Task-Based Learning in the Classroom for EFL Learners: A Review

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Abstract
In language teaching and learning, there are several methodologies and approaches; one of them is TBL. Since the 1980s, this approach has had the most pedagogical attention in second language pedagogy. TBL is becoming increasingly common worldwide, particularly in English classes in Indonesia. The task's goal is to establish a clear reason for language use and create a natural meaning for language learning. The ideas and principles of TBL have proven to be effective in classrooms. This paper aims to explain why teachers should implement TBL (TBL) in the language classroom and how to implement TBL during classroom instruction. The discussion begins with the introduction and the description of TBL. Then, it goes on TBL characteristics and continues with the approaches, the benefits, and framework of TBL.

Keywords: TBL, English Classroom, EFL Learners

1. INTRODUCTION

English has been the first foreign language to be learned in schools in Indonesia (Alisjahbana, 1990). Formal English language instruction was nationally launched at junior high school. It was governed by the enactment of Law No. 22/2006 on standardized content, specifying that English is a compulsory subject in junior and senior high schools (SMP). The aim of English learning at SMP is to help students attain a functional communication level (Supriyono & Sugirin, 2014). Students are supposed to be skillfull in language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are incorporated into English teaching-learning. On English's significance, it is taught to be used only in a formal school and in an informal school. Unfortunately, while English was advertised as a mandatory lesson in Indonesia, the reality shows that English teaching has not improved substantially in Indonesia's formal educational institutions, including at the school level. Some researchers indicate that several factors affect English learning; the teaching method is one factor (Ellis, 2006).

In response to this phenomenon, Task-Based Learning (henceforth, TBL) was introduced in our country. Prabhu first recognized the approach on his Communicational Teaching Project in Bangalore, India, in 1979. It suggests the term "task" as the main activity of planning and teaching. Prabhu (1987) describes a task as an operation that needs teachers to monitor the process, in which learners generate a result from provided information through some thinking process. According to Nunan (1989:10) task is a slide of classwork requiring learners to understand, exploit, create, or communicate in the target language while stressing meaning rather than form. From the

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above definitions, it can be inferred that the focus in TBL lies on meaning. Moreover, Willis (1996:18) proposes the utilization of tasks as a key priority for language lessons, suggesting that tasks have a supporting analytical structure. According to her, tasks eliminate the dominance of teachers. Thus, the teacher's role is nothing more than a guide, whereas the roles of the students are very involved. In short, the usage of tasks in English for Foreign Language teaching tends to be the prime criterion for the successful participation of students in the process of learning.

TBL can be as a part of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). According to Littlewood (1999), TBL can be described as a specific approach for applying the broader of communicative approach. TBL aims to build students ' communication skills through practical and communicative tasks. These are activities where learners use the target language to obtain an outcome on a communicative goal (Willis, 1996). This approach gives students a chance to actively participate in activities designed to achieve an objective or complete a task. It creates an enjoyable classroom environment by involving students through the use of tasks in the learning process. The tasks are carried out daily, such as writing a letter or speaking to someone on phone. TBL aims to build students' inter-language by assigning problems and then using language to solve them (Skehan, 1998:9). It also improves their learning, as the TBL tasks stimulate student participation and enhance substantial language output. Tasks are seen as instruments in task-supported teaching that teachers and learners use to meet common language goals and objectives with the teacher support through training, online resources and selective feedback (Samuda and Bygate, 2008:10).

TBL in the Indonesian context is a relatively new concept for most English teachers. Some of them do not have the right ideas about teaching methods and strategies. Ideally, teachers need to perform various forms of language classroom activities, such as tasks related to the growth of language skills. Many tasks depend on the classroom size, the amount of students, the incentives for group and pair work, and so on. Contradictory, most teachers are not familiar with current approaches to ELT, so my research study researcher aimed at finding methods that are easily accessible to teachers in the ELT field. Most teachers follow traditional methods of teaching English, and students are also used to learning this way. Yet nowadays teachers are struggling to keep up with new English teaching methods. In their classrooms, they seek to apply some of the processes. Some teacher also started using TBL for teaching the students in language classrooms. There are certainly some reflections among teachers and learners about this approach.

