Task-based Learning

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Task-based learning

- It allows students to use authentic topic material, which is relevant to the students' needs.

- Language is used immediately in the real-world context of the learner, making learning authentic.

- Task based approach sees the learning process as one of learning through doing.

What is a task?

- Task is a goal-oriented activity in which learners achieve a real outcome.

- Tasks are activities which have meaning as their primary focus.

- They have specific objective that must be achieved in a given time.

Why TBL?

1. Tasks can be more easily related to students' real-life language needs.
2. Tasks create contexts that facilitate second language acquisition.
3. Tasks create opportunities for focusing on form.
4. Students are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation in a task-based approach.
5. A task-based approach enables teachers to see if students are developing the ability to communicate in an L2.

Teacher roles in TBL

- Selector and sequencer of tasks

- Preparing learners for tasks

- Consciousness-raising

Learner roles in TBL

- Group participant

- Monitor

- Risk-taker and innovator

TBL framework

- Tasks can be used as the central component of a three part framework: "pre-task," "task cycle," and "language focus."
- The aim of TBL framework is to create the favorable conditions for language learners:

- exposure to the target language

- opportunities to use the target language for expressing meaning

- motivation to engage with target language and use what they know

TBL framework
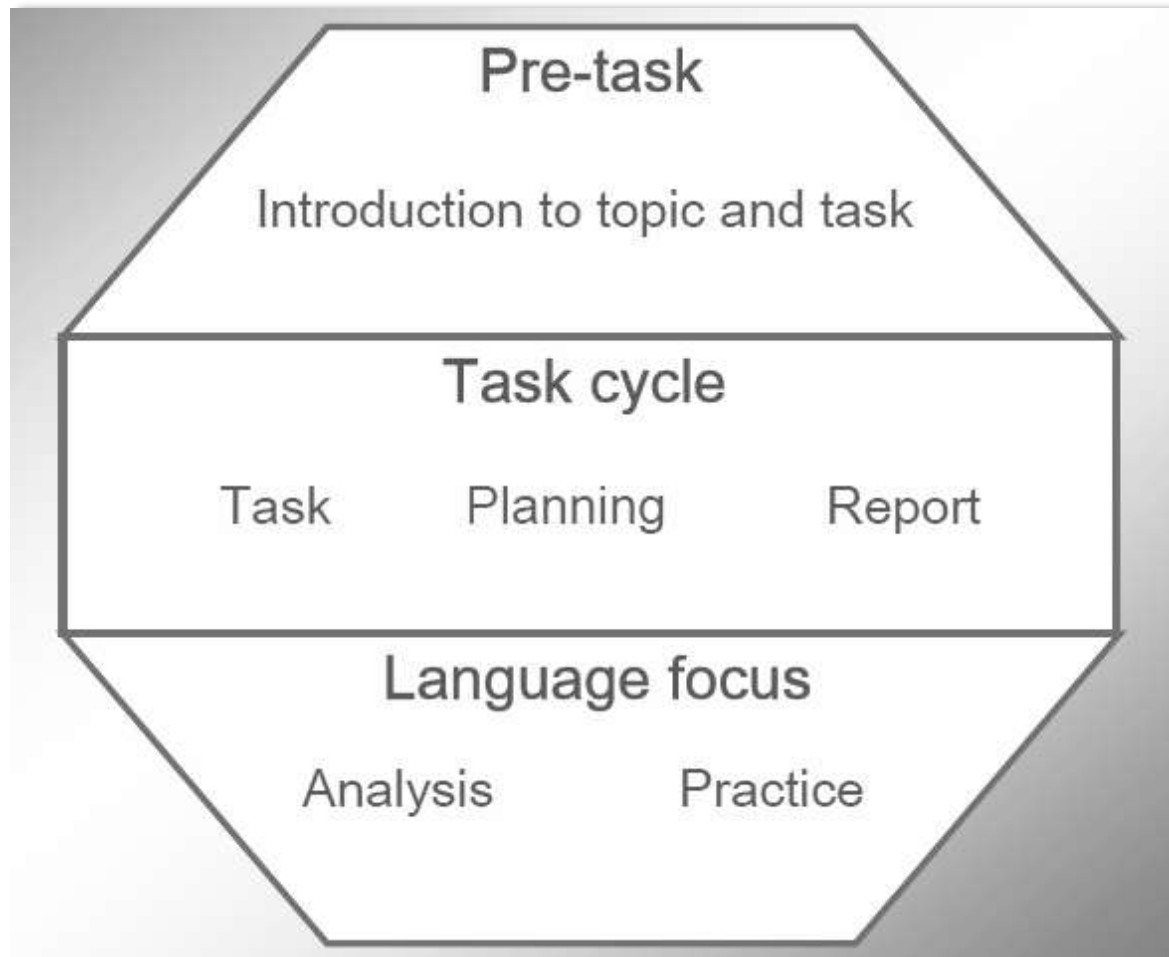
1. PRE-task

- Serves as an introduction to the topic and task.

- Teacher explores the topic with the class, highlights useful words, phrases and helps learners understand task instructions and prepare.

- It may involve also brainstorming, preparation time, listening to native speakers doing the task.

2. Task cycle

A. TASK

- Learners do the task using whatever language they already have in pairs or small groups
- Teacher monitors from a distance and doesn´t correct errors
- The emphasis is on meaning rather than form

6 main types of task:

- Listening
- Ordering and sorting
- Comparing
- Problem solving
- Sharing personal experiences
- Creative tasks

TASK TYPES	EXAMPLES OF TASK TYPES
LISTENING	Brainstorming, fact-finding
ORDERING AND SORTING	Sequencing, ranking, categorizing, classifying
COMPARING	Matching, finding similarities, finding differences
PROBLEM SOLVING	Analyzing real or hypothetical situations, reasoning, decision making
SHARING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES	Narrating, describing, exploring and explaining attitudes, opinions, reactions
CREATIVE TASKS	Brainstorming, fact-finding, ordering, sorting,..

B. PLANNING

- Learners prepare to report to the whole class how they did the task, what they decided or discovered.

- The emphasis is on organization and accuracy.

- The teacher advises students on language and helps them correct any errors they make during this phase.

C. REPORT

- Some or all of the groups report briefly to the whole class.
- The others listen in order compare findings or conduct a survey.
- The teacher may rephrase but not correct the language.

After these phases students may listen to native speakers do the same task and to compare the language.

3. Language focus

A. ANALYSIS
- Students examine and then discuss specific features of the text or transcript of the recording.
- They can enter new words, phrases and patterns in vocabulary books.

B. PRACTICE
- Teacher conducts practice of new words, phrases and patterns occurring in the data, either during or after the analysis.

Some Problems and Solutions

Pedagogical problems	Solutions
1. Students lack proficiency to communicate in the L2	Devise activities that develop ability to communicate gradually.
2. Students unwilling to speak English in class.	Use small group work; allow planning time; learner training
3. Students develop pidginized language system	Select tasks that demand fully grammaticalized language

Educational problems	Solutions
1. Emphasis on 'knowledge' learning	Review philosophy of education.
2. Examination system	Develop new more communicative exams
3. Large classes	Use small group work; develop tasks suited to large classes.