

**FLEXIBILITY AND ROLE OF TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING IN  
EDUCATION**

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**AMALIY VAZIFALAR ORQALI TIL O'RGANISH USULINING  
MOSLASHUVCHANLIGI VA TA'LIMDAGI ROLI**

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**ГИБКОСТЬ И РОЛЬ ОБУЧЕНИЕ ЯЗЫКУ НА ОСНОВЕ ЗАДАНИЙ  
В ОБРАЗОВАНИИ**

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**Abstract:**

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is all about putting learners at the center of the learning experience, emphasizing real communication through engaging in practical tasks. This article delves into how the concept of a "task" within TBLT has evolved over the years, highlighting the distinction between standard language exercises and authentic pedagogical tasks. Drawing from both theoretical insights and classroom experiences, it examines the spectrum of tasks, ranging from drills focused on form to activities centered on communication. Additionally, it touches on the cognitive and sociocultural theories that underpin TBLT, how educators implement it in various classroom settings, and the hurdles they encounter when trying to adapt TBLT to their unique educational and cultural contexts. By broadening the definition of what constitutes a task, this paper aims to empower teachers to apply TBLT in a more adaptable and effective manner.

**Key words:** Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Communicative Language Teaching, Language Tasks, Form-focused vs Meaning-focused Activities, Language Learning Continuum, Sociocultural Theory, Cognitive Perspectives in SLA, Classroom Challenges, Language Output, Task Adaptation in Education.

### **Annotatsiya:**

Amaliy vazifalar orqali til o'rganish (Task-Based Language Teaching, TBLT) — bu o'quvchini o'rganish jarayonining markaziga qo'yuvchi yondashuv bo'lib, amaliy vazifalarni bajarish orqali mazmunli muloqotga e'tibor qaratadi. Ushbu maqolada TBLTdagi “vazifa” tushunchasining yillar davomida qanday o'zgargani o'rganiladi, an'anaviy til mashqlari bilan haqiqiy pedagogik vazifalar o'rtasidagi farq ta'kidlanadi. Nazariy bilimlar va sinfdagi tajribalarga tayangan holda, vazifalar ko'lamini — shaklga yo'naltirilgan mashqlardan tortib, muloqotga asoslangan faoliyatlarga — ko'rib chiqadi. Shuningdek, TBLTning kognitiv va sotsiokultural nazariyalari, turli o'quv muhitlarida o'qituvchilarning uni qo'llashi va o'z ta'limiy va madaniy sharoitlariga moslashtirishda duch keladigan qiyinchiliklari muhokama qilinadi. Vazifa tushunchasini kengaytirish orqali, maqola o'qituvchilarga TBLTni yanada moslashuvchan va samarali qo'llashda yordam berishni maqsad qiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Amaliy vazifalar orqali til o'rganish (TBLT), Kommunikativ til o'qitish, Til vazifalari, Shaklga yo'naltirilgan va mazmun asosidagi faoliyatlar, Til o'rganish davomiyligi, Sotsiokultural nazariya, SLAda kognitiv yondashuvlar, Sinfdagi qiyinchiliklar, Til chiqishi, Ta'limda vazifalarni moslashtirish.

**Аннотация:** Обучение языку на основе заданий (Task-Based Language Teaching, TBLT) — это подход, ориентированный на учащегося, который акцентирует внимание на содержательной коммуникации через выполнение практических заданий. В данной статье рассматривается эволюция понятия «задание» в рамках TBLT, подчеркивается различие между стандартными языковыми упражнениями и подлинными педагогическими заданиями. Опираясь на теоретические знания и опыт работы в классе, исследуется спектр заданий — от формально ориентированных упражнений до коммуникативных активностей. Также обсуждаются когнитивные и социокультурные теории, лежащие в основе TBLT, способы его применения преподавателями в различных учебных условиях, а также трудности, с которыми они сталкиваются при адаптации TBLT к своим образовательным и культурным контекстам. Расширяя понимание того, что считается заданием, статья стремится помочь преподавателям более гибко и эффективно применять TBLT.

**Ключевые слова:** Обучение языку на основе заданий (TBLT), коммуникативное обучение языку, языковые задания, упражнения, ориентированные на форму vs. смысл, континуум изучения языка, социокультурная теория, когнитивные подходы в SLA, трудности в классе, языковой продукт, адаптация заданий в образовании.