This paper aims to present the definition of TBL, identify the characteristics of TBL, highlight the approaches of TBL, expound the benefits of TBL, and explore how to implement the approach in the EFL Classroom.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1. Definition of TBL

TBL was initiated in the 1980s. Prabhu had developed it to support the teaching of communicative languages. Prabhu claimed that students could learn in a more effective way when they focus on the task, not the language they use. TBL is a framework in

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which communication and practical activities are essential to language learning. The communications language methodplays a greater role than creating the correct language. TBL is, therefore, seen as one model of CLT in considering real and effective communication as the key features of language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

TBL is an approach which emphasizes the learning process of communication by engagement in the target language. It represents the acknowledgment of communicative language teaching theory. Ellis (2003) also points out that activities are also used as valuable testing methods and as the basis for language training strategies. TBL focuses on authentic language and the origination of practical activities using the target language. An effective learning will happen if students engage in language taks instead of learning form or grammar (Nunan, 2004). The main objective of this approach is to utilize tasks to promote target language acquisition. Such activities can include reserving a restaurant table, shopping with friends, visiting a doctor, or finding other people's advice. In contrast to the GTM, the assessment focuses primarily on results, the proper fulfillment of real-world tasks, not the precision of specified language forms. It makes TBL particularly effective in creating target language fluency and confidence in the EFL class.

TBL aims to enhance the activities of students in language rather than the activities of teachers. The teacher creates and executes various tasks, encouraging the learners to encounter the target language naturally, independently, and originally (Willis, 1996:25). The tasks must offer learners new personal experiences of the target language and the teacher's role is so critical. The teacher must be responsible for raising awareness and the students must fulfill the experimental task.

TBL usually uses pair work and group work to improve student engagement and cooperation. It can also use more formal cooperative learning models. This approach applies to all language ability levels, but the nature of the task differs between levels.Another significant feature of TBL is that it is not intended to guide or regulate language forms used by learners. However, learners can make certain mistakes when they talk but must find their mistakes as a nominal learning component. Learners must feel free to play with the risk-taking target language. The teacher would then support themto take the risk of doing something wrong, rather than saying anything.

2.2. Characteristics of TBL
Swan (2005) says TBL has the following characteristics:
- Language learning should be natural and focuses on meaning rather than language forms.
- Instructions will promote student-centeredness, not teacher-centricity.
- Because naturalistic learning does not achieve target precision, involvement is important for fostering the disguise of languagecomponents while preserving the apparent advantages of a natural approach.
- This approach can be accomplished through providing chances to concentrate on the structure that will attract students' attention to language elementsbecause they appear in classes based on meaning.
- Communication tasks are particularly appropriate instruments for this approach.

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- More systematic language analysis before or after activities may be beneficial. That can contribute to the internalization of communication by leading to or optimizing awareness of formal features.
- Traditional approaches are impractical and inappropriate, especially where passive formal training and practice are necessary, communication isolated.
  Nunan also suggests seven principles of TBL (2004:35-36), as discussed below.
- *Scaffolding.* It is necessary for an educator to perform lessons or use resources to reinforce the context of the learning process.
- *The dependency of tasks.* A task needs to be set up focusing on the instructions sequence.
- *Recycle.* A teacher must reintroduce a specific linguistic aspects to the students for a length of time.
- *Active learning.* There will be other opportunities for the learners to participate in the teaching and learning process. The theory suggests that learners will understand better if they will consciously improve their understanding instead of listening to teacher explanation alone.
- *Integration.* The teaching and learning process should include all facets of language instruction, rather than concentrating on only one aspect. There are three aspects to be taught, which are considered important, namely form, function and meaning.
- *Integration.* The learning process should cover all aspects of language teaching, instead of focusing on just one aspect. Three things to be taught are considered essential in learning language, namely form, function and meaning.
  Based on the explanationsabove, a task is defined as activities that will contribute to the classroom interaction and the students in comprehending the materials. Besides, it is expected to improve the students' engagement and language skills, task is hopefully able to increase the students' motivation.

2.3. Approaches to TBL in EFL Classroom

TBL has three primary approaches, they are Long (1985), Skehan (1998), and Ellis (2003). Ellis following table (2009) classifies these three TBL approaches by five characteristics: (1) offering incentives for natural use of language; (2) learner-centeredness; (3) focus-on-form; (4) type of task; and (5) opposing conventional language teaching methods (e.g. PPP).

Table 1. A comparison of three approaches to TBL in Language Teaching

Characteristic	Long (1985)	Skehan (1988)	Ellis (2003)
Natural Language use	Yes	Yes	Yes
Learner-centredness	Yes	Yes	Not necessarily
Focus on form	Yes-through corrective feedback	Yes-mainly	Yes-in all phrases of TBL lesson
Tasks	Yes-unfocused and focused	Yes-unfocused	Yes-unfocused and focused
Rejection of Traditional approach	Yes	Yes	No

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All these three approaches have in common, as is evident from the table, that they all underline the tasks features characteristic of tasks in contexts setting for natural language useand concentrate on form. However, there are strong variations in the three strategies on how to obtain attention to form with Long stressing restorative input, Skehan task design and pre-work preparation, and Ellis a multitude of forms in all three stages of the TBL. There are also differences in the three approaches in terms of (1) (i.e. Ellis does not see group work as a critical features), (2) (i.e. while Skehan prefers only chaotic tasks, Long and Ellis still see a place for concentrated tasks) and (3) (While Long and Skehan see conventional hierarchical teaching as potentially impossible, Ellis finds that its reciprocal to TBL) (Ellis, 2009).

