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QUALIFICATION PAPER

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Content

Introduction

The Decree of the President of Republic of Uzbekistan “Measures on the further development of the system in teaching foreign languages” adopted on December 10 in 2012 put some actual problems: in teaching foreign languages, mainly English. Teaching English as a foreign language demands different methods and techniques. In purpose of the cardinal improvement the system of the teaching growing generations to foreign languages preparation specialists, freely mastered them, by introducing the leading methods of the teaching with use modern pedagogical and information-communication technology and on this base of the making the conditions and possibilities for broad their access to achievements of the world civilization and world information resource, developments international cooperation and contacts.

The current qualification paper has a primary aim at attempting to analyze one of dilemmas in the sphere of ELT methodology**;** the effectiveness of using task based learning in teaching English. The problem of using task based learning in teaching English is of great importance. The culture of task based learning are characterized as one of the most effective methods of teaching and learning a foreign language through research and communication, different types of this method allow us to use it in all the spheres of the educational process. They involve activities which focus on a theme of interest rather than of specific language tasks and helps the students to develop their imagination and creativity. The main idea of task based learning is considered to be based on teaching students through research activities and stimulating their personal interest.

The research tasks are set as follows: to describe the principal characteristics of task based learning, to identify the types and to analyze their benefits and peculiarities.

The purpose of the work is to introduce Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT), to carry out the method of TBLT in English classes and to create a real purpose for language use and provide a natural context for language study. Considering the principles of TBLT (i.e., authentic, learner-centered, using

language, intentional and interactive), it seems tasks as classroom undertakings that are intended to result in pragmatic language use. From the current research can be included that each student is unique and will respond well to a particular method. The most effective teaching methods are those that maximize instruction opportunities, keep students actively engaged and minimize disruptions or off-task student behavior. Learn about the most effective teaching methods you can bring to your classroom so your students will work to their highest potential.

The associated questions of the research also set the following goals: to establish effective methods, to structure activities, to communicate the material and to create a dynamic classroom where students will feel motivated to learn.

Besides it, task – based learning of teaching English give special prominence to learners: promote communicative competence, create a meaningful context for language use, increase learning motivation, construct a cooperative learning environment, encourage creative and spontaneous use of language. As result of, many researchers and teachers try to apply numerous teaching methods not only to increase students ability, but also to help them comprehend the academic subject matter at the institute.

Tasks are a central component of TBLT in language classrooms because they provide a context that activates learning processes and promotes L2 learning. It is important to remember that TBLT is an approach rather than a method. It assumes that the teacher respects the students as individuals and wants them to succeed. It also acknowledges that motivation, attitudes to learning, students' beliefs, language anxiety and preferred learning styles, have more effect on learning than materials or methods

The theoretical value of this qualification paper lies in the analysis of task – based learning methods as a methodological problem and in the conducting overview of the learning process nature.

The material of the present work may be applicable at the general courses on Methodology of English Teaching. Moreover, it may be highly useful for elaboration of programs and classes on teaching skills. In addition, it may serve as

a basis for further research what illustrates the practical value of the qualification paper.

The structure of the research is the following: introduction, two main chapters, conclusion, the list of references and appendix.

Introduction states the topicality of the issue, the purpose and objectives of the research, defines the object and the subject of the qualification paper, enumerates methods applied in the process of research, expounds its practical and theoretical value and lays out the structure of the work.

Chapter I outlines task based learning and teaching, task based methodology, and analyze the definition of the TBL. The differences of .traditional classroom and TBLT classroom will be pointed in this chapter.

In chapter II we characterize principles, perspectives and types of task. We analyze peculiarities of the components of the TBL and aassessing of task based learning

Conclusion generalizes the results of the research and summarizes all the information provided in the qualification paper.

List of references comprises bibliography of literature used during the research.

Chapter I. Task based learning and teaching

1.1. Task based methodology. Defying task

Task-based learning (TBL) is an approach to second/foreign language (L2) learning and teaching and a teaching methodology in which classroom tasks constitute the main focus of instruction. A *classroom task* is defined as an activity that (a) is goal-oriented, (b) is content focused, (c) has a real outcome, and (d) reflects real-life language use and language need.

Why are many teachers around the world moving toward TBL? Why are they making the change to TBL? This shift is based on the strong belief that TBL facilitates second language acquisition and makes L2 learning and teaching more principled and more effective. This belief is supported by theoretical as well as pedagogical considerations. In the first half of this introduction, we briefly summarize the various perspectives that have tried to account for how TBL can facilitate L2 learning. In all cases, we present the perspective proposed, the theoretical conclusions based on that perspective, and the way in which tasks are seen to facilitate learning from that perspective.

Pedagogy can be defined as systematic intervention to promote change in students' thinking, knowledge and behaviour. Clearly this requires activities designed to direct learners' attention to relevant areas of knowledge and behaviour, so leading them to review, adds to, reorganize or exercise their current capacities. The idea that intended change can be achieved simply by describing the relevant abilities and bodies of knowledge and leaving learners to work out their own ways of memorizing and using them has long been rejected.

Furthermore, current views on the need for the curriculum to meet students' real world needs implies that classroom activities should reflect those needs. Tasks - defined as "pedagogic activities in which language is used to achieve non-linguistic outcomes but with the overall purpose of improving learners' language proficiency" - are, then, a particularly appropriate tool of pedagogic intervention.

Views on the nature of language offer a second strong theoretical reason for the interest in language learning tasks. Through much of the 20th century, linguists

increasingly came to view language as a complex communication system, involving not only grammatical abilities, but a whole range of dimensions. These include:

- those at the level of broad discourse structures;
- the ability to adjust lexical and discoursal patterns to the social context;
- the more local ability to formulate acceptable speech acts in an appropriate manner;
- the most specific level of acceptable lexico-grammatical and phonological realizations.

Such a view highlights the multi-dimensional and integrated nature of language, resources at one level being used in conjunction with those at other levels. While language is always going to emerge as linear performance, that linearity is now seen as involving the interweaving of choices concerning each of the many levels of language use. In addition, a full account of language is seen as reflecting the fact that it is situated within socio-cognitive contexts - functioning both ideationally and interpersonally.

Such a view places particular demands on language learning activities: it is not possible for activities to concentrate on a single dimension of language; some at least are needed which can simultaneously bring the different dimensions together.

Linguistic and pedagogic thinking then converge in seeing communication tasks as a relevant development within language pedagogy. There is little doubt that the major issue in the area of task-based learning is the relationship between task design and language learning, the question being how knowledge about how tasks work can be used in improving their design and use.

The core concept of TBLT is the task. The definition of a task has evolved over the last 20 years through empirical research in classroom implementation. There are different definitions based on everything from the real world to pedagogical perspectives of tasks. For a balanced view on tasks, the definitions from various perspectives are discussed chronologically.

Definition of tasks

Researchers	Key concepts
LONG (1985)	What people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between?
Breen (1987)	A range of work plans for exercise and activities in language instruction.
Littlejohn (1998)	Any proposal within the materials for action undertaken by the learners to bring up the foreign language learning.
Skehan (1996)	Meaning, task completion, the real-world and outcome are focused.
Willis (1996)	A classroom undertaking for a communicative purpose to achieve an outcome.
Ellis (2003)	A work plan that requires learners to process language pragmatically to achieve an outcome.
Nunan (2005)	A piece of classroom work to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form.

LONG introduces the concepts of tasks, defining (target) task as:

A piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a fence, dressing a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an airline reservation, borrowing a library book, taking a driving test, typing a letter, weighing a patient, sorting letters, making a hotel reservation, writing a check, finding a street destination and helping someone cross the road (p. 89).

LONG's tasks (target tasks) here are very closely related to the real world. Tasks in this definition can be related to tasks that both use and do not use language. Without language use, some tasks, such as painting a fence can be achieved. Nunan (2005) argues that LONG's definition of task does not necessarily involve language use.

The pedagogical and real worlds are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, as

researchers in the TBLT approach claim, there should be some connection between the two. However, tasks which are used in language classrooms need to contribute to developing communicative abilities. Recently, researchers Breen, Littlejohn, Skehan, Willis & Willis, Ellis, Nunan, have become interested in the pedagogical tasks which can work in the language classroom. From pedagogical perspectives, real world target tasks are likely to be too difficult for learners to achieve because of potential semantic, pragmatic, lexical and syntactic difficulties.

Thus, pedagogical tasks should represent a bridge to real world tasks. Breen tries to define task from the pedagogical perspective any structured language leaning endeavor which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task. "Task" is therefore assumed to refer to a range of work plans which have the overall purposes of facilitating language learning-from the simple and brief exercise type, to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem-solving or simulations and decision-making (p. 23).

Breen's definition of task does not clarify how task is different from practices or exercises. It is a broad view. According to Breen, all kinds of activities relating to language learning can be tasks. However, tasks are not synonymous with practices or activities (Nunan, 2005). Thus this definition does not seem to help teachers to understand what tasks are.

