

## Communicative Task-Based Approach in ELT

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**Abstract:** Task is a purposeful activity where students use the target language with a specific communicative task in order to prepare them for communication in real situations. Communication-oriented teaching lessons allow students to increase motivation, expand the expressive possibilities of speech in a learning environment. Therefore, ELT teachers should choose topics that will motivate students and contribute to the most effective development of the language. In this article, we will discuss about communicative task-based approach in English language teaching.

**Key words:** task-based teaching, communicative task, foreign language learning

### Introduction

Knowing a foreign language does not mean knowing grammar rules and vocabulary. It's not just about knowing the language, but about the ability to use it in real communication, i.e. about practical possession, therefore, about the development of "communicative competence". The linguistic competence and its constituent part - grammatical skills and abilities, occupy a leading place in the process of achieving this goal. Undoubtedly, communication is possible only if there is language competence, which is based on grammatical skills and abilities. Thus, one of the most challenging tasks facing foreign language teachers is how to stimulate the imagination of their students so that they are more motivated to learn. As a result, the ongoing process of finding and developing teaching materials that can be used to complement the basic textbooks for a course of study is one of the most important activities of the teacher in planning a lesson. Many teachers tend to base the planning of an English lesson on the traditional PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production) approach - presentation, practice, productivity as this method is reliable and effective. This technique is the best at the moment, as it covers all areas of vocabulary and grammar of the textbooks or programs used. However, the use of this methodology revealed that during the teaching of theory and practice, the individual needs and characteristics of each student are not taken into account; the content is almost always dictated by a textbook or curriculum. It is quite rare for teachers to instruct their students to perform the kind of classroom exercise that they encounter in everyday life using their native language. If teachers make sure that the foreign language in which students speak in class becomes "meaningful" and therefore memorable, students will be able to naturally memorize and apply the language in various situations. Communication-oriented teaching lessons allow students to increase motivation, expand the expressive possibilities of speech and gives naturalness to the statements of students in a learning environment.

### Materials and Methods

Learning by doing communicative tasks gives benefits to the students. This teaching method can help the students to learn in a situation that exists in the real world; a situation when oral communication is of fundamental importance for the performance of a specific task. The goal is not

to learn the structure, but to complete the assignment. However, in order to successfully complete the assignment, students must use speech correctly and communicate their ideas. Thus, the language becomes a communication tool that is aimed at helping the student to successfully cope with the task at hand. The immersion in the language environment occurs, and students begin to communicate in a foreign language with a practical purpose.

One of the main goals when choosing a communicative task is to increase student activity. The teacher must set certain tasks for the students; there will be an opportunity for a spontaneous, individual and original experiment with a foreign language. As a result of completing each such task, the student will have a certain personal experience of using a foreign language, and at this stage the teacher will play a very important role. Nunan notes five main characteristics of the communicative tasks (Nunan, 2002):

- 1) Emphasis on teaching communication through communication in the target language;
- 2) The introduction of authentic texts (teaching materials) into the educational situation;
- 3) Providing students with the opportunity to focus not only on the language, but also on the learning process itself;
- 4) Increasing the student's personal experience as an important element contributing to learning;
- 5) An attempt to link language learning in the classroom with the activation of the language outside of it (Nunan, 2002).

There are a number of interpretations of the concept of "task". According to the definition of Richards and Rodgers, pedagogical tasks consist of performing actions in the course of understanding the language and working with it (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). For example: being asked to draw a map while listening to a discussion, listening to an instruction, and executing a command. For the successful completion of such a task, the teacher must indicate which result will be considered successful. According to Nunan, pedagogical tasks are done in the classroom, during which students are involved in the process of comprehension, manipulation, reproduction or communication in the target language, while their attention is focused on mobilizing all grammatical knowledge to express meaning (Nunan, 2002). Teachers divide classes into the following stages to do various tasks:

- Preliminary tasks: The teacher gives a topic, sets tasks and introduces students to situations / vocabulary / texts (through reading and listening, as well as sharing personal experience or demonstrating various pictures). This engages students in the topic being studied and improves language skills, which can be very beneficial. The teacher can only point out or focus on useful phrases and vocabulary, but not teach new structures. It is helpful to give students an example of how to do a similar assignment correctly. Then the teacher explains what the task itself is and organizes the activities of the students.
- The task: Students complete the assignment in pairs or groups, using the appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. The teacher provides support and monitors the correct completion of assignments.
- Planning: Students prepare to present their ideas and work to the rest of the students. They make a test presentation in their groups. During this time, the teacher helps students with advice or answers questions that arise.
- Representation: Students present their work. The instructor decides in which sequence the students or representatives of groups of students will speak. And also gives short comments on

the content of the work. Students focus on communication, even at the expense of correct grammar.