### Introduction:

In recent years, the landscape of language teaching has shifted away from the traditional teacher-led grammar drills and moved towards more engaging methods that promote communication and active participation from learners. One approach that has gained popularity is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), which emphasizes using language in real-world tasks. At the core of TBLT is the idea of a "task," which distinguishes it from conventional language teaching that often relies on repetitive practice. However, pinning down exactly what a "task" entails in TBLT can be a bit tricky. Early concepts revolved around using language to achieve practical objectives, but research indicates that classroom activities can vary widely—from simple, form-focused drills to comprehensive communication tasks. This paper delves into the evolution of the task concept, drawing insights from theory, classroom experiences, and the hurdles teachers encounter when implementing TBLT in diverse learning settings. By examining both theoretical frameworks and real-life teaching scenarios, this article aims to provide a clear and practical understanding of tasks in TBLT, equipping teachers to apply this approach effectively across different contexts.

At the heart of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) lies the belief that meaningful tasks—not the usual drills—should take center stage in the classroom. Unlike exercises that require students to merely repeat grammar structures or memorize vocabulary, TBLT tasks are crafted around real-life objectives. These tasks encourage students to use language as a practical tool to accomplish something, rather than just showcasing their grammar skills. For instance, think about booking a hotel room or asking for directions—these are everyday situations where effective communication is far more important than perfect grammar. In TBLT, learners are motivated to utilize whatever language they already possess to reach these goals, rather than being confined to specific forms dictated by the teacher.

This transition from focusing on form to emphasizing meaning makes language learning feel more relevant and authentic. However, in practice, things are rarely so clear-cut. Many classroom activities don't fit neatly into one category or another.

One of the most comprehensive models was proposed by Littlewood (2003, 2004, 2005), who introduced a five-point continuum. Rather than viewing tasks and exercises as opposites, this model allows teachers to position activities along a spectrum—from strictly grammar-focused drills to fully communicative tasks. In between, there are various shades—activities where learners still pay attention to language forms while also engaging in genuine communication.



This model has proven particularly beneficial in teacher training, as it provides educators with a more realistic and practical framework for discussing their classroom decisions.

All of this illustrates how the concept of a "task" in Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has evolved and become more adaptable over time. While the initial focus was heavily on real-life, meaningful communication, many teachers today appreciate activities that occupy a middle ground. Instead of adhering to a strict definition, this broader perspective allows teachers to tailor TBLT to their own classrooms—especially in contexts where students might still require some structured grammar practice before diving into fully communication-based tasks.

As mentioned earlier, a key characteristic of TBLT is its emphasis on "tasks" as the primary method for language learning. Unlike traditional exercises that concentrate on practicing specific grammar points or vocabulary in isolation, TBLT tasks aim to help learners achieve goals that extend beyond just language. In these tasks, the main objective is to communicate meaning effectively. Learners are encouraged to utilize the language they already know to complete the task, rather than being confined to fixed phrases or grammatical structures. This approach makes language use more practical and authentic—much closer to how we actually use language in everyday situations, like booking a hotel or asking for directions.

However, in real classrooms, things aren't always so neatly defined. In practice, the distinction between a "task" and a "traditional exercise" often becomes fuzzy. Teachers might blend various activities, some of which lean more towards grammar. Form-Meaning Blend: Activities that still emphasize grammar or vocabulary are seen on the spectrum but arranged within some kind of significant framework. These could include organized question-and-answer sessions or "exercise-tasks," during which students practice forms but also exchange some information. Meaning starts to be more apparent even though form is still very important. Meaning with Support: Further along are activities where the main objective is to convey meaning, but students are given support—like sentence starters, model conversations, or constrained options—to enable them to use the language successfully. Examples here include guided role-plays or organized information gaps.

Tasks most closely related with TBLT principles are found at the opposite end of the scale. These give communication top importance, and students can use any language necessary to reach a genuine objective in real life. The attention is totally on the outcome; therefore the vocabulary used comes naturally from the activity itself, much as in actual discussions or group problem-solving.

Viewing language instruction via this continuum offers a more realistic and adaptable perspective on it. It lets educators and researchers explain what is truly going on rather than trying to fit everything into the categories of either "task" or "exercise." Particularly helpful in teacher education, this helps to communicate about the many means language may be taught

and learnt. Though TBLT clearly favors tasks at the meaning-focused end of the spectrum, this wider perspective helps us appreciate how less communicative activities can still play a important role—perhaps as preparation for more challenging assignments requiring more elaborate communication. It ultimately involves knowing how different kinds of activities help significant language growth rather than selecting one approach above the other.

One approach apart from conventional language teaching is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT).