Drawing on Breen's (1987) definition, Littlejohn (1998) proposed a broader definition:

> "Task" refers to any proposal contained within the materials for action to be undertaken by the learners, which has the direct aim of bringing about the learning of the foreign language (p. 198).

With this definition, each task can be shown reflecting the three aspects of process, participation and content. Process means what teachers and learners go through; classroom participation concerns whom learners work with in the process. Content is something that learners focus on (Littlejohn, 1998).

Skehan (1998) also synthesized the characteristics of a task: (1) Meaning is

primary; (2) Learners are not given other people's meaning to repeat; (3) A task has some connection to the real-world; (4) Task completion has some priority; and (5) The assessment of the task is in terms of outcome.

Stressing both meaning and form, Ellis also defines task in a pedagogical way. Drawing on research, he recently defined a task as:

A work plan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance direct or indirect to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills and also various cognitive processes (p. 16). Ellis' (2003) definition is very pedagogical because it includes attention to meaning and engagement with grammar in addition to other major points in language teaching, such as inclusion of pragmatic properties, use of authentic language and cognitive process.

Lastly, Nunan (2005) defines task as:

A piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right with a beginning; Nunan's (2005) definition emphasizes the pedagogical tasks' involvement in communicative language use. Nunan views tasks as being different from grammatical exercises because a task involves achieve outcome. There are more perspectives in defining tasks than those discussed here, which come from the different contexts in which tasks are used. Table 2 summarizes the key concepts of other definitions as well as the definitions discussed above. This table includes a

variety of definitions of task, but throughout all definitions, tasks relate to goals reached through active participation of learners.

Considering the principles of TBLT (i.e., authentic, learner-centered, using language, intentional and interactive), the author defines tasks as classroom undertakings that are intended to result in pragmatic language use. Tasks are a central component of TBLT in language classrooms because they provide a context that activates learning processes and promotes L2 learning.

Nunan (2005) suggests the following 8 principles of TBL:

1. Scaffolding: Lessons and materials should provide support to the students.
2. Task chains: Each exercise, activity and task should build upon the ones that have gone before.
3. Recycling: Recycling language maximizes opportunities for learning.
4. Organic learning: Language ability “grows” gradually.
5. Active learning: Learners learn best by actively using the language they are learning. They learn by doing.
6. Integration: The lesson should teach grammatical form and how the form is used for purposes of communication.
7. Reflection: Learners should be given opportunities to think about what they have learned and how well they are doing.
8. Copying to creation: Learners should not only drill and practice what has been written for them, but also be given the opportunity to use their creativity and imagination and what they have learned to solve real world tasks.

1.2. Traditional classroom and TBLT classroom and the advantages of TBL

During the 1980s, CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) was dominant in the field of SLA (Second Language Acquisition). Ellis (2003) argued that CLT has traditionally employed a Present-Practice-Produce (PPP) procedure mainly directed at the linguistic forms of the target language. Willis (1996) states that presentation of a single point of grammar or a function, practicing of newly

grasped rule or pattern (drills exercises, dialogue practice), and relatively free language production in a wider context consolidate what has been presented and practiced, such as a communication task or a role play activity.

However, the PPP approach has its skeptics (Willis, 1996; Skehan, 1996; Ellis, 2003). Willis (1996) points out that "production" are not achieved very often outside the classroom (p. 135): Learners often fail when communicating (i.e., they do not do it, or they do it but not well) with native speakers. Skehan (1996) also argued that students do not learn what is taught in the same order in which it was taught, so the presentation, practice and production of material do not always line up. Ellis (2003) summarizes two reasons for this result:

First, research in the field of SLA has demonstrated that learners do not acquire language the same way as it is often taught, which is presentation followed by controlled practice and then production (i.e., the PPP model of instruction); Second, learners take a series of transitional stages not included in PPP to acquire a specific grammatical feature.

Traditional form-focused pedagogy	**TBLT classroom**
Rigid discourse structure	Loose discourse structure
Teacher controls topic development	Students able to control topic development
The teacher regulating turn-taking	Turn-taking is regulated by the same rules
The teacher knows what the answer is to	The teacher does not know what the answer is to
Students' responding role and performing a limited range	Students' initiating and responding roles and performing a
Students' responding role and performing a limited range of language functions	Students' initiating and responding roles and performing a wide range of language functions
Little negotiate meaning	More negotiate meaning
Scaffolding for enabling students to produce correct sentences	Scaffolding for enabling students to say what they want to say

Form-focused feedback	Content-focused feedback
Echoing	Repetition

These insights from SLA research showed that language learning is largely determined by the internal process of the learner. Skehan argued that learners do not simply acquire language when they are exposed to it. However, the exposure may be "orchestrated" by the teacher. He considers that learning is promoted by activating acquisition processes in learners and thus requires an approach to L2 learning and teaching that provides a context that activates these processes. According to Richards and Rogers, "Tasks are believed to foster a process of negotiation, modification, rephrasing and experimentation that are at the heart of second language learning" (p. 228).

Nunan describes the difference between the traditional classroom and the TBLT classroom based on the TBLT theories. This establishes clear guidelines for differentiating between traditional form-focused pedagogy and the TBLT classroom. Even though this distinction does not always work, it is helpful to understand what the TBLT classroom might be like in Table 1. This distinction between the traditional classroom and the TBLT classroom provides teachers with a better understanding of how TBLT is different from the traditional classroom. provides a context that activates these processes. According to Richards and Rogers, "Tasks are believed to foster a process of negotiation, modification, rephrasing and experimentation that are at the heart of second language learning" (p. 228).

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Task-based learning has some clear advantages:

● Unlike a PPP approach, the students are free of language control. In all three stages they must use all their language resources rather than just practicing one pre-selected item.

● A natural context is developed from the students' experiences with the language that is personalized and relevant to them. With PPP it is necessary to create contexts in which to present the language and sometimes they can be very unnatural.

● The students will have a much more varied exposure to language with TBL. They will be exposed to a whole range of lexical phrases, collocations and patterns as well as language forms.

● The language explored arises from the students' needs. This need dictates what will be covered in the lesson rather than a decision made by the teacher or the course book.

● It is a strong communicative approach where students spend a lot of time communicating. PPP lessons seem very teacher-centred by comparison. Just watch how much time the students spend communicating during a task-based lesson.

It is enjoyable and motivating.

In traditional English teaching, the translation approach, the TTT approaches (Test-Teach-Test or the others) and other approaches were used. Then, English teaching researcher tried many teaching methods. Among them, the PPP approach (Presentation, Practice and Production) is the most influential method. But no matter what method it is, teachers design activities from pedagogical angle, but hardly consider in terms of life.

The role of teacher is just person who inculcates the knowledge but not leader. All the methods more or less make the subject lose its interests; the students’ innovation ability can not be improved as well. As a result, when the students go into the society, they often follow the beaten track and are not brave enough.

TBLT provides a structured framework for both instruction and assessment. Using tasks as the basic building blocks of syllabus design allows

teachers to both sequence lessons and assess their outcomes, while at the same time creating reasonably authentic parameters within which students can communicate with each other for a purpose.

Most importantly, it allows them to focus on what it is that they are saying to each other, rather than on *how* they are saying it. A task may be short and self-contained (e.g., ordering a pizza by telephone) or longer and more complex (e.g., organizing and publishing a student newspaper), but the tasks always involve a clear and practical outcome (e.g., The pizza arrives with the correct toppings, or the newspaper is printed and is recognizably a newspaper).

In a task-based approach, specific language forms should never be the primary focus, because it is important that students be allowed to make meaning in whichever way they see fit, at least at first. Teachers may assist or even correct students when asked, of course, but may not restrict the students' choice of which forms to use by explicitly teaching, say, the present continuous before the task is attempted. A post-task phase, on the other hand, is generally recognized by TBLT practitioners as useful. During this segment of the lesson, after the students have attempted the task, the teacher may choose to go over the language used, correcting specific errors and/or highlighting particularly well-suited forms that students may have attempted to use.

When considering TBLT, it is crucial to focus on the fundamental notion of authenticity, as tasks attempt to simulate, in a way that is as authentic as possible, what happens when students attempt real-world activities.

This has several advantages:

- Authentic tasks are intrinsically motivating. That is, students attempt them because they see that the task is, in itself, interesting and applicable to their lives.
- Targeted real-world tasks have much clearer outcomes that can be more easily assessed, unlike more general, or "open," tasks such as having a conversation. For example, when a person attempts to order a pizza on the

telephone in a second language, that person knows if he or she has "passed" or "failed" within a very short time—when the pizza does or does not arrive, with the correct toppings or not.

