

**TEACHING SPEAKING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIC LYCEUMS IN
UZBEKISTAN****Polatova Sarvinoz Ismoilovna****Academic Lyceum of Termiz University of Engineering Agro-Technology, English teacher,
Termiz University of Economics and Service, Department of Foreign Language and
Literature, English teacher Phd Eshmurodova Dildor Uralovna**

Abstract: Effective communication in English is increasingly essential in Uzbekistan, where English language education is prioritized for enhancing global competitiveness. Despite the emphasis on English, challenges remain in teaching speaking skills effectively in secondary schools and academic lyceums. This thesis explores modern approaches to teaching speaking skills, focusing specifically on Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as a method to improve student engagement and proficiency.

Keywords: Task-Based Language Teaching, effective communication methods, speaking skills, innovative and inclusive education.

Uzbekistan's educational reforms since independence have prioritized English language education. However, traditional methods often focus on grammar and reading, neglecting the speaking component. Task-Based Language Teaching provides a framework that can bridge this gap, facilitating authentic communication and practical language use.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Task-Based Language Teaching focuses on the use of meaningful tasks as the central component of language learning. In TBLT, the emphasis is on using language in real-life contexts, which helps students develop their speaking skills through practical application rather than rote memorization.

Key Features of TBLT

1. **Meaningful Communication:** Tasks are designed to promote authentic communication where language is used for real purposes.
2. **Focus on Fluency:** Students are encouraged to prioritize fluency over accuracy during task completion, allowing for more natural speech.
3. **Collaborative Learning:** TBLT often involves group work, fostering interaction among students and enhancing their speaking abilities through peer communication.

Examples of TBLT Activities

1. Role Play

Activity: Students are assigned roles in a simulated scenario, such as a job interview, a restaurant setting, or a customer service interaction. They must prepare and perform their roles in pairs or small groups.

Implementation:

- Preparation: Students research their roles and prepare questions and responses.
- Execution: Each pair performs their role play in front of the class or in small groups.
- Feedback: After the role play, peers and the teacher provide constructive feedback on language use, fluency, and interaction.

2. Information Gap Activities

Objective: To develop questioning and conversational skills.

Activity: In pairs, students receive different pieces of information about a topic (e.g., travel destinations, historical events). They must ask questions to fill in the gaps in their knowledge.

Implementation:

- Preparation: The teacher provides each student with a unique set of information.
- Execution: Students take turns asking questions to discover the missing information from their partner.
- Feedback: Class discussion follows, where students share what they learned from each other.

3. Problem-Solving Tasks

Objective: To encourage critical thinking and collaborative speaking.

Activity: Students are presented with a problem (e.g., planning a school event, solving an environmental issue) and must discuss and propose solutions as a group.

Implementation:

- Preparation: The teacher introduces the problem and provides guidelines for discussion.
- Execution: Students brainstorm solutions, discussing and negotiating their ideas in small groups.
- Feedback: Each group presents their solution to the class, followed by Q&A sessions.

Discussion

Effectiveness of TBLT

The shift towards TBLT in teaching speaking skills can yield significant benefits for students in Uzbekistan. The focus on meaningful tasks fosters greater student engagement and motivation, leading to improved language proficiency. Additionally, collaborative activities help to reduce anxiety associated with speaking, creating a supportive learning environment.

Challenges and Considerations

Implementing TBLT may pose challenges, including:

- **Teacher Training:** Educators may require training to effectively design and facilitate TBLT activities.
- **Resource Availability:** Schools need adequate resources to support interactive learning environments.
- **Classroom Management:** Managing group dynamics and ensuring all students participate can be challenging.

Recommendations for Implementation

1. **Professional Development:** Schools should provide training workshops for teachers on TBLT methodologies and activity design.
2. **Resource Allocation:** Invest in teaching materials that support task-based learning, such as role play scripts, realia, and interactive tools.
3. **Curriculum Integration:** Incorporate TBLT principles into the national curriculum to emphasize the importance of speaking skills.

Conclusion: This study advocates for the adoption of Task-Based Language Teaching as a modern approach to teaching speaking skills in secondary schools and academic lyceums in Uzbekistan. By focusing on meaningful tasks and real-life communication, TBLT can significantly enhance students' speaking proficiency and prepare them for global opportunities. Future research should examine the long-term effects of TBLT on students' language acquisition and overall academic performance.

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