2.4. TBL in the EFL Classroom, Why?

TBL provides many benefits because it is focused on communication and encourages the learnersto express previously acquired skills in different forms of communication (Nunan, 1989). This allows the language learners to use language that is geared towards meaning (Breen 1989 as quoted in Ellis, 2009).

TBL enables spontaneous communication between learners

Learners should use anything they know about vocabulary and grammar. For example, a role-play allows the learners to make free use of vocabulary. It offers students a chance to check what language they already learn. It provides learners the opportunity to hear and understand from other languages and thus gradually increase their level of confidence. When they perform a task, the cognitive and communicative skills of the learners are established. Rather than focusing on individual language systems, attention is drawn to problem-solving by the learners. It promotes more creativity amongst the learners.

Automaticity

Language learning automaticity is characterized as a more effective, accurate, and consistent output (Segadowitz, 2003 referred to in Rider, et al 2007). Automaticity is likewise claimed to lead to findings close to those of native ones. Studies in the areas of cognitive psychology and second language learningindicate that automaticity is accomplished in an authentic communication situation by using language laws in a innovative way (Rider et al, 2007). TBL encourages automaticity. Cognitive language theories say that real-life conditions help achieve automatic language comprehension (Johnson, 1988 as quoted in Ellis 2009).

TBL helps language learners to master vocabulary

In general, teachers clarify the vocabulary in a pre-task, and learners are not active; words taught are quickly forgotten. So when the teacher considers creatively to involve students in the pre-task, and it is helpful for students. Some of the suggested options for vocabulary enhancement include estimating words for the task topic or subject, and building words on word network through brainstorm, cooperative dictionary search, and matching word list with a meaning list (Newton, 2001). The teacher has to make extra

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effort to plan an interactive glossary. It is also worth empowering learners to negotiate meaning from new rather than an old source.Although the question remains regarding the amount of vocabulary learned through community learning, learners have improved significantly. This is often suggested that vocabulary learning happens indirectly when learners engage in interaction based on the cooperative mission. Upon completing the tasks, if the learners are motivated to record of new words and revisit the terms, and if they address new words in various ways even contexts, it will improve their language skills. A teacher has to make sure that learners can access and learn new words without teacher assistance through tasks and use this vocabulary to accomplish specific objectives of the tasks (Newton, 2001).

After finishing the task, if the students are roused to record of new words and return to the terms, and on the off chance that they address new words in different manners even settings, it will improve their language abilities. An instructor needs to ensure that students can get to and learn new words without educator help through undertakings and utilize this jargon to achieve explicit goals of the assignments

Providing language learning requirements
Language learning can not take place without motivation and chances.TBL allows learners to communicate and use the language. Learners have an opportunity to discuss turns to chat and even seek out a lot of contact techniques. TBL produces conditions that naturally improve language learning. It trains learners to use real-world language (Andon, 2010).

Maximizing connectivity
TBL provides requirements to appreciate what students feel and comprehend in conducting their task. Throughengaging the tasks, learners use the language they have learned recently as well as new language objects. Tasks help learners to gain to assimilate language components they know and comprehend easily. This helps learners to pass their past acquired skills creatively to new interaction contexts. This involves learners in constructive dialogues and helps learners to play with various communication strategies and furnishes learners with public language.

Experiential learning
Experiential learning is considered an assential basisfor TBL. The actual personal experience of the students is the starting point in this approach.Intellectual development is believed to occur when learners participate and concentrate on task sequences.This approach considers active involvement to be central and therefore the approach is learner centered. This is contrary to the instructional communication approach in which the learners acquire the teachers' knowledge passively.

2.5. TBL in the EFL Classroom, How?
        According to Long (2000), TBL can be operationalized at a macro level using the following procedures: (1) performing needs analysis to determine the target tasks,

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(2) classifying tasks in some categories, (3) developing pedagogical tasks from the task types or categories, (4) choosing and arranging pedagogical tasks to develop a task-based syllabus. Skehan (1996) identified four phases in implementing TBL at a micro level: pre-emptive stage, during the task period, post-task 1 and post-task 2. The pre-emptive stage is aimed at reducing cognitive load and developing target language through preparation and awareness-raising. It aims at integrating fluency and precision through task choice and pressure manipulation during the actual task. Post-task 1 includes public success after group-level tasks have been completed, performance monitoring by videotaping etc., and testing. It ultimately aims at defocusing learners from unnecessary fluency and promoting precision and restructuring. The final step, Post-Task 2, is aimed at facilitating the process of analysis and synthesis through task sequences (repeating and parallel tasks) and task families (tasks similar to those carried out).

