

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

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TBLT is a method for teaching language. It uses real tasks to teach. Students do activities using the target language. They speak, write, listen, and read with meaning. Example: A speaking task helps students speak better. The main goal is communication in real life. Students learn to use language for action. TBLT is a part of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). It is used to teach social and real-life communication.

Brief History of TBLT

TBLT became popular in 1987. It was started by N. Prabhu in Bangalore, India. He saw that students learn well through problem-solving. They learned even without direct grammar lessons. Many experts worked on this method. Some are Teresa P. Pica, Martin East, and Michael Long. David Nunan wrote a famous book in 1989. Rod Ellis also wrote many books on TBLT. He is a leading expert in this field.

What Is a Task in TBLT?

Rod Ellis gave 4 main ideas of a task:

- It must focus on meaning.
- It must include a gap (information or reasoning).
- It must use students' own language skills.
- It must have a real result, not just practice.

There are 2 types of tasks:

- **Unfocused tasks:** For general language use. They don't focus on any grammar rule.
- **Focused tasks:** For special grammar learning. They help students use certain grammar in speaking.

Rod Ellis also gave 3 kinds of focused tasks:

- **Structure-based tasks:** Use grammar rules in talking.
- **Comprehension tasks:** Understand the meaning and answer.

- **Consciousness-raising tasks:** Learn grammar from examples.

Example: Students use dictogloss. They listen to a passage, take notes, and then rewrite.

Tasks should be easy to understand. Hard tasks like astronomy may confuse average students. So, choose tasks students can do well.

Theory Behind TBLT

TBLT helps students learn language naturally. Students learn without thinking about grammar too much. They get better at speaking through use. Ellis says we need implicit learning. We learn by doing, not by memorizing rules. Other experts also support TBLT.

Lynch and Maclean gave two reasons:

- Classroom tasks are like real-life tasks.
- Research supports TBLT for second language learning.

Skehan said TBLT is flexible and useful.

Students learn through doing, not just reading. It is better than only teaching grammar rules.

Stages of TBLT

Stages of TBLT are not fixed. They change depending on context. Ellis says that to learn a language, there is no need to go abroad. It helps to learn well inside the classroom. Learning can happen through incidental learning. Here is one example of classroom stage design:

Pre-task (15-20 mins):

- The teacher introduces the topic.
- Students learn words and phrases.

Task (10 mins):

- Students plan the day in groups.
- They talk and share ideas.

Planning (10 mins):

- Groups prepare their final plan.
- Teacher helps students with words and grammar.

Report (15 mins):

- Each group presents their plan.
- Other groups listen and choose the best plan.

Post-task:

- Teacher gives exercises like True/False and Fill-in-the-blanks.
- Students also write an assignment at home.

Key Features of TBLT

- Focus on real communication.
- Use of real-world tasks (doctor visit, phone call).
- Students use language for real needs.
- Tasks are student-centered.
- Students create language, not just repeat.
- Meaning is more important than grammar rules.
- Students work in pairs or groups.
- Tasks are like real-life situations.
- The results of tasks are more important than correct grammar.

Principles of TBLT (According to David Nunan)

- **Scaffolding** – Help students step by step.
- **Task dependency** – Tasks are connected.
- **Recycling** – Repeat words and ideas in new ways.
- **Active learning** – Students do the task themselves.
- **Integration** – Use all four skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing).
- **Reproduction to creation** – Start simple, then make new things.
- **Reflection** – Students think about their learning.

Common Techniques in TBLT

- Practice all four skills.
- Use group work and pair work.
- Teachers help students during tasks.

- Use both input-based and output-based tasks.
- Input = reading/listening.
- Output = speaking/writing.
- Output tasks include corrective feedback.

Advantages of TBLT

- Natural learning inside class.
- Good for large classes.
- Focuses on real-life meaning.
- Useful for students with weak grammar knowledge.
- Helps shy students speak in groups.
- Encourages creativity and confidence.

Disadvantages of TBLT

- Hard to check results of tasks.
- No clear way to test learning.
- Some students may feel confused.
- Teachers must plan more.
- Not all topics are good for tasks.
- Grammar may be ignored sometimes.
- Teachers need good training.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a modern method. It helps students use language in real life. Students learn by doing tasks, not just by rules. It makes learning more natural and fun. TBLT builds speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is good for big classes and all levels. But it also has some problems in testing and planning. Still, TBLT is a useful and student-friendly way to learn a language.