- Real-world activities can be looked at and sequenced in much the same way as grammar forms can—from simpler to more complex. For instance, ordering from a menu at a restaurant is easier than ordering by telephone for several reasons—students can use gestures, text and sometimes pictures; there is less information to convey (e.g., no address or credit card number); students may resort to single-word utterances. In the same way, telling a story is more complex than both examples above, because students now need to use connected sentences, time markers, pronouns and so on. It can be reasonably assumed that a student who can tell a story in English can also telephone for a pizza or order at a restaurant (but not vice-versa), in much the same way as we can reasonably assume that a student who can use conditionals can also use the present continuous (but again, not vice-versa).

Therefore, when a series of connected, themed tasks are sequenced in such a way as allows students to simulate a real-world context and perform at an increasing level of complexity, a variety of benefits occur. These include a purpose-driven recycling of vocabulary and language forms, a heightened sense of overall motivation, a marked increase in communicative confidence, scaffolded autonomy-building and a truly student-centered classroom. Much of the language learning thus occurs implicitly, as *noticing* on the part of the student, rather than as *explaining* on the part of the teacher.

It has been argued that TBLT may not be the best way to develop basic language skills in the lowest ability levels, nor for very young learners. Because ours is a "strong" approach to TBLT, we generally agree with this perspective. Although many textbooks on the market today claim to be task-based, and are targeted across many levels including children and beginners, we should stress that these are, almost without exception, and often admitted to by the authors, a

“weak” approach to TBLT. In other words, they make compromises with some of the tenets of TBLT in order to target children and beginners, especially by providing language-based activities such as embedded grammar points. We do not find fault with this practice beyond simply articulating the fact that these are not, strictly speaking, task-based courses. In fact, we think that many of these courses are very well designed in their own right and serve their purposes well.

We believe that a strong TBLT approach is built squarely upon a foundation of authenticity. Tasks must be as realistic as possible in order to engage students so that their meaning-making is also as authentic as it can be. A “weak” approach may be effective in an ESL environment, since the forms students learn in class may be authentically used outside the classroom almost immediately. In an EFL environment, however, such opportunities are usually limited, and therefore the more authenticity created *inside* the classroom, the better. For this to happen, tasks must not simply be authentic in their own right, but they must be authentically linked to each other as well, thus creating a sustained authenticity which allows for the recycling and reinforcement of the language forms used.

Chapter II. Perspective and types of task

2.1 Perspectives and principles of Task based learning teaching

Task-based learning (TBL) is an approach to second/foreign language (L2) learning and teaching and a teaching methodology in which classroom tasks constitute the main focus of instruction (R. Richards, Schmidt, Platt, & Schmidt, 2003). A *classroom task* is defined as an activity that

(a) is goal-oriented,

(b) is content focused,

(c) has a real outcome, and

(d) reflects real-life language use and language need (for a review, see Shehadeh, 2005).

The syllabus in TBL is organized around activities and tasks rather than in terms of grammar or vocabulary (R. Richards et al., 2003).

Why are many teachers around the world moving toward TBL? Why are they making the change to TBL? This shift is based on the strong belief that TBL facilitates second language acquisition (SLA) and makes L2 learning and teaching more principled and more effective. This belief is supported by theoretical as well as pedagogical considerations. In the first half of this introduction, we briefly summarize the various perspectives that have tried to account for how TBL can facilitate L2 learning. In all cases, we present the perspective proposed, the theoretical conclusions based on that perspective, and the way in which tasks are seen to facilitate learning from that perspective. They are:

1. The input prespective
2. The output prespective
3. The cognitive prespective
4. The sociocultural prespective
5. The research – practice interface prespective
6. Th student autonomy and student - centered intraction prespective

According to the input perspective, interaction provides learners with an opportunity to receive feedback on the level of their comprehension in the L2, which results in negotiated modification of conversation with their speech partners that leads to comprehensible input, which, in turn, is necessary for SLA (e.g., Krashen, 1998; Long, 1996).

Likewise, negotiation serves to draw learners' attention to the formal properties of the target language (i.e., to focus their attention on form) as they attempt to produce it. Learners' noticing of and paying attention to linguistic form is also a necessary requirement for L2 learning (Long, 1998; Schmidt, 1998).

Therefore, it can be concluded that negotiation of meaning and modification of input are necessary for L2 learning. How do tasks facilitate L2 learning according to this perspective? Research has shown that they provide learners with excellent opportunities for negotiating meaning, modifying input, and focusing on the formal properties of the L2 (e.g., Ellis, Tanaka, & Yamazaki, 1994; see also Ellis, 2003).

According to Swain (1995, 1998, 2000), learner output plays an important role in the acquisition process because it (a) forces learners to move from semantic to more syntactic analysis of the target language (TL), (b) enables them to test hypotheses about the TL, and (c) helps them consciously reflect on the language they are producing. All of which makes it possible for learners to notice a gap between what they want to say in the L2 and what they can say, which prompts them to stretch their current interlanguage capacity in order to fill the gap.

This represents "the internalization of new linguistic knowledge, or the consolidation of existing knowledge" (Swain & Lapkin, 1995, p. 374). In other words, output presents learners with unique opportunities for active deployment of their cognitive resources (Izumi, 2000).

Learner output is not just a sign of acquired knowledge, but also a sign of learning at work (Swain, 1998, 2000). Research has shown that tasks provide

learners with an excellent opportunity to modify their output in order to make it more comprehensible (e.g., Iwashita, 1999; Shehadeh, 2001, 2003, 2004).

The cognitive perspective on L2 learning stipulates that learner performance has three basic aspects: fluency, accuracy, and complexity. *Fluency* refers to the learner's capacity to communicate in real time, *accuracy* to the learner's ability to use the TL according to its norms, and *complexity* to the learner's ability to use more elaborate and complex TL structures and forms (Skehan, 1998, 2003). These three aspects can be influenced by engaging learners in different types of production and communication. To do so, it is necessary to identify what task types, variables, and dimensions promote fluency, accuracy, and complexity in L2 learners and use them accordingly.

These three aspects of learner performance are important for both effective communication (fluency and accuracy) and progress and development (complexity) of the L2 (Skehan, 1998).

Research has shown that task-based instruction can promote fluency, accuracy, and complexity in learners (Ellis, 2005b). For instance, if a teacher wants to promote fluency, he or she engages learners in meaning-oriented tasks; and if the goal is to promote accuracy or complexity, the teacher engages learners in more form-focused tasks.

According to Vygotsky (Rieber & Carton, 1987), external activities that learners participate in are the main source of mental and cognitive activities. When individuals interact, their cognitive processes awaken. These processes, which occur on the interpsychological (or social) plane, include both cognitive and language development.

The language development moves from the intermental plane to the intramental plane on the assumption that what originates in the interpsychological sphere will eventually be represented intrapsychologically, that is, within the individual. In other words, external activities are transformed into mental ones through the processes of approximation and internalization. With respect to L2 learning, this means that learners collaboratively construct knowledge as a

joint activity.

This co-construction of knowledge engages learners in cognitive processes that are implicated in L2 learning. Thus, social interaction mediates learning, as explained by Ellis (2000): “Learners first succeed in performing a new function with the assistance of another person and then internalise this function so that they can perform it unassisted” (p. 209), a process often referred to as *scaffolding.* Collaborative construction of knowledge in a joint activity is an important source of L2 learning.

Research has shown that tasks are successfully accomplished by learners as a joint activity and that this process of joint accomplishment indeed contributes to L2 learning (e.g., Lantolf, 1996; LaPierre, 1994). Also, studies have shown that jointly performed tasks enable students to solve linguistic problems that lie beyond their individual abilities (Swain & Lapkin, 1998).

Tasks have attracted both researchers and teachers: Researchers use them as a research tool to collect and analyze learner data and learner language (so that they can make principled conclusions on how languages are learned), and teachers use them as a teaching tool.

These two groups have worked pretty much independently in the past, with little or almost no cooperation. However, with TBL there are now more serious attempts to make pedagogical decisions to use tasks as a teaching tool based on insights gained from tasks used as a research tool (see, e.g., Ellis, 2003; Van den Branden, 2006b).

> With task-based learning and instruction, there is now more collaboration between researchers and teachers. In fact, tasks and TBL have brought researchers and teachers, and by implication, learning and teaching, closer together than ever before, which makes L2 learning and teaching more principled and more effective (see also Samuda & Bygate, 2008).

Recent approaches to L2 teaching methodology emphasize student autonomy and student-centered instruction as effective ways of learning. This is

because (a) students take much of the responsibility for their own learning;
(b) they are actively involved in shaping how they learn;

(c) there is ample teacher-student and student-student interaction;

(d) there is an abundance of brainstorming activities, pair work, and small-group work;

(e) the teacher's role is more like a partner in the learning process, an advisor, and a facilitator of learning than an instructor or lecturer who spoon-feeds knowledge to learners (see, e.g., Edwards & Willis, 2005; Mayo, 2007).

Therefore, internally driven devices, as opposed to external techniques (e.g., self-noticing) and external feedback (e.g., clarification requests), must be encouraged in the L2 classroom because strong empirical evidence suggests that internal attention-drawing devices are more facilita- tive of L2 learning than external attention-drawing techniques (Izumi, 2002; Shehadeh, 2004).

