FUTURE PERSPECTIVES OF TBLT IMPLEMENTATION

Researcher: Eshmanova Shaxnozaxon Ismoiljon qizi

Annotation

The article presents considerations on the appropriate implementation of task-based approach in foreign language teaching process. The research touches upon such subtopics as the role of TBA in FLT, benefits pushed forward by TBA application, suggestions for teachers to enable them successfully implement TBA.

Key words: task-based language teaching, ESL, EFL, pedagogical benefits

Learning a foreign language can be a frustrating experience for language learners if teaching learning process happening in the classroom are not interesting, motivating and/or meaningful to them. Skehan in Rubin and McCoy (2008) points out that a language task is meaningful in its own right and linked to the real world, although it may also be focused on a particular language goal. Task-based learning according to Harmer "makes the performance of meaningful tasks central to the learning process…if students are focused on the completion of a task, they are just as likely to learn language as they are focusing on language forms." Thornbury (1999: 134) states that by offering learners an opportunity to make meanings for themselves, task-based approach seems to replicate more closely natural acquisition approaches.

The main advantages of TBL are that language is used for a genuine purpose meaning that real communication should take place, and that at the stage where the learners are preparing their report for the whole class, they are forced to consider language form in general rather than concentrating on a single form (as in the PPP model). Whereas the aim of the PPP model is to lead from accuracy to fluency, the aim of TBL is to integrate all four skills and to move from fluency to accuracy plus fluency. The range of tasks available (reading texts, listening texts, problem-solving, role-plays, questionnaires, etc) offers a great deal of flexibility in this model and should lead to more motivating activities for the learners. Learners who are used to a more traditional approach based on a grammatical syllabus may find it difficult to come to terms with the apparent randomness of TBL, but if TBL is integrated with a systematic approach to grammar and lexis, the outcome can be a comprehensive, all-round approach that can be adapted to meet the needs of all learners.

The purpose of teaching is not to assist learners in obtaining scheduled targets but to provide them with the context and conditions where language acquisition can take place. The teachers' roles have also been altered from instructor to establishers of study setting, assistants, guides, and advocates of the learning activities. Learners are the subjects in the classroom, which indicates that they are the key figures in the learning process. They are not empty vessels to be filled by the teachers any more but torches to be lit via offering appropriate learning settings and tasks.

The pedagogical benefits of task-based teaching of EFL are numerous. Task-based approach has blocked the distance between class and real life and has altered the malpractice in which teachers totally isolated traditional foreign language teaching from real life. Task-based approach assists learners in internalizing language skills in a natural way and shows learners how to sort out the problems that they encounter in real life (Lin, 2009). At this juncture, language teachers aiming at infusing task-based approach into their language classrooms should attribute prominence to the following points for the effective implementation of task-based pedagogy (Ellis, 2009):

- The tasks must be adapted to the linguistic proficiency levels of the students (e.g. if the students have restricted proficiency, tasks should first be of the input supplying rather than output-producing type).
- Tasks should be trialed to provide that they contribute to suitable L2 use and revised within the framework of experience.
- For TBLT to work, teachers should have an overt comprehension of what a task is.
- Teachers and students should be made familiar with the purpose and logic behind doing tasks (e.g. they should comprehend that tasks contribute to incidental learning of the kind that will pave the way for the development of their communicative skills).
- Principally, the teachers engaging in teaching a task-based course must be engaged in the design of the task materials.

The problems and difficulties of learning a second language are the major factors for scholars to develop new methods to be employed in language pedagogy. When Prabhu developed Task-based learning, he thought that if students' minds engaged in a task they may learn more effectively because the basic condition of education is learner engagement.

No wonder TBL was seen as another device to handle learning problems and has been the target of many researches during the past two decades. Looking at the development of task-based learning

research, the initial priority was given to the definition of tasks and the philosophy behind it. At present, the main concern of leading researchers is the kinds of tasks and whether at which level task-based learning is effective.

Tasks-Based Language Teaching is appropriate to overcome the problems of target language acquisition in a classroom. Therefore, the language teachers should try to design the tasks that will meet their students' needs in their daily lives. Through the tasks assigned, the students will get motivated to use the language being learned inside or outside of the classroom. As a result, the students' integrated skills will improve and their problems related to the target language use will be minimized.

The following tips will immensely aid teachers to effectively implement TBA in their teaching practice so as to enable their learners to acquire the target language in more involving, meaningful and purposeful contexts so that they could successfully apply their mastery over the target language in real life communicative situations:

Tips for teachers for implementing Task-Based Teaching (Introducing TBT with classes not used to it)

- Start from the experiences your pupils already have.

- Try a short, simple task –one with a definite goal.

- Explain the purpose of each task, and at the end, summarize language goals.

Involve your learners:

- Talk to your students – they know best what they want.

- Involve them in the selection of topic areas and even in the design of task.

- Look for feed-back from them on how they liked the task e.g. ask them for two things they liked and one suggestion.

