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Tapşırıq əsaslı dil tədrisi və onun effektivliyi: nəzəri icmal

Xülasə

Bu məqalədə Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) yanaşması nəzəri baxımdan təhlil olunur və onun effektivliyinin elmi ədəbiyyatda necə əsaslandırıldığı araşdırılır. Məqalə empirik tədqiqat deyil; əsas məqsəd TBLT-nin formalaşma tarixini, anlayış əsaslarını, başlıca prinsiplərini, üstünlüklərini və məhdudiyyətlərini sistemli şəkildə ümumiləşdirməkdir. Xüsusi diqqət “task” anlayışına, TBLT-nin ikinci dilin mənimsənilməsi nəzəriyyələri ilə əlaqəsinə və mənaya yönəlmiş fəaliyyətlərin dil öyrənməsinə təsirinə yönəldilir. Eyni zamanda yanaşmaya qarşı irəli sürülən əsas tənqidlər, xüsusilə imtahanyönlü təhsil sistemi, müəllim hazırlığı, böyük siniflər və proqram məhdudiyyətləri baxımından nəzərdən keçirilir. Müzakirə göstərir ki, TBLT müasir dil tədrisinin ən təsirli və ən çox müzakirə olunan yanaşmalarından biridir. Bununla belə, onun uğuru avtomatik deyil; effektivlik tapşırıqın keyfiyyətindən, müəllimin metodik hazırlığından və konkret tədris mühitinə uyğunlaşdırmadan asılıdır. Məqalənin nəticəsi kimi vurğulanır ki, TBLT həm metod, həm də nəzəri çərçivə kimi dəyərini qoruyur, lakin onun real səmərəsi yalnız balanslı və kontekstə uyğun tətbiq zamanı üzə çıxır. Bu yanaşmanın tətbiqində müəllimin rolu və tapşırıq dizaynı xüsusi əhəmiyyət daşıyır.

Açar sözlər: tapşırıqəsaslı dil tədrisi, ikinci dilin mənimsənilməsi, tapşırıq, kommunikativ yanaşma, effektivlik

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Task-Based Language Teaching and Its Effectiveness: A Theoretical Review

Abstract

This article examines Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) from a theoretical perspective and discusses how its effectiveness has been explained in language education literature. The study is not empirical; rather, it aims to synthesize the historical development, conceptual foundations, major principles, strengths, and limitations of TBLT in a systematic way. Particular attention is given to the concept of task, the relationship between TBLT and second language acquisition theory, and the claim that meaning-focused activity can support language learning more effectively than instruction based only on isolated forms. The article also reviews major criticisms of the approach, especially those related to examination-oriented systems, teacher preparedness, large classes, and curricular constraints. The discussion shows that TBLT remains one of the most influential approaches in modern language teaching. However, its success is not automatic; its effectiveness depends on task quality, teacher expertise, and principled adaptation to the realities of a particular educational context. The article concludes that TBLT remains theoretically strong, but context matters.

Keywords: Task-based language teaching, second language acquisition, task, communicative approach, effectiveness

Introduction

Task-Based Language Teaching has become one of the most influential approaches in modern language pedagogy because it places purposeful language use at the center of instruction. Unlike traditional approaches that organize teaching around predetermined grammatical items, TBLT structures learning around tasks that require learners to use the target language in order to achieve a communicative goal. As a result, the approach has attracted continuing interest from researchers in second language acquisition, curriculum design, methodology, and assessment.

The importance of TBLT is closely linked to dissatisfaction with teaching models that produce knowledge about grammar without necessarily developing the ability to communicate effectively. Supporters of TBLT argue that language grows through interaction, negotiation of meaning, purposeful output, and context-sensitive attention to form (Skehan, 2003; Long, 2015). From this perspective, learning is not simply the memorization of rules; it is a developmental process supported by meaningful use. A further reason for its relevance is that TBLT has influenced not only classroom practice, but also materials design, syllabus construction, and the broader debate about what it means to know and use a second language successfully.

At the same time, TBLT has generated important debate. Some scholars present it as one of the strongest pedagogical realizations of second language acquisition theory, while others argue that its classroom implementation may be difficult in exam-driven, teacher-centered, or resource-limited settings (Bruton, 2005; Carless, 2007). Therefore, a theoretical review remains useful.

The aim of this article is to examine the main theoretical foundations of TBLT and to evaluate how its effectiveness has been discussed in the literature. The article argues that TBLT has strong conceptual support, but its pedagogical value depends on informed teaching, suitable task design, and adaptation to local educational conditions.

Research

The theoretical roots of TBLT can be traced to communicative language teaching and to broader developments in second language acquisition research. A key early influence was Prabhu's work, especially the Bangalore Project, which proposed that learners could develop language ability through engagement in meaning-focused activity rather than through prior mastery of isolated grammatical forms. This idea challenged structural syllabuses and encouraged teachers to think of language learning as something that may emerge through problem-solving, information exchange, and goal-oriented communication.