Task-based instruction is an ideal tool for implementing these principles in the L2 classroom.

For instance, research has shown that task-based pair and group activities that are generated by students or are sensitive to students' preferences ensure not only that students take responsibility for much of the work but also that students have greater involvement in the learning process.

At the same time, such activities free the teacher to focus on monitoring students and providing relevant feedback (e.g., Shehadeh, 2004).

There is no wonder, therefore, that many teachers around the world are moving toward TBL; that task-based pair work and group work are now considered standard teaching and learning strategies in many language classrooms around the world; and that many publications, symposiums, seminars, colloquiums, academic sessions, and even whole conferences are specifically devoted to TBL.

In order for task-based language teaching to be effectively implemented in the classroom, it is important to activate a number of key principles. These are *scaffolding*, *task dependency*, *recycling*, *active learning*, *integration of form and*

function, reproductive and creative language use, and *the place of reflective learning*.

Scaffolding	a supporting framework
Task dependency	linking and building one task to another
Recycling	reintroducing language items
Active learning	acquiring language through using it
Integration of form and function	showing the relationship between form and meaning
Reproductive and creative language use	graduating from copying language to creating language by oneself
The place of reflective learning	asking "why are we doing this" to provide insight into the learning process

Scaffolding principle. A 'scaffold' is a supporting framework. An important function of the classroom is that it should provide a supporting framework within which learning can take place. Scaffolded learning can take many forms. For example, you might pre-teach some key vocabulary items needed during a listening or reading lesson. Alternatively, you might do some brainstorming to remind learners of what they already know of a topic before a lesson on that topic.

Scaffolding is particularly important in task-based language teaching because learners may encounter holistic 'chunks' of language, some of which may be beyond their proficiency level. The scaffolded learning will provide the learners with reassurance and support, and will build confidence and enhance motivation.

The following task is an example of scaffolding. It occurs at the beginning of a listening lesson in which students will identify personal qualities necessary for particular occupations. The task provides a context for the lesson and pre-teaches some of the key adjectives that the learners will encounter in the lesson.

Task dependency principle. Within a lesson, tasks should be linked together so that succeeding tasks build on and exploit the ones before. Through this principle, learners are led step-by-step through the learning process. A task-based lesson should lead the learners to the point where they can do something new with the language they are learning.

Within the task-dependency framework, a number of other principles are in operation. One of these is the receptive-to-productive principle. At the beginning of the instructional cycle, learners should spend a greater proportion of time engaged in *receptive tasks* (listening and reading) than in *productive tasks* (speaking and writing). Later in the cycle the proportion changes, and learners spend more time in productive work. In the following task, learners are required to produce language that they encountered receptively earlier in the lesson.

Recycling Principle The analytical approach is based on the assumption that learning is not an all-or-nothing process – that learning is piecemeal and inherently unstable (Nunan, 1999). If it is accepted that learners will not achieve 100% mastery the first time they encounter a particular piece of language, then it follows that they need to be reintroduced to these items over a period of time.

This recycling allows learners to encounter target language items in a range of different contexts. In this way they will see how a particular item functions in conjunction with other closely related items in a linguistic 'jigsaw puzzle'. They will also see how it functions in relation to different content areas. For example, they will come to see how 'expressing likes and dislikes' and 'yes/no questions with do/does' function in a range of content areas, from the world of entertainment to the world of food.

Active learning principle. Fundamental to task-based teaching is the idea that learners acquire language through using it. A key principle behind this concept

is that *learners learn best through doing*. When applied to language teaching, this suggests that most class time should be devoted to opportunities for learners to use the language rather than listening to the teacher talk. These opportunities can range from practicing memorized dialogues to completing a table or chart based on some listening input. The key point, however, is that the learner (not the teacher) is doing the work. This is not to suggest that there is no place at all for teacher explanation but that teacher-focused work should not dominate class time.

Integration principle. This principle is somewhat controversial. It is disputed by some proponents of a 'strong' interpretation of task-based language teaching. (To review 'strong' and 'weak' interpretations, please revisit Lesson 2.) It argues that language teaching should show learners the relationship between form and meaning.

In synthetic approaches the linguistic elements (the grammatical, lexical and phonological components) are taught separately and one-by-one. The problem for the learners is learning how to put these various elements together for effective communication.

When communicative language teaching emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, some language specialists argued that a focus on form was unnecessary and that all learners needed were opportunities to communicate in the language.

This led to a split between proponents of *form-based instruction* and proponents of *meaning-based instruction*. Proponents of meaning-based instruction argue that, while a mastery of grammar is fundamental for effective communication, this can be achieved by the learners subconsciously, and an explicit focus on form is unnecessary for language acquisition.

However, proponents of a 'weak' interpretation of task-based language teaching (and I would count myself among them) have argued that the challenge for language teachers is to show learners the systematic relationships between grammatical form and communicative meaning.

Reproduction to creation principle. Reproductive language work requires learners to reproduce language models provided by the teacher, the textbook or audio. These tasks are designed to give learners initial mastery of target language items. The following extract exemplifies reproductive language work.

While such practice provides a basis for language development, it doesn't go far enough. Learners should be encouraged to move from reproductive to creative language use. In creative tasks, learners recombine familiar elements in novel ways. This principle can be deployed with students at intermediate levels and above as well as with beginners if the process is carefully sequenced. The task below shows how learners can move from reproductive dialogue practice to creative language use.

Reflection Principle. In task-based language teaching, the focus is not only on language but also on the learning process (Reid, 1995; Christison 2003). Learners should be given opportunities to look back on what they have learned and think about how well they are doing.

This is particularly important for learners who have done most of their learning in 'traditional' classrooms. For such learners, task-based language teaching can be mystifying and even alienating, leading them to ask 'Why are we doing this?' Adding a reflective element to teaching can help learners see the rationale for the new approach.

2. 2. The components of the TBL

The task-based learning framework basically consists of three phases; pre-task, task cycle and language focus. The pre-task phase introduces the class to the topic and the task by activating topic-related words and phrases. The task cycle offers learners the chance to use whatever language they already know in order to carry out the task, and then to improve that language. Exposure to language can be provided at different stages, depending on the type of task. The last phase in the framework, language focus, allows a closer study of some of the specific features naturally occuring in the language used during the task cycle. It includes analysis

and practice components and serves the purpose most PPP concepts rely on - explicit study of language form.

The components within each phase of the framework provide a naturally flowing sequence, each one preparing the ground for the next. Let us now take a closer look at each of the individual steps of a task-based learning cycle.

The pre-task phase is usually the shortest stage in the framework. It can last between two and twenty minutes, depending on the learners' familiarity with the topic and the type of task.

At first, learners have to be given a definition of the topic area. They may, especially if they come from other cultures, hold different views on what some topics are about. To make the learners then ready for the task, words and phrases that might be useful have to be recalled. This can be done in a number of ways.

According to Willis, pre-task activities to explore topic language "should actively involve all learners, giving them relevant exposure, and [] create interest in doing a task on this topic" (Willis, 43). One way of doing this is by classifying words and phrases connected with the topic. Playing "Odd one out", where an item that does not fit in a set of related words or phrases has to be found, or matching phrases to pictures are also useful techniques. In some classes, drawing mind-maps might help learners to become familiar with the topic area.

The third step in the pre-task phase is to ensure that all learners understand what the task involves, what its goals are and what outcome is required. Apart from mere explaining the task, the teacher can show the class what previous learners have achieved or demonstrate the task with a good learner.

The task – cycle. After working hard to set the scene in the introduction phase, the teacher now in the task stage acts as an observer monitoring what is going on in the classroom and acts as a time keeper. He should make sure that all groups are doing the right task and that really all the learners take part. As a passive observer, he ought to be forgiving about errors of form and should only interrupt and help if there is a major communication break-down.

The task component helps learners to develop fluency in the target language and strategies for communcation. The main focus lays on the meaning which has to be conveyed. Through tasks, learners may well become better communicators and learn new words and phrases but it is often argued that this does not necessarily streches the learners' language development or help with internalisation of grammar.

This is supplied by the report stage, where learners naturally aim for accuracy and fluency. It gives them a natural stimulus to upgrade and improve their language. In fact, it is a real linguistic challenge - namely to communicate clearly and in accurate language appropriate to the circumstances.

In the task phase, when they speak in real time, learners just tack words and phrases together in a more or less improvised fashion. In planning their report, in contrast, they have to create a comprehensive and compact summary of what has happened with the support of their group, the teacher, dictionaries and grammar books. The teacher's main role now is that of a language adviser, helping learners to shape their meanings and to express exactly what they want to say. He ought to comment on good points and creative use of language and should, if learners ask to be corrected, point out errors selectively - most important are those which obscure the meaning. For other errors of form, learners should try to correct each other.

