas of development, thereby fostering continuous improvement and mastery of language skills. Real-life tasks may lack immediate feedback or correction mechanisms, necessitating learners to depend on their communicative prowess (Long, 2015).

### **CONCLUSION**

In these authentic scenarios, learners are presented with genuine communication challenges without the readily available support of timely corrections or assessments. Consequently, students must draw upon their own linguistic abilities, interpersonal acumen, and contextual awareness to effectively navigate and engage in real-world interactions. This absence of immediate feedback engenders a sense of autonomy and self-reliance in learners, compelling them to cultivate adaptive communication skills and develop a heightened sensitivity to the nuances of language usage, cultural norms, and social cues in unscripted situations. As a result, real-life tasks foster a deeper level of language acquisition and communicative competence, as learners actively grapple with the complexities of genuine language usage and forge a more profound connection between their language skills and the intricacies of real-world communication dynamics. Pedagogical tasks are deliberately crafted to sustain learners' active involvement and enthusiasm within the classroom environment (Skehan, 1998). This purposeful design of instructional activities aims to cultivate and maintain learners' interest and motivation throughout the language learning process.





By integrating engaging and meaningful tasks, educators foster a dynamic learning atmosphere that captivates students' attention and encourages their active participation. The strategic incorporation of such tasks contributes to a more enriching and enjoyable educational experience, ultimately fostering a positive and enduring impact on students' language - 19 - acquisition and overall learning outcomes. Real-life tasks in language education significantly motivate learners due to their direct applicability and practical relevance (Dörnyei, 2001). As learners recognize that the language skills acquired through these tasks are readily transferable to real-world interactions, they become more engaged and invested in the learning process. The integration of real-life tasks fosters a purpose-driven approach to language acquisition, encouraging learners to view language learning as a valuable tool for effectively communicating in authentic contexts. Consequently, learners develop a deeper appreciation for language acquisition and are inspired to embrace language learning with enthusiasm and commitment. Pedagogical tasks are intentionally organized and regulated to suit the diverse proficiency levels of learners (Ellis, 2003). This deliberate structuring ensures that instructional activities are tailored and customized to accommodate individual learners' abilities, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment. By adapting the complexity and difficulty of tasks based on learners' proficiency levels, educators optimize the learning experience, enabling students to engage with appropriate challenges and attain targeted language learning objectives more effectively. Real-life tasks exhibit a heightened level of complexity and dynamism, demanding learners to adapt their language use adeptly across diverse contexts (Long, 2015). Within these authentic scenarios, learners encounter multifaceted communication challenges that necessitate a flexible and agile linguistic approach to effectively navigate various social, cultural, and situational settings. Such tasks inherently present learners with the opportunity to develop a deeper - 20 - understanding of language's contextual nature, as they grapple with the intricacies of adapting their language skills to diverse real-world situations. The incorporation of real-life tasks in language learning curricula enhances learners' communicative competence by fostering adaptability, versatility, and a nuanced grasp of language



usage, ensuring that they are better equipped to communicate effectively and authentically in a broad spectrum of everyday circumstances.

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