Later scholars developed this idea more systematically. Willis (1996) offered a practical pedagogical model built around pre-task, task cycle, and language focus. Nunan (2004) emphasized the educational value of tasks and the connection between classroom activity and language use beyond the classroom. Ellis (2003) provided a detailed discussion of the nature of tasks, the place of form-focused work, and the distinction between task-based and more traditional instruction. Long (2015) linked TBLT more directly to needs analysis and second language acquisition theory, arguing that tasks should be derived from learners' communicative needs in the real world. Taken together, these contributions show that TBLT is not a single technique, but a principled approach to curriculum and pedagogy. A central concept in the literature is the notion of task. Although scholars define the term somewhat differently, there is broad agreement that a task is an activity in which meaning is primary, learners use the target language for a communicative purpose, and some outcome is achieved beyond the correct production of language itself. This is what distinguishes tasks from traditional exercises. In conventional exercises, success is often measured by the accurate production of a selected form. In tasks, however, learners mobilize their available language resources in order to solve a problem, exchange information, make a decision, or complete a goal (Willis, 1996; Nunan, 2004).

Several key principles follow from this understanding. First, TBLT is meaning-focused: learners are expected to use language to do something, not merely to display knowledge of rules. Second, tasks are outcome-oriented, since they usually involve a result such as planning, comparing, deciding, or solving. Third, tasks often aim to reflect real or realistic language use, which increases authenticity and can strengthen learner engagement. Fourth, TBLT is learner-centered, because it gives students

an active role in constructing and negotiating meaning (Van den Branden, 2006). However, learner-centeredness does not mean lack of structure. Well-designed TBLT requires careful planning, sequencing, and support from the teacher. One of the most important issues in the literature is the relationship between meaning and form. TBLT is sometimes misunderstood as an approach that ignores grammar. In fact, major scholars argue that attention to form remains necessary, but that it should often occur within or around meaningful communication rather than replace it entirely. This position is important because it allows TBLT to avoid a false opposition between communication and accuracy. A task-based lesson can include preparation, performance, reflection, and language focus, provided that the central organizing unit remains the communicative task itself.

The effectiveness of TBLT is usually explained through its compatibility with major insights from second language acquisition research. When learners perform tasks, they are exposed to input, required to produce output, pushed to negotiate meaning, and encouraged to notice gaps in their current knowledge. These processes are widely regarded as supportive of language development (Skehan, 2003; Ellis et al., 2019). Interaction is especially important because learners often ask for clarification, confirm understanding, or reformulate their ideas during task performance. Such moments can make linguistic features more noticeable and can stimulate modification of language use.

Another commonly cited advantage is that TBLT integrates multiple dimensions of language ability. In real communication, grammar, vocabulary, discourse, listening, speaking, and pragmatics operate together rather than separately. Tasks reflect this reality more closely than highly controlled drills do (Ahmadian & Long, 2021). For that reason, many scholars regard TBLT as pedagogically valuable not only for fluency, but also for the gradual development of broader communicative competence. At the same time, the literature does not support overly simplistic claims. TBLT is not effective merely because an activity is called a task. Its success depends on task design, sequencing, teacher guidance, learner readiness, and curricular fit. Poorly designed tasks may produce superficial talk or limited attention to relevant language features. In addition, research synthesis in instructed second language acquisition suggests that gains depend on the quality and type of instruction rather than on the existence of instruction alone (Norris & Ortega, 2000). Thus, the strongest theoretical position is balanced: TBLT has significant potential, but that potential is realized only under principled implementation.

A major line of criticism concerns context. In highly examination-oriented school systems, teachers may feel pressure to prioritize explicit grammar teaching, controlled practice, and test preparation. In such contexts, TBLT may appear time-consuming or difficult to assess. Carless (2007) shows that institutional expectations, teacher beliefs, and classroom realities strongly influence whether task-based pedagogy is considered feasible. Similarly, Bruton (2005) warns that an attractive theoretical model cannot automatically be transferred into every educational environment. Teacher expertise is also crucial. Effective task-based teaching requires more than asking students to work in pairs or groups. Teachers must know how to select suitable tasks, prepare learners, manage interaction, and use post-task analysis productively. Large classes, limited time, mixed proficiency levels, and restricted resources can make this work difficult. For this reason, some scholars distinguish between full TBLT and task-supported language teaching. Ellis (2024) notes that, in some settings, tasks may function more realistically as part of a mixed model rather than as the sole basis of the curriculum.

Overall, the literature suggests that TBLT remains theoretically persuasive because it presents language as purposeful action rather than only as formal knowledge. It encourages teachers to design learning around use, interaction, and outcomes, while still recognizing the value of form-focused support. Its continuing influence lies not only in its classroom procedures, but also in the broader pedagogical insight that language is learned most meaningfully when learners use it to achieve communicative purposes.

Conclusion

Task-Based Language Teaching remains one of the strongest theoretical approaches in contemporary language education because it links pedagogy with purposeful language use, interaction, and contextualized attention to form. The literature shows that TBLT developed from communicative and acquisition-oriented thinking and that its central concept, the task, shifted the focus of instruction from isolated language items to meaningful activity. Its effectiveness is commonly explained through opportunities for input, output, negotiation of meaning, and the integration of several components of communicative competence. At the same time, TBLT should not be treated as a universal solution. Its pedagogical value depends on task quality, teacher expertise, classroom conditions, and curriculum demands. Therefore, the most convincing conclusion is that TBLT is highly valuable as both a method and a theoretical framework, but it works best when implemented critically, flexibly, and in accordance with local educational needs. For that reason, its significance extends beyond one method of teaching and contributes to a broader understanding of language learning as an active, social, and goal-directed process rather than the passive accumulation of separate forms.

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