The report stage, Willis points out, then probably presents "slightly less of a learning opportunity than the planning stage" (Willis, 58). But without the report, the learning process of planning, drafting and rehearsing would not happen. Learners naturally feel curious what their colleagues have achieved during the task and actively join in the report stage. A report might last as little as 30 secondes or up to two minutes. Of course, also the reports are bound to strange wordings and grammatical errors. What must be taken into consideration, however, is that learners here offer the best language they can achieve at that moment, given the linguistic resources and time available. During the report stage, the teacher acts as a chairperson, introducing the presentations, deciding who speaks next and

summing up at the end. He ought to keep an eye on the time and stop the report stage when it becomes repetetive.

Giving reports can be done orally or by writing. Audio and video presentations can be included and a number of media should be used to make the reports as interesting and vital as possible. If feedback is given by the teacher, it should be tactfully and positively. Whenever possible, learners ought to be encouraged to find out mistakes by themselves. This can be done by little quizzes and guessing games, noting the respective phrases on the blackboard but leaving a gap where the mistake occured. Learners then should complete the phrase in order to make it correct.

Language focus. Within the task-based learning framework, tasks and texts give learners a rich exposure to language and also opportunities to use it themselves. In addition to that, they also benefit from instruction focused on language form. This is not necessarily teacher-led, although the teacher mostly introduces the activities, is on hand while learners do them and reviews them in the end.

The activities mentioned above are sometimes called "consciousness raising activities" or "meta-communicative tasks". These are tasks that focus explicitly on language form and use, an aspect that is normally covered first in traditional language teaching.

To avoid a PPP situation, analysis activities should not, as Willis writes, "consist of decontextualised presentation and practice of language items in isolation" (Willis, 102). By following the task cycle, they rather involve learners in a study of those language forms they actually used and needed during the cycle. Analysis activities give learners time to systematise and build on the grammar they know already, to make and test assumptions about the grammar and to increase their repertoire of useful lexical items.

While learners test their own hypothesis and make their own discoveries, the teacher should hold back but ought to be ready to handle individual questions. In reviewing the material they have been exposed to and the language they have used,

learners not necessarily notice the same aspects as the teacher but rather pick out things that are new to them and they can fit into their own developing picture of the target language.

There are three main starting points for analysis activities: semantic concepts, words or parts of a word and categories of meaning or use. Of course, the teacher has to set certain guidelines where the learners' investigation should be leading to. Starting points that will catch the right kind of samples to stimulate a deeper investigation into grammar and meaning have been proven useful. Looking for *had* in a text, for example, will lead learners to verb phrases with *had* and help them explore the use and meaning of the past perfect.

The main themes in a text or transcript are revealed in the lexis. In analysing semantic concepts, identifying the theme words and phrases helps learners to notice lexical repetition and how this can form cohesive through the text. These words or phrases can also be used for categorising, for exploring shades of meaning and finally building up lexical sets.

Analysis tasks staring from words or parts of words can involve learners in classification according to grammatical function, exploring the meaning and effects of alternative choices of form, exploring collocation or classification according to meaning and use. Learners might also want to collect similar examples from their previous knowledge or from a dictionary.

Working on categories of meaning or use mostly consists of concordance analysis. Learners are asked to find phrases or verbs with a specific form that serve a specific function. They might be asked, for example, to find all phrases with verbs ending in *-ing*, which describe someone or something, which follow *is*/*was*/*are*/*were* or which follow verbs like *stop* and *start*. If there are any constructions left over, learners could try to classify them as well.

Once most learners have finished the activity, the results are discussed in class. When presenting their findings, learners should be asked to explain their reasons for classifying an example in a particular way. When the review is completed, further examples that fit in these categories can be added to the list.

The teacher may also focus on other useful words or collocations that occur, always based on the linguistic material provided by the task cycle.

In the course of the analysis activities, learners practise saying target words and phrases and hear them repeated in different contexts. Practise activities can combine naturally with analysis work. On their own, they are unlikely to give learners deeper insights into the meaning and use of grammatical patterns or speed up their acquisition of these patterns. In connection with analysis work, however, they serve a valuable function and provide confidence and a sense of security.

Language practise activities start with mere repletion and listen-and-complete exercises and can reach up to memory challenge tasks and concordance and dictionary exercises. The teacher's creativity here is, of course, unlimited.

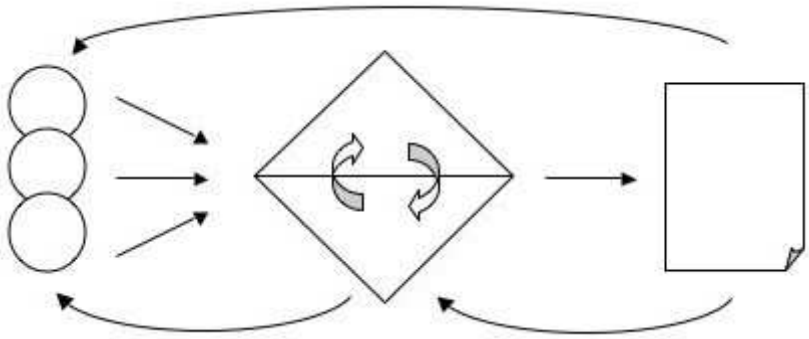
One of the most important requirements for designing effective writing tasks is to think of coherent, connected activity sets, which include pre-writing, during-writing and post-writing activities. Connected activity sets help students complete the writing task successfully and foster the process of writing.

Working backwards from the final task makes it easier to design such activity sets. Only by viewing writing in the broader context of activity sets can you ensure that writing is taught as a process, with brainstorming, several writing and re-writing tasks, and active revision. While the activity sets are presented here in chronological sequence for clarity, during actual writing, there is much recursively among the steps.

1. **Pre-writing activities** prepare learners for a final writing task and activate, review or build sub-skills that prepare the learner for completing the main writing task. They usually focus on the audience, the content, and the vocabulary necessary for the task. These are typically word and phrase level activities.
2. **During-writing activities** engage learners in recursive writing, self-editing and revisions. As the students are guided through writing and re-writing, the teacher should guide them through other areas such as syntax.

3. **Post-writing activities** help learners reflect on and revise their writing based on feedback from an audience, such as peers and/or an instructor.

Process-based Activity Set for L2 Writing



Pre-writing tasks	**During writing**	**Post-writing tasks**
Pre-writing tasks build/review sub-skills for the final writing activity.	Tasks during the main writing process encourages self-editing or peer-review.	Post-writing tasks allow for reflection, sharing, or publishing of the final product.
The process is recursive. Even after the post-writing task(s), new sub-skills can be developed for a next revision on the written assignment or for the next assignment.		

Pre-writing tasks review and build students' knowledge of relevant vocabulary, relevant grammar points and, most importantly, students' background knowledge, since that is what really generates thoughtful and interesting written work. Pre-writing tasks are a crucial element of successful writing instruction.

Pre-writing activities may take many different forms. Here we review a few effective ways to get the writing process started: associograms, prompts, interviews, and reading/listening activities.

A well chosen picture or song can foster the learner's creativity. A few questions in addition to the picture can really help ideas flow.

Written prompts can help students hypothesize what is going on in the picture and generate interesting content. These prompts can be provided by the instructor or generated through brainstorming by the students. They can follow the Five *W*s and the *H* from journalism: who, what, when, where, why and how):

Interviews can serve to generate ideas for writing and move learners beyond their own experiences. It usually works best when some of the questions (using the 5 *W*s and 1*H*) are unexpected or "hook" students' interests.

Before you watch the video, make a quick list of a few potential problems associated with using interviews and also several positive outcomes of interview type activities as a pre-writing activity.

When language learners respond to texts, whether written or oral, they can learn new vocabulary, expressions, grammatical structures, and valuable pragmatic information (e.g., how to structure an e-mail, a movie review, etc.).

Below is an example of a reading-based pre-writing activity that leads to students writing their own greeting cards. The questions accompanying this model birthday card should lead the students to notice relevant expressions, rhetorical structure, grammar, content, greetings, etc.

During- the Writing. Once students are ready to write, they need clear instructions and resources to complete the next steps in the process: writing drafts, revising, self-editing, expanding. Students should be allowed to use notes they generated from the pre-writing tasks. Decide also whether they may use a dictionary or spell-checker, and what you expect them to do for this activity. Ensure that your pedagogical objectives align with the actual activity you assign your students.

You will write a short story that tells your reader about your latest winter vacation. It will describe in some detail - the more interesting the better - what you did, where, and how it went. After you are finished composing your short story,

make sure to re-read your story and run through the self-editing checklist! In the meantime, follow these steps to begin your masterpiece!

- Write a paragraph that explains a) where the story takes place, b) who was there, and c) what was the funny event that happened.
- Write 2-3 paragraphs a) about what happened before, during and after this event or b) add descriptions of the main characters that explain why this event was funny.
- Provide details that make the story interesting for your reader (make sure theywant to read it!).
- Start with a hook, have a clear beginning, middle and end (a complete story arc) in your narrative.
- Add phrases to make the story flow smoothly (cohesion markers, pronouns, conjunctions)
- Eliminate "fluff" (unnecessary or redundant details)
- Review your story for fluidity, vocabulary, grammar, style and mechanics

Post-Writing. We define post-writing as the step in the writing process where the written text is shared with other audiences, such as a peer-editor or the instructor or even with the general public.