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) stands out as a method that moves away from traditional language instruction. Instead of relying on drills or memorization, it taps into learners' natural ability to pick up language by engaging them in meaningful tasks. These tasks often lead learners to notice and use language forms naturally, rather than through forced instruction. The approach is grounded in several influential theories of language learning—especially from cognitive, psycholinguistic, and sociocultural perspectives[5].

#### Cognitive and Psycholinguistic Points of View

Many academics stress how cognitive and psycholinguistic hypotheses help to define TBLT. These theories center on the inner, cognitive processes that take place when someone learns and employs a language.

Rather of seeing learning as habit formation, cognitive viewpoints regard students as active participants who process, store, and retrieve information. Learning is viewed as something dynamic and psychologically demanding.

Value of interaction: These ideas emphasize on significant interaction—that is, talking, listening, and haggling significance with others. This interaction gives vital input and possibilities for students to create language, therefore spurring inner learning mechanisms.

Implicit vs. Explicit Knowledge: The latter—'knowing how' to communicate—is given first priority by TBLT, even though there's ongoing debate about how paying attention to form can aid in developing this ability. One significant difference is often made between explicit knowledge (such as knowing grammar rules) and implicit knowledge (being able to use language naturally).

Research inspired by these points of view examines how students do tasks in terms of complexity, correctness, and fluency, therefore measuring learning. This allows scientists to see how the requirements of a task influence the language learners produce.

Shared ideas between TBLT and experimental learning, which emphasizes learning by doing, also help one to connect. This aligns with cognitive theory, which stresses the direct engagement of the learner in relevant events.

Though the term "information processing theory" is not directly stated in the sources, the emphasis on how students mentally process input and output and how their performance

evolves across tasks certainly matches this line of thinking in Second Language Acquisition (SLA).

**Sociological Points of View:** Beyond cognitive processes, TBLT is also enlightened by sociological theories that emphasize learning through interaction with others.

**Learning via Social Interaction:** Sociocultural perspectives regard language a thoroughly social activity through which one develops. Through interaction with classmates and instructors, learners hone their abilities; learning results from interpersonal activity [6] not only in their head.

According to this viewpoint, a key concept is scaffolding—where more experienced people (like teachers or stronger peers) help students as they work on assignments just outside their current capacity. Although the sources do not mention Vygotsky by name, the notion of scaffolding is intimately related to his idea of the Zone of Proximal Development.

TBLT promotes pair and group activity, therefore enabling students to solve challenges jointly and support one another. From a sociological perspective, this partnership is more than practice; it is an essential element of real learning.

Some cultural models view the classroom as a complicated network wherein the relationships inside the learning community define learning through the tools we use (like assignments, vocabulary, or technology). This draws from what's called Activity Theory.

TBLT employs actual chores to enable pupils to learn a language more naturally and creatively. Tblt motivates students to use the language to solve issues, make judgments, or finish tasks—just as they would in daily life—rather than emphasizing grammar drills or rote memorizing rules.

**The three phases of TBLT**

1. Students may activate background knowledge or complete basic practice exercises to learn key vocabulary in preparation for the main task.
2. This is the main part, where students use language to complete a meaningful task—say, solving a problem or making a decision—focusing more on communication than on flawless grammar.
3. Learners may reflect on their actions, present results, repeat the activity with corrections, or concentrate on pertinent language they employed after the task.

**Categories of Duties**

Examples of this are:

Activities of information gaps (distributing lacking information to a companion)

Conversations and polls

Even scholarly assignments like TOEFL's integrated speaking and writing reflect this strategy as they mix reading, listening, and speaking/writing for actual communication.

**Difficulties in Application**



Real classrooms—especially large or test-focused ones—teachers may confront:

Managing classroom noise

Pupils excessively using their official first language

inconsistency with grammar-focused tests

Traditional instruction methods neglecting communication

Many teachers therefore modify TBLT rather than completely changing their standard techniques. From controlled practice to open, genuine conversation, they might gradually go from grammatical drills and exercises to more interactive activities employing a flexible continuum[7].

Applying Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in classrooms, especially across many civilizations and educational systems, is not always simple. Teachers frequently have several difficulties that lead them to rather change TBLT than rigorously adhere to it. The method itself is meant to be adapted for many learning settings.

Although many educational institutions—including those in East Asia—officially support TBLT, implementing it can be challenging. Here are some typical challenges educators face, especially in East Asian classrooms, and how these result in adaptations:

1. Managing loud, active groups during TBLT assignments is challenging, especially in huge classes. Traditional techniques like "presentation, practice, production" (PPP) provide instructors with clear control; yet, TBLT promotes greater student freedom, which can seem disorganized and difficult to oversee.