- Analysis (focus on language): The teacher marks words, phrases or grammar the technical structures that students used in their presentations. The language structures necessary for learning are also highlighted.

The main advantages of task-based communicative approach are:

- ✓ the focus in the learning process shifts from teacher to student;
  - ✓ a different understanding of the function of language (as a communication tool, and not as a learning goal);
  - ✓ bridging the gap between abstract knowledge of the language and its real use;
  - ✓ students become free from "linguistic control", using all available knowledge, not only practicing one necessary phrase or linguistic phrase;
  - ✓ a communicative approach to learning;
  - ✓ using a wide range of tasks - reading, listening, problem solving, role playing, polling, etc .;
  - ✓ classes take into account the individual needs of students, are interesting and motivate to study.
- [4]

## Results and Discussions

Tasks based on a communicative purpose traditionally include various role-playing, games, communication modeling, etc. Such tasks are realized with the help of various cards, booklets and other handouts. This contributes to greater efficiency and productivity in achieving educational objectives in teaching a foreign language. For example: role plays are used to allow students to practice speaking in a conversational situation, build confidence and fluency, assess progress, and put learning into action. We use three types of role-plays in the classroom:

1. The cooperative role play requires participants to work together for planning a party for the teacher, deciding the food list for a barbecue, brainstorming ways to attract tourists to local attractions are all cooperative role plays. Often involving 'safe' situations, cooperative role plays are good for gently easing shy students into conversations and for building relationships within a student group.
2. Information gap role plays are based around filling in holes in the participants' knowledge. Answering questions from customs officers, asking for timetabling details, making a library card or interrogating a murder suspect are all information gap type situations. If based on the students' real selves these role plays are simple to set up, but fictitious situations may require more elaborate preparations. They are an excellent way to practice question and answer patterns and prepare students for real-life encounters.
3. Task-based role plays require participants to complete a set activity such as checking into a hotel, giving directions to a taxi driver, ordering a meal or getting the phone number of a potential love interest. They are useful for helping students to practice realistic survival English skills and are an excellent way to build students' confidence in their ability to function in real situations. As a teacher, it is a great sign if you see your learners acting out what they have just learnt. This shows that you have grabbed their attention and engaged their curiosity. Role plays are an essential tool to have in the teaching box, but it pays to be aware of where you want them to go. Here are some questions to ask yourself as you design a role play.

- What kinds of language structures or grammar points do I want my students to use, and will this role play incorporate them naturally?
- Do I know in my own mind I want to see occur in the role play?
- Do the students have the language and social skills to be able to manage the situation?
- Can I issue set up instructions clearly and make sure that all participants understand their own roles?
- Is the situation appropriate for the age, level and status of the students in this group?
- What do I want the students to take away from the exercise and how can I reinforce this through feedback?

Role plays always help if students are enjoying themselves. It is an active, social activity where students can get into character and use role play to reflect on and develop their knowledge of a topic. There are key benefits of role playing:

- Develops communication and language skills
- Allows students to act out and make sense of real-life situations
- Allows students to explore, investigate and experiment
- Develops social skills as students collaborate with others
- Helps children learn about different cultures
- Encourages children to express their ideas and feelings in a relaxed environment
- Develops students' cultural awareness
- Sparks creativity and imagination

***What a clerk might say:***

May I help you?

Can I help you?

Can I help you find something?

What can I do for you?

***What a customer might say:***

Excuse me. Do you work here?

(Can you help me?)

Can I ask you something?

***What a customer might respond:***

Yes. I'm looking for \_\_\_\_\_. / Do you have any \_\_\_\_\_ (s)?

Can you tell me where the \_\_\_\_\_ is/are?

When you check out/leave the store :

Clerk: Did you find everything you needed?

Did you find what you were looking for? /Did you find everything okay?

Will that be all (for today)? /Is that everything? / (Will there be) anything else?

Customer: That's all for today. / That's it. Thanks.

## Conclusion

In conclusion we can mention here the teacher facilitates communication in the classroom and enables learners through communicative based tasks where they can use their language skills in order to exchange information/communicate.

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