The basic components of post-writing activities:

- Re-read your story, make sure sentences make sense.
- Add phrases to make the story flow smoothly (cohesion markers, pronouns, conjunctions).
- Eliminate "fluff" (unnecessary or redundant details).
- Proofread for spelling, vocabulary, grammar (checklist).
- Edit your paper (peer-editing, post-teacher editing).
- Share with audience (website, print, etc.).

Publishing is optional and should be understood in the broadest sense of the word: sharing the author's written work with multiple readers or even viewers. Here are a few ideas for making student work public.

Publishing in written format:

- an online blog
- a wiki entry
- a printed or online class newspaper/newsletter
- a collection of poetry, short stor,y or mixed-genre writing

Publishing (Presentation) in oral format:

- filming a news report
- filming or producing a skit
- producing a theater play or variety show, either for just the class or for a larger audience (long-term writing assignments)
- poetry reading

Publishing or presenting written work can help focus learners' attention and motivation for writing: there is a real, legitimate communicative purpose for their work.

It is quite common now that when some of us teachers design the tasks for teaching a lesson, the tasks lose their “taskness”. They become more like exercising focusing on discrete aspects of language. And indeed, many of the so-called tasks don’t satisfy the definition of a task. For example, most of the listening teaching is designed like this,

Pre-listening

Presenting some words and ask students to read and learn first. Teachers may give the definition of the new words.

While-listening

Teachers play the tape for the students to listen for the 1st time, students listen and get the general idea. And then play the 2nd time, design some True or

False or Wh-questions to help students to get the detailed information. Then teachers check the answers.

Post-listening

Teachers ask students to retell what they have heard and check again.

It is quite doubted that whether these activities or steps should be called “tasks”? I think both teachers and students will feel dull and bored by doing these asking, answering, and checking.

So in addition to design what type of task to include in a lesson, we teachers need to make decisions about what students will be asked to communicate about and what skills or abilities the students need to be trained through the task. Thus, a key element in the design of the task must be to the choice of thematic content. Now the syllabus of the textbook we are using is developed for the Communicational Teaching Project.

Many of the tasks included are built around the themes that are directly related to the students’ school or social life that they’re expected to be familiar with. Now what I’m interested in and also more concerned about is how we teachers put those wonderful tasks into practice in each individual lessons, making students learn and fulfill those tasks through carrying out the effective activities designed by the teachers.

Now I would like to use the framework for designing the task-based lessons and my teaching experience to demonstrate my ideas.

phrase	Examples of options
A pre-task	Framing the activity Planning time Doing a similar task
B during -task	Time pressure Number of participants
C post-task	Learner report Consciousness raising Repeat task

The task of the lesson is to listen to a conversation between an interviewer and a journalist about the danger of taking drugs and ask students to do a report and make another interview to realize the relation between drugs and crimes and call on them to stay away from drugs.

It is designed as follows:

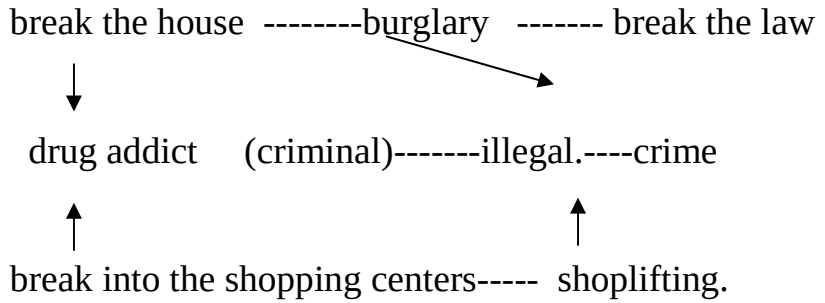
The Pre-task phrase

The purpose is to prepare the students to perform the task in ways that will promote acquisition. We know it is very important to present a task in a way that motivate learners. There are some alternatives which can be tackled procedures in one of the 4 ways below.

1) supporting students in performing a task similar to the task they will perform in the during task phase of the lesson.
2) Asking students to observe a model of how to perform the task.
3) Engaging students to non-task activities designed to prepare them to perform the task.
4) Strategic planning of the main task performance.

Activity 1

Present a story with the new words by reviewing the text taught in the previous lesson, make the words related to each other and let students guess what the topic might be in this lesson.



This is designed to raise learners' consciousness about specific features of task performance. It concludes some learning strategies, eg. "learning to live with uncertainty" and "learning to make intelligent guesses". Thus, students can be taught to help become adaptable, creative and inventive.

Activity 2

Listen to the tape ---the conversation between an interviewer and a professor, talking about the danger of drugs and related crimes. It seems to be a sort of exercise for listening comprehension , but it provides a model as well.

Through this activity, students are asked to observe a model of how the task can be performed .Students can be trained by doing the practice in listening, but also get idea about the "ideal" performance of the task, just as Skeham (1996) and Willis (1996) suggest that simply "observing" others perform a task can help the cognitive load on the learners. Then students are required to pay attention to how the speakers keep their conversations going and some key points, which helps students to identify and analyse the features in the model text and help overcome some communication problems as well.

Activity 3

Ask students to find out the key points that two speakers use in their conversation and how they use them. Then the students can be given time to plan how they'll perform the task. The strategic planning may involve the provision of linguistic forms / strategies for performing the task. The teachers may provide some guidance.

The guidance may focus students' attention on form or content. As Skeham (1996)suggest that learners need to be made explicitly aware of where they are focusing their attention--- whether on fluency, complexity or accuracy.

Another option concerns the amount of time students are given to carry out the pre-task planning. General speaking, 10---15 minutes is quite suitable.

The during-task phrase.

The methodological option available to the teachers in the during-task phrase are of two basic kinds. First, there are various options relating to how the task is to be undertaken that can be taken prior to the actual performance of the task and thus planned for by the teacher. These will be called "task performance options". Second, there are a number of "process options" that involve the teacher

and students in online decision making about how to perform the task as it is being completed.

Activity 4

Group work. Teacher set the task to the students. Each group acts a role according to the request below and think and discuss---what questions you may ask and how you will answer and this activity can create the information gap between students.

Group A act as interviewers (journalists from the local TV station)

Group B act as professor who has done research on the drugs and crimes for about 10 years.

Group C act as drug addict who has taken drugs for 3 years and now has put into prison for committing crimes.

Group D act as police officer who has been dealing with the crime related to drugs for 5 years.

When the task performance is being carried out, the following 3 things should be put into consideration.

1 whether to require the students to perform the task under time pressure.

2 whether to allow students access to the input data while they perform the task.

3 whether to introduce some surprise element into the task.

We teachers need to ensure that students can complete the task in their own time and then set a time limit to encourage fluency rather than accuracy. When students are carrying out the task, we teachers should allow students to borrow the useful related information from the input data to encourage students' participation in the task, especially for those poor learners, especially when they feel speechless. And of course, while discussing, some unexpected questions and answers will come up, for the students' imagination and creativity have been greatly motivated. And it may help to enhance the students' intrinsic interest in the task.

On the other hand, achieving the processes during the task is quite challenging. It depends on how the participants orientate to the task and on their personal skills

in navigating the roles of interlocutor / language users and instructor/ learners as the task is performed.

The post-task phrase

The post-task phase affords a number of options. These have three major pedagogic goals:

1) to provide an opportunity for a repeat performance of the task

2) to encourage reflection on how the task was performed

3) to encourage attention to form, in particular to those forms that proved problematic to the learners when they performed the task.

Activity 5

After the students have a heated and exciting discussion two students are chosen from Group A to be the TV presenters to arrange for an interview for the program named “Tell as it is”. Remind them to be aware of the what TV presenters should say at the beginning of the program and the skill of asking questions and ask the questions to the right people. Later, ask them to interview any other students who act as professors, police officers, and drug addicts according to their own wills. And other students are asked to give the proper response according to the roles they play.

It is known that when students repeat a task their production improves a lot when they’re told to repeat the task publicly in front of the class, of course, it may increase the communicative stress, but it gives students an opportunity to show their ability and their wonderful work, through which they can get the self achievement.

Activity 6

Evaluation: Hand out the questionnaire and let students ask themselves the given questions to evaluate their own performance of the task and the task itself.

Evaluation about your performance in class. Make your marks out of ten

- How attentive were you?
- How much did you contribute to the lesson?
- How much did you learn?

 How much did you co-operate with your group members?

(5) Are you satisfied with the activities in this lesson?

30---40 very good

20—30 ok

below 20 not very well and need improving

It is very important to get the reflection, students will consider how they might improve their performance of the task, and it may contribute to the developing of learning strategies, which are important for language learning and it will help teachers to decide whether to use similar tasks in the future or look for a different type.

