

Overview and Reflection on the Research of Task Based Language Teaching

Feng Xiaoyun

China West Normal University

Published: 15 April 2019

Copyright © Xiaoyun.

Abstract

In the early 20th century, during the development of teaching English as a foreign language, many researchers in English gradually realized that the current education model of English as a foreign language still reflects the education level of the 1970s. Therefore, many researchers have focused their research on the in-depth exploration of the teaching model of English. Promulgated in 2008, it can also be seen in the "General Course Outline of International English Teaching" that in the process of teaching English as a foreign language, the Task Based Language Teaching mode has gradually entered a wider application stage.

The main content of this paper is to summarize the characteristics of task-based teaching methods, the status quo of domestic research and the status quo of research abroad, and some reflections on the research summary of task-based teaching methods.

Key words: Task Based Language Teaching characteristics reflections

1.1 Definitions of TBLT

When we refer to the Task-based Language Teaching, task will be first discussed. Then, what is task? Although there are a large number of articles on the Task-based Language Teaching, there is not a widely accepted concept about task so far. Task-based language teaching consists of a series of tasks as teaching organizational units, and classroom teaching contains a series of tasks. But there is not a widely recognized definition of the concept of "task" at present. Several definitions of task were mentioned as follows.

Littlewood (2002) believed that a task is a special activity. A teacher or a student can set the activity. The goal may be in language. Both finding grammatical rules and completing exercises are in it.

Cite this article: Xiaoyun, F. (2019). Overview and Reflection on the Research of Task Based Language Teaching. *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science*, 7(3), 45-51.

Widdowson (1990) believed that the task must be chosen with great care to enable learners to engage in purposeful problem-solving activities with them.

There are plenty of definitions about the Task-based Language Teaching. Generally speaking, Task-based Language Teaching takes special tasks as the basis for teaching and is driven by the completion of the task. The task in Task-Based Teaching refers to an activity in which learners can use the target language to achieve the goal. In the eyes of Professor Pang Jixian (2000), the so-called “task”, in short, is “doing things”. In the process of “doing things”, students are in an energetic and animate learning atmosphere at all time. In the classroom, the process of communication between teachers and students is also a good interaction process. For the sake of completing the assigned task of the teacher, learners take this as the center and a goal, and mobilize all kinds of language and non-verbal resources, take a variety of measures to find some ways which can help them to solve the problems in order to accomplish their learning goals. The completion of the task also creates a positive and beneficial learning atmosphere.

Nunan proposes six elements in task-based teaching. They are goals, input, activities, roles, partners, and environment.

(1) Goal: The type of goal the teacher and learner set for the task.

(2) Input: The materials the teacher teaches in class should be understandable by the students.

(3) Activities: teachers design and create activities to accomplish the specific task of classroom effects.

(4) Roles: teachers and learners.

(5) Partners: In class, students should complete specific tasks with other students as partners.

(6) Environment: team work, matching work and so on.

Task-based language teaching enables students to complete a variety of real life, learning, work and other tasks to the real goal of the task, so as to develop their ability to use English through direct English class teaching. Task-based language teaching proposed that this approach bridges the input (teaching content) to the output. Teachers can use this method to check whether students have mastered the teaching content. In the process of completing the task, students learned to use English in their daily life and developed their own ability to speak English. In various tasks, students are gradually cultivating their ability to use the language. In the end, they will be able to develop their own style. Therefore, this method is to complete the specific tasks the teacher created in the classroom. Based on the above discussion, we can conclude that task-based language teaching methods will improve teaching effectiveness.

1.2 Illustration of the Advantages of TBLT

The task-based teaching method is formed by absorbing the advantages of a variety of previous teaching methods. It does not exclude other teaching methods. The task-based teaching method organizes teaching by tasks. And in the process of task fulfillment, participates in, experiences, interacts, communicates, and cooperates in the learning mode. It fully utilizes the learners' own cognitive abilities and mobilizes their existing target language resources. Perceiving, recognizing and applying the target language in practice reflect a more advanced teaching concept and is an effective foreign language teaching method worthy of promotion.

This new applied teaching method completes a variety of task activities to help stimulate

students' interest in learning. In the process of completing the task, the combination of language knowledge and language skills will help students develop comprehensive language skills. It can promote students to actively participate in language exchange activities, inspire imagination and creative thinking, and help students to play a role in the subject. There are a large number of group or double activities in task-based teaching. Each person has his own task to complete. Better teaching for all students. The activities involved a wide range of information, which will help broaden students' knowledge. Learning knowledge at the event and cultivating interpersonal communication, thinking, decision-making and resilience are conducive to students' all-round development. In the task-based teaching activities, under the enlightenment of the teacher, each student has the opportunity of independent thinking and active participation, easy to maintain the enthusiasm of learning, and develop good study habits.