TBL proposes that teachers assist students with practical classroom tasks and let students accomplish these tasksby modeling, experiencing, practicing, participating, cooperating and communicating (Nunan, 2004). In Nunan's view (2004), a TBL framework is established which identifies and illustrates the key elements. However, Willis (1996) and Gatbonton and Segalowitz (2005) have explained the following elements for an effective TBL lesson: pre-task, task cycle and post-task (see Figure 1).

The procedures above can be adapted by teachers when conducting TBL. They can be adjusted to create a successful learning condition with the learning objective and the students' level of proficiency.

The English teacher who seeks TBL will play three key roles: (1) task selector and sequencer; (2) task preparation; and (3) awareness building. Related to the first position of teacher, it should be emphasized that the teacher is involved in identifying, modifying, developing, and constructing tasks suitable for the student's needs, desires, preferences, and language levels. Concerning the second position of the teacher, it may be mentioned that some pre-task training is essential for students. Such training exercises can involve presenting subjects, defining instructions for task, helping students learn or remember useful words and phrases to promote the task and partially view processes of task. As for the last teacher position, it can be stressed that the teacherusesa combination of shape-focusing strategies, covers pre-task-focused activities, reviews the text in question, directs access to similar tasks and uses comprehensive content (Richards and Rogers, 2001).

In the EFL classroom, the students exposes to TBL will play three main roles: (1) group participant; (2) monitor; and (3) risk-taker and innovator. With regard to the students' first position, it is suggested that the studentscomplete a variety of tasks in pairs or groups. Pair or group work can require some transformation for students who are more accustomed to all-around activities and/or individual tasks. Concerning the second student function, it should be emphasized that tasks are used as instruments in TBL to promote learning processes.

In the EFL study hall, the understudies opens to TBL will assume three fundamental jobs: (1) bunch member; (2) screen; and (3) daring individual and trailblazer. With respect to the understudies' first position, it is recommended that the

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understudies total an assortment of undertakings two by two or gatherings. Pair or gathering work can require some transformation for understudies who are more acquainted with all-around exercises and additionally singular undertakings. Concerning the subsequent understudy work, it ought to be underscored that errands are utilized as instruments in TBL to advance learning forms.

Figure 1. The Framework of TBL

Steps	Sub-steps	Role of teacher	Role of students
Pre-task	Introduction to topic and task	Discussing topic with the students, aids students to comprehend instructions and prepare.	Doing the teacher's instruction
Task cycle	Task	Acting as a guide and support students	Working in pairs or groups to do the task
	Planning	• Making the report's intent clear • Acting as a language counselor • Helping students prepare oral reports or written one	• Preparing to explain to the class how and what they learned • Rehearsing what they're about to say or write a written version.
	Report	• Acting as a moderator, decides who will talk next or ensure that all students read most written papers. • Giving short feedback on the form and content. • Recordingstudents doing the same or relevents task.	Showing to the class the spoken and written report.
Post-task	Analysis	• Doing reviews every analysisactivity with class • Giving additional essential words , sentences and patterns. • Collecting language items from the report stage.	• Building knowledge to recognize and process different language features from the task, text and/or transcript • Asking about the features that the students noticed
	Practice	Conducting after-analysis tasks, if necessary to create trust.	• Practicing words, phrases and patterns of analytical activities • Using other features in next task or report process • Entering valuable language items in the notebooks • Inserting useful laguage items in the notebooks

Classroom activities should be designed to encourage students to understand how language interacts. Students must "attend" the message in task activity, as well as how such messages are usually packaged.Related to the third learner position, several tasks can be said to force students to produce and report messages with no full language resources and limited experience. The point of these tasks is said to be this. This may be

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useful for developing language and contextual guessing skills, finding explanations and interacting with other students (Richards and Rogers, 2001).

3. CONCLUSION

Over the last two decades, task learning has evolved and remained a potential and successful solution for many EFL teachers, while some researchers are still investigating the influence of this approach. TBL represents a popular language teaching concept. The aim of teaching is not to assiststudents achieve scheduled goals, but to furnish them with the specific circumtance and conditions where learning of a language occur.The positions of the teachershave additionally been moved from teacher to research setting establishers, assistants, guides and learning activity advocates. A teacher's role is important in setting up the stedentsin performing tasks, such as pre-teaching vocabulary and grammar structures, encouraging the students to be engaged in the process of teaching and learning, and so forth.

For any approach to successful teachers, students' participation must be highly imaginative and inventive and be able to take action to arouse students' curiosity.If teachers are eligible, learning opportunities will be optimal. They will take any opportunity to improve the students' skills and prepare them in real-life scenarios to use language in the future. Any effort should be put in to carry out the task well. This is also the responsibility of teacher trainees and in- administration assessors to enhance the performance of the students. Instead of trying to classify one approach as the best, researchers, instructors, curriculum development officials, course designers, and interested parties will find ways to promote language learning.

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