And what's more, if time permits, before the end of the class, teachers should select forms that students used incorrectly while performing the task or "useful " or "natural" forms that students failed to use at all. As the post –task stage is needed to counter the danger that students will develop fluency at the expense of accuracy.

2. 3 Different types of tasks

The kind of language learners are exposed to during the task circle can come from a number of sources. We want analyzed, the most important ones.

Text-based tasks require learners to process a text, any piece of spoken or written continuous speech, for meaning in order to achieve the goals of the task. This primarily involves reading, listening to or viewing the text with some kind of "communicative purpose", as Willis points out (Willis, 68), and may also involve talking about the text or perhaps writing notes.

Many teachers use supplementary materials in their lessons since the language found in some coursebooks is restricted and simplified. These have to be chosen, however, with due regard both for the language and the learner. Most learners have their favourite topics or specialist areas. Extra motivation can be achieved when the teacher chooses supplementary material reflecting the learners' interests.

Texts can be found in a variety of sources. Continuous spoken language used in the classroom would normally come from professionally made radio or TV-programmes. Some sources, like the BBC World Service, are aware of the fact that their audiences are non-native speakers of English and adapt the language they use in a natural way. According to Willis, such an adaptation can still be called "authentic", because it has not been produced "with a specific-language teaching purpose in mind, but mainly to communicate, inform and/or entertain" (Willis, 69).

When turning to written language, one has to distinguish between published and unpublished sources. Published sources are books, newspapers or magazines, unpublished sources would include for example letters from pen-friends and data collected by learners doing specialist project work. Nowadays, also the Internet is becoming a useful resource. A whole range of text-types is available, most of the material being spontaneous, unedited and available without charge.

As always in task-based learning, it is also important in the case of reading tasks to give learners a specific purpose for what they are doing. Unless learners are given a specific purpose for reading, they see the text as a decontextualised learning device and read one word at a time, looking up all the words they do not understand. They should, in contrast, work out which words belong together and form units of meaning. This can only be achieved when reading for meaning is promoted. Learners have to get used to the idea that reading for partial or approximate comprehension is much more useful than aiming at perfect understanding each time.

Listening to the radio or watching TV is slightly different from reading in the sense that these activities have to be done in real time and in sequence. This can be a problem in lessons since some learners tend to panic, then get left behind and finally give up. Carefully designed tasks on well-chosen texts can prevent this happening. It is important to encourage learners to listen to the source, predict and make guesses about meanings without penalising wrong ones.

Text-based tasks cover a variety of different tasks. In predicting tasks, for example, learners predict or attempt to reconstruct the content of a text on the basis

of given clues from part of it, without having read, heard or seen the whole. In jumbles, learners are confronted with sections of parts of a complete text, but in the wrong order. It is the learners' job to rearrange these sections.

Other useful exercises are restoration tasks, where learners replace words or phrases that have been omitted from a text, or identify an extra sentence or paragraph that has been put in. In jigsaw tasks, the aim is for learners to make a whole from different parts of a text, each being held by a different person or taken from a different source. Comparison tasks, finally, invite learners to compare two or more similar texts to spot factual or attitudinal differences, or to find two points in common.

Learners might have difficulties with certain texts. Factors which are likely to cause problems are unknown words or phrases, unusual metaphors and complex phrase- or clause structures. Teachers ought to consider these items when preparing their classes for the task. Generally, if a text is linguistically complex, an easy task should be set. If, on the other hand, a text is easy, more challenging tasks can be set.

The democratic structure of the Internet, that gives every user the opportunity to contribute his thoughts, allows a totally different view of our society and makes the Internet also interesting for education and teaching. The speed in which information is provided and can be downloaded makes it absolutely unrivalled.

Governments and governmental organisations all over the world put a great effort into making people fit for the Internet since this is the medium of the future. Yet, the view of the Internet which is promoted by various people because of various intentions is not always what the Internet really is. It offers such fantastic opportunities that very soon a commercialisation of the Internet could be noticed. This is fair enough as long as the intention is clear and as long as it makes things easier for the consumer.

Looking at homepages without a commercial background, one can find a quite good reflection of our world and of society. Thanks to free offers for

homepages and web space from advertising-financed web service providers, everybody can nowadays easily publish their views and opinions on the Internet. This is positive on the one hand, since information can be made available to the world quite fast and unbureaucratically. It is negative, on the other hand, because there is no guarantee, not even a hint for the quality of the offered information. This is not of relevance in personal homepages presenting its author. It is, however, of great significance, when one considers the educational value of the Internet.

When we go to a library to inform ourselves about a certain topic, we can assume that the books we find there, are of rather high quality. Especially in science and studies, the points of view of the various scholars may differ enormously, but at least we can proceed on the assumption that what finally was published is well-researched and well underpinned. This is guaranteed to us by the readers and the publishers of the publishing house. On the Internet, everyone is their own publisher and nobody else than the author himself decides what to make available for the public and what not. Speaking of science and studies, information that has been insufficiently researched or that has yet not been thought through to the end can be easily found on the Internet. Not only unknown or even anonymous authors or sources which are not well-known but also traditional and well-known publishing houses offer insufficient information that is sometimes not reliable. Their data is limited just to avoid to compete the books they are publishing. Very likely, this unreliable data makes up the majority of information offered on the Internet. It is, therefore, quite risky to fully rely on the Internet when looking for important data.

Exposure to spontaneous speech. Spontaneous speech and spoken interaction in the target language are important sources of exposure for learners. Yet, this is the most difficult type of language to bring into the classrooms for teaching purposes.

Apart from teacher-led conversations, typical samples of real-time interaction are generally all too rarely heard in the language classroom. But what learners need are the kinds of words and phrases that sustain the interaction and

link ideas without sounding awkward. This can be achieved by exposing learners to pieces of recorded speech showing them how fluent speakers manage the organisation of a conversation.

One practical solution for finding comprehensible material is to make one's own recordings of fluent target language speakers doing the same tasks as the learners. This exposure to samples of real-time talk is immediately relevant to the learners' learning situations.

Learners in this case have a reason for listening and get to know what the task goals are. Additionally, they get used to listening for specific things and hear "how speakers negotiate opening moves, sustain the interaction, evaluate progress and bring things to a close" (Willis, 89). Most learners find it useful using a transcript accompanying the listening task.

We can distinguish between "closed tasks" and "open tasks" here. If the task consists of a problem or a puzzle to solve, it would obviously be of no use to play the whole recording first. In this case, learners would better do the closed task first, then hear the recording afterwards. They can compare the strategies speakers used in the recording with their own strategies.

If, however, the task consists of comparing personal experiences, then it might be useful for learners to listen before they do it. In this case there is no solution - just a range of different perspectives.

While listening to task recordings, it is important for learners to feel they are managing to understand quite a lot for themselves. They should, however, not be expected to understand everything. Setting a different purpose each time they listen, each slightly more challenging than the last, is a way of grading the activity.

When teaching in an environment where fluent speakers of the target language are easily accessible, it might also be possible to get groups of learners to record interviews to bring back into the classroom or to simply bring them into contact with native speakers.

Basically, most people are willing to talk about things the learners are interested in. And learners, even if feeling a little nervous in the beginning, find

that they can speak enough to hold interviews, and bring back to class something unique, personal and satisfying. Any written documentation accompanying the interviews might serve as background information for the class.

It might be a good idea to plan a series of interviews starting with people learners are familiar with, then progressing to people outside the school. Finally, it will be a challenge to find local personalities who learners do not know.

Thirdly, teachers can exploit the recorded interviews in textbooks and resource books. Although they are rarely natural and spontaneous, as samples of a certain type of spoken interaction, they are always useful.

2.4 Assessing task based learning

We, like most teachers today, take it as a given that communicative ability in a second language must be considered as a whole. That is, communicative ability includes not only vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar skills, but also the capacity to use these in real-world contexts. It is this last point which is often missed by traditional assessment tools, such as university entrance exams, often because it is considered too time-consuming and subjective to try to assess communicative ability. We hope to show you that task-based assessment is neither time-consuming nor subjective, and in fact includes many other advantages as well.

Task-based assessment is easy, straightforward and, above all, meaningful for students and teachers alike. Simply put, one begins by looking at the appropriate completion of any given task *first*, and at the accuracy of the language used to complete it *second.* If the student can achieve a particular goal, or "outcome," using English, then the student passes. Conversely, if they cannot achieve the outcome in a generally acceptable manner, then they fail.

Task	Tell a story
Parameters	On a simple, familiar topic (e.g., family trip) To a single sympathetic listener (e.g., a friend)

Now, let us say you are grading the task outcome on a 10-point scale. If the student has *appropriately completed* the task (i.e., They have managed to tell a story according to these parameters, regardless of how "good" it actually was.), they pass, and now have a score of between 6 and 10.