1.3 Relevant Research at Home and Abroad

Prabhu, N.S. (1979 — 1984) instructed in communicative teaching in India, this is the initial form of task-based teaching. When he was conducting this experiment, he paid great attention to "learning by doing".

In the past 10 years, foreign scholars still have a lot of research on task teaching methods. Peter Robinson (2001) discusses the impact of cognitive complexity of tasks on language output and learners' understanding of task difficulty. Lyle F. Bachman (2002) discusses issues related to task-based language performance assessment. Glenn Fulcher and Rosina Marquez Retie (2003) reviewed the impact of task difficulty on candidates in the oral exam and made some suggestions. Cynthia Lee (2004) explores the relationship between Chinese students' language production, communication strategies and communicative tasks and explores the relationship between second language and task learning from the perspective of learner discourse. David Nunan (2004) published "Task-based Language Teaching" as a supplement and extension to the 1989 edition of "Designing tasks for the Communicative Classroom". From the definition of task-based language teaching, framework, task composition, task-based language teaching experience foundation, formal focus, integration task, task-based language teaching evaluation, task and teacher development, the task language teaching is explained in detail. Every aspect Rod Ellis (2005) has written a collection of papers, "Planning and Task Performance in a Second Language," which focuses on the nature of mission planning and its impact on task performance in the lab, classroom, and test environment.

There are also many studies on task-based teaching methods in China.

Xia Jimei (1998) first proposed task-based language teaching in college English teaching to help students get out of the classroom, introduce society into the classroom, extend the classroom to the society, and help students learn to develop viability and work ability.

Chen Xiaotang (2004) introduced the theoretical basis and learning basis of task-based teaching method, and discussed how to design tasks from three aspects: task objectives, task types and textbooks, and discussed tasks from the roles of learners and teachers. The specific application of teaching methods. Looking forward to the broad prospects of task-based

teaching methods, the article also points out that task teaching methods have shortcomings in task type setting, difficulty sequence and performance evaluation, and need to be improved.

Fang Wenli (2003) summarized the characteristics and significance of task-based teaching methods, and introduced three modes of task design, namely, structural, communicative and intermediate; and explored the implementation of task-based teaching methods from the perspective of psychology and cognition. Possibility, combined with teaching practice, explores the problems that task-based teaching methods should pay attention to when applying in China. Finally, it is pointed out that the implementation of task-based teaching methods should be carried out in a planned and planned manner.

Chen Zuohong and Tian Yan (2008) discussed the application of task-based language teaching method in English teaching from the definition of task, type and task design, and discussed how to use task-based teaching method to improve students' oral communication ability.

Qi Xiugui and Qi Zhenhai (2004) re-recognize the task-based approach from the following perspectives: the definition of task and task-based approach, and the different approaches to outline design, focusing on the theoretical basis and problems of these approaches.

1.4 Implications for Future Task-based Language Teaching

Task-based teaching is an effective way put forward by the Ministry of Education, which can arouse students' attention and improve their interest in learning English. At the same time, the English curriculum standard considers it necessary to apply the task-based pedagogy in the classroom. So TBLT helps to improve teaching quality. For example, students in the experimental class have improved their ability to use English in completing their tasks, and their comprehensive language ability has been raised more than before. Through the use of task-based language instruction, English classes are more energetic than traditional ones. The attitude of students to English learning has undergone great changes, that is, most students can learn English independently and effectively. In such a vivid classroom, students become more confident than before.

But there are still some limitations in this method.

1. Group activities lack programmatic rules

In practice, when students encounter topics that are unfamiliar or uninteresting, discussions are difficult to carry out, and discussions are easy to break away from the topic and become farther and farther away from the teaching objectives. Teachers cannot fully take care of every student and inadvertently attack some students. The enthusiasm of the students; the students are not right or wrong in the discussion, they feel that they have not learned anything; when analyzing the results of the group activities, how to balance between the students with good grades and the balance between each student, etc. Further exploration and research are needed to make the theoretical basis and practical mechanism of task-based teaching more complete.

2. The task completion criteria are still ambiguous

How do teachers judge whether a student has completed a task satisfactorily, and how to measure whether a student's acquired knowledge and skills acquired through the task are translated into a proficiency in life is worthy of further study and improvement.