2. Language Use: Teachers worry students might rely too much on their first language during tasks, limiting their English practice. Reduced levels of English also impede students from completely expressing themselves, hence instructors typically rely on more conventional, regulated approaches. Some teachers, too, lack enough confidence in their own English to manage unscheduled communication tasks.

3. Rather than being fully engaged or negotiating meaning, some pupils focus only on finishing the job and use just enough language to get by. Moreover, just a few kids sometimes run the discussion, therefore restricting more general involvement.

4. Many institutions prioritize conventional exams that test vocabulary and grammar instead of communication skills. Because it does not always get students ready for these exams, this makes it difficult for teachers and students to fully embrace TBLT.

5. The learner-centred, interactive approach of TBLT often clashes with cultures in which instructors dominate the classroom and education is mostly about memorizing facts. Switching to a student-centered strategy can seem like a major upheaval that some people find unpleasant or unsuitable [8].

Teachers often shun wholesale TBLT because of these problems. Rather, they modify it to suit their setting:

Integrating concepts from TBLT with current teaching practices. They could, for instance, still expressly teach grammar and utilize drills, but incorporate communicative activities where pupils can utilize language more freely.

Slowly progressing down a continuum from conventional, form-focused activity toward more genuine communication. Included in this continuum are:

Exercises and non-communicative practice

Guided language practice with some meaning

Using new language in conversational practise

Tasks in organized communication emphasizing meaning but with instructor help

Authentic communication including debate and problem-solving

Teachers can stay at ease by maintaining some familiar activities and gradually attempting more engaging ones.

Modifying inventions to meet local beliefs and needs. Teachers adjust TBLT to fit their expertise, school environment, and cultural values.

Tasks suited TBLT include debates, information-gap exercises, simulations, problem-solving, collaborative projects, and surveys. Reflecting actual academic conversation, the TOEFL iBT test combines reading, listening, speaking, and writing in comparable integrated activities. TOEFL activities, though, do not address the problems instructors meet using these daily activities in their classrooms.

TBLT is not only a set procedure of application. Teachers adapt this flexible method in response to actual classroom conditions, student capabilities, institutional requirements, and cultural expectations. This turns TBLT into an active method of combining fresh concepts with well-known behaviors to best match every teaching environment.

### **Discussion:**

Implementing TBLT in classrooms across different countries and cultures has shown that while the approach offers valuable opportunities for real communication and learner engagement, its practical use often requires adaptation. Among the most often occurring difficulties is classroom management, particularly in big classes. Teachers find it difficult to strike a compromise between learner independence and maintaining control, which is simpler in more conventional, teacher-led methods.

Using the learners' first language (L1) while doing tasks presents yet another difficulty. Though communication is the aim, students with poor English proficiency often resort to their native tongue, therefore restricting their practice time. Teachers sometimes have doubts in their own speaking abilities, which makes encouraging spontaneous language use in the classroom difficult.



Using just the minimum language required to finish assignments, certain pupils interact with them on only a superficial level, therefore lowering the communicative advantage. Furthermore, cultural traditions and educational standards might make it difficult for some instructors to completely change from a teacher-centred approach to one based on learners. Some areas' educational systems give more importance to memorization and grammatical understanding than active language use, which could run against TBLT principles.

Many teachers don't fully embrace TBLT but rather modify it to meet the needs of their pupils, their teaching environment, and their own beliefs in order to address these difficulties. This includes gradually moving toward more student-centred activities by employing a mix of communicative tasks and form-focused exercises. Some educators begin with drills and gradually integrate more genuine conversation over time—that is, they reshape TBLT to meet their local curriculum, school rules, or pupil expectations. Others follow a continuum

**Results:**

Teachers often adapt TBLT rather than adopt it fully.

TBLT is seen as flexible, not a fixed method.

Major challenges include classroom management, overuse of L1, low student proficiency, and cultural mismatch.

Many teachers use a combination of traditional and TBLT methods to suit their local teaching contexts.

The concept of a “task” is now broader, ranging from structured practice to open-ended, real-world communication.

**Conclusion:**

Task-Based Language Teaching has strong potential to improve communicative competence and make language learning more meaningful. However, its success depends on how well it is adapted to fit different educational settings. Teachers play a key role in shaping TBLT to meet the realities of their classrooms, students' needs, and cultural expectations. Instead of viewing TBLT as a strict method, it should be seen as a flexible framework that allows for gradual change. By understanding the core principles of TBLT and creatively applying them, educators can enrich their teaching while maintaining relevance and effectiveness in diverse learning environments.

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