If they could not accomplish the task (e.g., They could not be understood at all, or if what they produced would not reasonably be called "a story.") then they fail. If they spoke reasonably well but did not stay completely within the parameters (e.g., If they spoke for only one minute or they spoke on an entirely different kind of topic.) then they did not complete the task, and they fail. Of course, as the teacher, you may always choose to make allowances in such cases, but strictly speaking, in a task-based assessment model, this student would indeed fail.

The next step is to assess *how well* the task was achieved. Now we can look at things such as pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Remember, if an appropriate outcome was achieved, then we *already know* that the student's pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar are at an "acceptable" level for the task, communicatively speaking. They would not have managed to complete the task otherwise.

Thus, task-based assessment works something like this:

Step 1 Was the task appropriately completed? Would the outcome be reasonably recognizable by an "average" native speaker of English as an example of its "type"? (In this case, was it a story?

Was there a beginning, a middle and an end? Were the events in the story linked to each other coherently? Was it clear enough to understand, despite any possible language problems such as poor pronunciation or grammar mistakes?) Yes (pass) No (fail)

Step 2 If "yes," how good was it? Read the descriptors below and assign a grade from 6 to 10. If "no," were there at least some redeeming qualities? Assign a grade from 1 to 5. Example scoring criteria for a pass:

10 No grammar mistakes worth mentioning. Vocabulary use was very appropriate. Pronunciation was exceptionally clear. Speech was remarkably smooth and fluent.

Gestures, facial expressions and manner were always appropriate and natural.

9 Some small grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation mistakes. However, speech was still very smooth and easy to understand. Gestures, facial expressions and manner were appropriate and natural.

8 Some noticeable grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation difficulties. However, overall speech was easy to follow and understand. Gestures, facial expressions and manner were generally appropriate.

7 Occasional serious difficulties with grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation. Speech was not always smooth and clear, but quite understandable. Did not revert to first language. Gestures, facial expressions or manner may have been somewhat distracting.

6 Serious difficulties with basic grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation. Speech was not always clear. Required some support from the listener. Reverted to first language on occasion. Gestures, facial expressions or manner were often distracting; nevertheless, generally understandable.

5 Serious difficulties with basic grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation. Required considerable support and patience from the listener. Often reverted to first language; nevertheless, short sections of the speech could sometimes be understandable.

4 Serious difficulties with basic grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation. Required considerable support and patience from the listener. Often reverted to first language. Understandable only to a very sympathetic listener familiar with the student’s first language, such as a teacher.

3 Did not display an ability to use basic grammar structures. Spoke in two- or three- word utterances using basic, but appropriate vocabulary. Used other means to support speech, including relying very heavily on first

language. Difficult to understand even for a very sympathetic listener; nevertheless, displayed some noteworthy quality, such as an understanding of storytelling conventions.

2 Did not display an ability to use basic grammar structures. Spoke in two- or three-word utterances using only basic vocabulary. Used other means to support speech, including relying very heavily on first language. Extremely difficult to understand, even for a very sympathetic listener.

1 Could not be understood beyond basic set expressions such as “How are you?” Made only single-word utterances, if any at all.

The underlying principle at work in task-based assessment is that tasks can be organized in a hierarchy which parallels “steps” in language proficiency because the language necessary to perform any particular task ultimately indicates an ability to perform that task’s “type.”

This means two things:

We can look at tasks in terms of relative difficulty. For instance, “ordering a hamburger at the restaurant” is easier than “ordering a pizza by phone,” which in turn is easier than “giving one’s impromptu opinion in a TV interview.” This is because the language required for each is increasingly more difficult. At a restaurant, one needs only to speak in single words aided by gestures to be reasonably understood. On the phone, it is necessary to be able to ask and respond to simple complete questions with no visual cues. Finally, to participate in a TV interview might require speaking for an extended period on an unprepared topic, requiring a facility with grammar and a large, generalized vocabulary.

We can think of tasks as representative of certain “types” of communicative acts. It is reasonable to expect that a learner who can order a meal at a restaurant can also function reasonably well at the dry cleaner’s or rent a car in person. Renting a car by phone, however, would be more like ordering a pizza, since the learner could not rely on gestures and other means of communicating. Finally, someone who could give a reasonable TV

interview could also be expected to, say, participate as a student in a high school algebra course.

Although how to rank tasks according to complexity and how to organize them into task types are still unresolved issues for researchers and theorists, we have chosen to follow the lead of language descriptor systems such as the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* in our Student Book. Nevertheless, our tasks do not necessarily correlate with either of these, as our primary concerns were task complexity and authenticity. *Widgets* has therefore been informed by what has worked in our classes first, and by our knowledge and experience with the literature second. In the end, however, we have noted extremely high correlations with all of the major TBLT tenets proposed by researchers and theorists.

Conclusion

It is clear that we cannot find a universal language learning methodology fitting on any teacher type, learner type, cultural background and personal preference. Each concept has its advantages, otherwise it would not have been created, but also its disadvantages. Concepts appreciated by one learner might be rejected by the other. All that methodology can do is to try to detect certain trends in society and then combine them with what research finds is good for most effective language learning.

Task-based learning, I think, is a typical approach for our time where two ideas are very important: naturalness and communication. These ideas lead like a red thread through all aspects of our lives. It is naturalness in style, in food, in behaviour, and learning; it is communication in business, in public, in privacy, and learning. The combination of the two must be the key to most effecient language learning: Let us all become native-like communication experts of any language. Naturalness stands here not only for the learning process, but also for the achieved ability for language use.

I do not think that it is impossible to speak a second language as fluent as native speakers do. Spending a number of years in the target country can help a lot. But I doubt that language learners can achieve the ability to use the respective language as natural as native speakers. Language knows so many different shades and tones, one simply has to grow up with it to be able to express them all.

Although the exposure to most natural and authentic language will not produce clones of native speakers, it can though help a lot. Although or maybe just because we cannot turn language learners into native speakers, we have to aim at the highest degree of natural language use possible. Very often, there is a major difference between the kind of English taught in schools and the kind of English spoken in Great Britain or the United States. Language forms are used inadequately, vocabulary is learnt in inappropriate contexts and the pronunciation is sometimes very similar to the first language. This is probably due to a methodology interested more in the structure of the language than in its use and to

teachers who illustrate theory with invented examples adapted to the respective structure.

Task-based learning tries to avoid such an unnatural understanding of language by presenting pieces of authentic language from which the learners can derive theories about the structure of the language and which function as a model for authentic language use. Making learners to communicate themselves as much as they can supports communication abilities. The main emphasis always lays on authenticity which just means that pieces of language are not produced to serve the function to illustrate grammatical theories but to communicate certain contents.

Obviously, learners cannot find out about the structure of language just by themselves, no matter how comprehensible and appropriate the input might by. There are a number of concepts which exist in most languages and therefore can be easily discovered but certain grammatical ideas differ enormously from the learners' first language and are not as obvious. It is a central matter of task-based learning that the teacher steps back and acts as an observer in the background. This definitely supports the learners' independence and may also increase motivation but I envision the teacher being sometimes more active in the language focus stage than described in most works about task-based learning. He does not need to *prescribe* what learners have to think, as this is the case in traditional approaches to language learning, but it would be, according to my view, quite helpful if he would *describe* grammatical concepts that are beyond the learners' capability more actively.

Task-based learning is an interesting concept which tries to combine modern findings of second language acquisition research with a traditional, structural approach. Additionally, it is a highly flexible framework; its components can be easily adapted to fit any learning situation. The ideas according to which task-based learning is designed are innovative on the one hand but not really revolutionary on the other. Innovation is inherently threatening, as Prabhu has pointed out:

A new perception in pedagogy, implying a different pattern of classroom activity, is an intruder into teachers' mental frames - an unsettling one, because there is a conflict of mismatch between old and new perceptions and, more seriously, a threat to prevailing routines and to the sense of security dependent on them. (Prabhu, 1987, quoted in: Ellis, 25)

With task-based learning, however, teachers and learners should not have major problems getting used to the new method. Communcation stands in the centre of attention but structure comes right after. So, the gap between "communication" and "structure", the two opposing concepts in language learning, is being narrowed. It can, I think, never be completely closed but a balanced compromise between the two ideas is the most effecient way anyway.

Task-based learning offers a change from the grammar practice routines through which many learners have previously failed to learn to communicate. It encourages learners to experiment with whatever English they can recall, to try things out without fear of failure and public correction, and to take active control of their own learning, both in and outside class. For the teacher, it may be true that the task-based language teaching is an adventure. But, it is also an effective language instruction that is worth trying.

Task-based learning can also be used in content areas well beyond language learning. In such instruction, the learning “task” is viewed as a basic tool that teachers use to guide students developing strategies for real-world problems solving. Such an approach is broadly and effective in science, social studies, and other disciplines, including business, medical education, accounting, etc. By completing the task, learners are provided with a real purpose for knowledge or strategy use and a natural context for content study.

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