1.5 Suggestions for Future Research

First of all, be sure to choose the type of task in the preparation of the lesson, and define the difficulty of the task. Only when we first have a clear grasp of these two indicators, we can better integrate the students' degree, the students' recognition of the tasks, the task execution environment and other factors in the design task, and make the task more difficult. Good adjustment. Secondly, from the beginning of the task, the teacher must assign a leader to the task activity among the students. In order to do this, one can effectively assist the teacher to complete the task, and the other can help the teacher to monitor the task completion.

Third, since the teaching parties complete the teaching process with the task as the medium, the teacher must master the time in the process of completing the task, and avoid the hasty end of the next link.

Fourth, after each step is completed, there must be a summary. After the completion of the overall task, it is necessary to carry out a clear system and a directional summary, so that the students can get out of the classroom teaching activities, return to the main purpose of language teaching, and understand what they have learned at the event. What is there? improve.

Finally, when carrying out tasks, we must take into account the differences in the degree of students. We cannot allow students with better mastery and enthusiasm in individual languages to take the opportunity to speak exclusively. Objectively, many students become listeners and must consciously guide different ages. Students from different levels and different countries and cultures participate in classroom teaching activities, so that everyone has something to say. Task-based teaching takes tasks as organizational units, and classroom teaching consists of a series of tasks that cannot be achieved by other teaching methods. The design or selection of tasks according to the goals, content and environment of the students is not only the improvement of the language ability of the learners, but also the enrichment and improvement of the teachers' abilities. In this process, teachers should better grasp the advantages of task-based language teaching and make language a real communication carrier.

1.6 Summary

No teaching method is omnipotent, and task-based teaching has its own limitations. As far as its theoretical system is concerned, there are still some inconclusive issues, such as the definition and classification of tasks, and the determination of the difficulty of tasks. As far as its theoretical basis is concerned, the learning theory of task teaching method is mainly based on the second language acquisition theory, which cannot be confused with the reality of foreign language teaching. Throughout the above empirical research, Chinese scholars use a kind of task-based teaching in the practice of teaching. Most of the task types are teaching tasks. "Communication" is limited to students and students, students and teachers. In the virtual space between the linguists or the network, the task implementation adopts forms such as discussion, speech, and simulation dialogue. This compromise is necessary in view of the particularity of

the language learning environment, the concept of learning, the syllabus setting, the curriculum evaluation criteria, and the language level of foreign language teachers in China. Implementing task-based teaching in the process of vigorously developing foreign language teaching reform in China

The study method has undoubtedly played a positive role in improving the time-consuming and inefficient teaching of foreign language teaching, "cramming" teaching, high scores and low energy. When we practice task-based language teaching as a modern language teaching idea, we must constantly explore the effective teaching methods with Chinese characteristics, even academic characteristics, class characteristics, and personal characteristics.

In short, in the basic stage of English teaching, teachers should mobilize the learners' enthusiasm and subjective initiative through systematic and rational teaching interventions, thus transforming one-sided learning into comprehensive learning and passive learning as active learning. English teaching reform is to promote students' ability to develop English comprehensively. The "Teaching Requirements for English Courses" promulgated by the Ministry of Education clearly states that our teaching model must be realized by "teaching mode of teaching language knowledge and skills only" to "both teaching general language knowledge and skills, and paying more attention to cultivating language use ability and the teaching mode of self-learning ability has changed. Many English teachers know that it is unrealistic to rely on the teacher's classroom to achieve this teaching goal. Only through the three-in-one teaching task arrangement before, during and after class can classroom teaching be well developed, and the curriculum reform can be further deepened, so that the original static English learning and teaching process becomes organic and dynamic. In the process of learning, students' English learning can achieve a qualitative and quantitative leap.

Reference

- [1] Ellis Rod. Task- based research and language pedagogy. *Teaching Research* 4, 3(2000)193- 220
- [2] Johnson Keith. What task designers do. *Language Teaching Research*, 2000;4;301- 321
- [3] KormosJudit. The role of individual and social variables in oral task performance. *Language Teaching Research* 4, 3(2000) 275- 300
- [4] Lee Cynthia. *Language Output, Communication Strategies and Communicative Tasks*. New York: University Press of America, 2004
- [5] Littlewood, W. Task-Based Language Teaching: What's Old and What's New? [J]. *Centenary International Conference on English Teacher Education and Development*, 2002(8:26-28).
- [6] Skehan Peter and Foster Paulin. Task type and task processing conditions as influences on foreign language performance. *Language Teaching Research*.1,3(1997), 185- 211

- [7] Skehan Peter. *A Cognitive Approach to Language Learning*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1999
- [8] Skehan Peter. *A Framework for the Implementation of Task- based Instruction*. *Applied Linguistics*, 1996, Vol. 17, No. 1, 38- 62
- [9] Widdowson, H.G. *Teaching Languages Communication*[M]. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.