Accuracy and correction:

- Allow learners to make mistakes, it's all part of the fluency process.

- Resist the urge to correct errors the moments you hear them.

- Correct supportively at the end, don't interrupt a learner in flow.

- In the final form focused phase, or even in the next lesson when you have had a chance to plan better, write the phrases on the board, gapping the place where the errors occurred. Ask the class to complete them in pairs.(but do remember there are lots of patterns that are late acquired, like third person singular, so it is better treat these very quickly and concentrate on common phrases and useful collocations.

Do not forget the grammar:

- TBLT does not mean the teacher have to leave forms completely aside. The task will naturally involve a combination of structures, words, and meaning.

- Identify useful language from the text or task recording and prepare form-focused activities in advance for doing after the task.

Challenge your students:

- Do not underestimate students' desire to be challenged. Students - even children- often know more than you think.

- Do not intervene too much when students are doing the task. Let them do it on their own.

Do not give up:

- if a task doesn't work well at the first time, reflect on what went wrong, (maybe ask your colleagues for their suggestions) adapt it and try again.

- Learn from your mistakes. Always ask how you could make a bad task better, and a good task great.

Be flexible:

- be ready to tweak the task as it progresses.

- If things go wrong, think on your feet and don't be afraid to stop the task and to be creative.

Be positive:

- ensure all learners realize their creativity and their participation are valued.

- Look at the class as half full not half empty. Don't think of your students as objects to be taught but as partners from whom you can also learn about life.

Give clear instructions:

- prepare your task well.

- Before setting the task, think through each stage carefully: How to organize it and What instructions to give at what points.

- Explain the goal and the type of work expected.

To get started with TBL:

- Learn by doing i.e. try out a simple task, add a planning and report phase, and see how it goes.

- Do not be afraid to give up control. The students need you to facilitate and support them.

Moreover, it is of huge significance to mention that TBA should encompass the enhancement of all

four language skills. In other words, when designing effective task-based activities, the teacher should take into consideration all the language skills listed below and implement them into the lesson:

Task-based listening

During task-based listening activities students have to activate knowledge of a topic and context in order to create one's own interpretation of what they have heard. In addition, these activities require information about roles, number and relationship of listeners and speakers who construct meaning of the utterance and respond to each other (Curriculum Development Council (CDC), 1999, p. 59). On the other hand, teachers should include realistic listening tasks in order to make the lesson effective and meaningful for learners. Moreover, teachers also use various texts including formal and informal language, enhance learners' confidence and help them avoid bad habits such as omitting important words, not paying attention or dreaming while listening (CDC, 1999, pp. 59-60).

According to CDC (1999), there are three stages occurring in a listening task:

Pre-listening stage: This stage establishes a framework for listening including asking for learner's knowledge about the topic, guessing content from the title, commenting on a picture, reviewing vocabulary, etc. (p. 64).

While-listening stage: In this stage learners take part in a listening activity while responding to the task. It includes ordering pictures, completing a timetable, constructing comprehensible notes, analyzing true/false statements, etc. (p. 64).

Post-listening stage: This phase facilitates development of skills including writing a summary, reading a text related to the topic, practicing role play activities, etc. (65).

As stated in Nunan (1989), listening tasks are further classified in relation to learner's' engagement in bottom-up or top-down processing (as cited in Richards, 1987a).

Nunan (1989) explained that top-down processes involve attaching an interaction to a part of a certain event (complaining, storytelling or joking), attaching persons or places to sections, expecting outcomes and deducing the topic of a speech, the consecution between events and missing items (as cited in Richards, 1987a). Nunan's (1989) study provides that successful listening includes using of meaningful words and phrases, relating the incoming information to a previous knowledge, identifying the aim of an utterance, interpreting intonation and rhythm and extracting important information from longer texts (p. 26).

In sum, task-based learning has made a significant progress in the last two decades and has remained a potentially fertile approach for many ESL/EFL teachers despite the fact that some researchers still question the effectiveness of TBL.

References:

1. Littlewood, W. (2004). The Task Based Approach: Some Questions and Suggestions.
ELT Journal 58(4), 319-326.

2. Norris, J. M., Brown, J. D., Hudson, T. D., Bonk, W. (2002). Examinee abilities and task difficulty in task-based second language performance assessment. Language Testing 19 (4), 395-418.

3. Nunan, D. (2006). Task-based language teaching in the Asia context: Defining 'task'.Asian EFL Journal 8 (3). Online documents at URL http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/ Sept_06_dn.php. [15.12.2006]

4. Prabhu, N. (1987). Second language pedagogy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

5. Richards, J. and Rodgers, T. (2001). Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

6. Seedhouse, P. (1999). Task-Based Interaction. ELT Journal 53(3), 149-156.

7. Skehan, P. (1996). A Framework for the Implementation of Task-Based Instruction. Applied Linguistics 17 (1), 38-62.