

Task Based Language Teaching Method

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Abstract— This paper is about Task Based Language Teaching, which is considered one of the newest of the teaching methods.

1 INTRODUCTION

Observing different classes in the USA impressed me and gave me knowledge of how students were active and motivated to participate in different kinds of activities that teachers usually used. As a middle school and university teacher, I have used the traditional way of testing English as a foreign language. Likewise, observing different classes made me realize that I can make testing English as a second or foreign language more effective and attractive. That can be by using various assessments and tests that derived from approaches that I have not used in my experience in testing such as the communicative approach and task based language teaching. That would turn learning the language from a challenge to something that interests learners and enables teachers to test different aspects of the language accurately with positive impression. I learned that using TBLT approach in some points in testing the language can enhance students' knowledge of their English language and reveal the use of the language.

There are some challenges to the traditional assessment that prevent the teacher from measuring the real level for some aspects of the Language. Byram (1997) noted, "It is the simplification of competencies to what can be 'objectively' tested which has a detrimental effect: the learning of trivial fact, the reduction of subtle understanding to generalization and stereotypes, the lack of attention to interaction and engagement because these are not tested." In term of communication and interaction, traditional assessments do not test these skills adequately even though these skills are used in daily life activities. According to Littlewood (2000), "language not only in terms of its structures (grammar and vocabulary), but also in terms of the communicative functions that it performs." Bachman & Palmer (1996) noted, "in order for a particular language test to be useful for its intended purposes, test performance must correspond in demonstrable ways to language use in non-test situations" (P.9). Therefore, the

teacher will be able to use an assessment that has TBLT characteristics to test students by giving an assessment of some aspects of the language and students' knowledge efficiently in regard to reliability, validity, authenticity, feedback and practicality.

Choosing an appropriate topic for the test or the assessment for the students' ages is important. If a teacher chose a topic about the Cinderella story for writing test in an advanced level class consisting of adults, the interest in the topic likely will be very low. In addition, giving very low learners a very challenging topic such as a very detailed and scientific topic in the test would overwhelm the test-takers in the matter of proficiency. The atmosphere should be comfortable for students starting with the equipment and including the materials they need in the exam. If the room is hot or very cold, students' performance will reduce. An example for needed equipment is the dictionary when students write very long papers. If the focus in the paper is the content and the sentence structure not the use of vocabulary, then students should be allowed to use a dictionary.

Moreover, giving feedback to the students can help them to work on their language weaknesses after taking a test or an assessment either is given immediately or afterwards. Brown (2010) stated, "In classroom-based assessment, washback can have a number of positive manifestation, ranging from the benefit of preparing and reviewing for a test to the learning that accurate from feedback on one's performance" (P.38). Positive washback helps students to develop their language in the future. I have not considered giving the students feedback since I did not know about them before. But after looking at John's feedback, I saw the importance of its positive effect on the students.

Authentic language is usually used successfully in TPLT, which means students will be involved in real life context and task. As Spence-Brown (2001) said, tests should "reflect the use of language in the real world" (p. 463). Brown (2010) said, authentic task "is likely to be enacted in the real world" (P.36). Authenticity has an importance in testing as reliability, practicality, and validity have. According to Bo (2007), "authenticity has become established as a central concern in test design and test validation" (p.31). Using authentic language in testing would facilitate learners to understand that the language is used in real life and can be used in different situations besides the test or the assessment. Additionally, one target of this kind of language testing is that the learner would be able to figure out the speaker's or the writer's intention, then respond to it naturally. As Doye (1991) noted, authentic test supposes to be "one that reproduces a real-life situation in order to examine the student's ability to cope with it" (p. 3). The learner should be able to reuse the content in the test successfully in real life. The teacher can use different linguistic forms naturally as it used in real life.

2 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, my experience in IMPAC create a curiosity to discover more about more method of testing such as task based language testing, communicative language testing, alternative testing, and integrative testing. Considering principals such as credibility, validity, practicality, authenticity, and washback enhance both learning, teaching and learning processes for both teachers and students. TBLT as the CLT and the alternative testing has the interaction feature, which increase students' production in the language and their performance in the test. In addition, that will increase their ability to test student's skills more accurate and help to develop language learning and testing in order to master the language sufficiently.

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