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Second Language and Its Significance in Teaching and Learning through Task-based Learning: Literature Review

Abstract

Learning a second language is not as simple as learning a regional language or mother tongue. Students can acquire the regional language faster because of the environment and usage of the language for survivors, where they get the opportunity to learn and get corrected. Whereas learning a second language without much reflection in routine will stress the learners to retain the language in the long run. To remove the barriers and learn the language better, task-based learning is one of the approaches that help the learners use the language without any intervention. Mistakes are rectified through observation and learning. It also indirectly helps the students to learn a second language faster. This review aims to define the character of task-based learning, the role of a teacher and the students, and to indicate the research carried out by various researchers. This literature review also states the effective usage of comics in task-based learning to improve the students' learning outcomes. Reading has a great impact on an individual because many leaders were voracious readers and that was reflected in their speech, daily life, and the book they published.

Keywords: Second Language, Teaching, Learning, Task-Based Learning, Comics.

Introduction

Language is the route of all trade as they help in the economy of self and the country. Task-based language learning focuses on the authentic use of the language in which the teacher involves the students to participate in an activity where language is the major target. It can be of the general scenario of daily activity such as visiting a customer service, private centres or the government offices where the students get the knowledge along with language examples: Railway station booking counter, courier booking centre to know how the shipment is carried nationally & Internationally, post office, Bank, General Physician, customer care etc. Task-based learning binds the learners with sentence usage in a sequence. Especially when the learners spend time reading books, they generally get into the habit of delivering the ideas

much better than expected. Reading produce higher impact factors on the learners, especially the English language. The learners get to know the usage of words and the sentence structure.

Street (1984) stated the distinction between literacy as autonomous skills and literacy as a social practice. Literacy as an autonomous skill defines language learning as mastering specific language skills, including grammar, syntax, and writing skills. Once learned, the above skills are considered context-free and transferable to any circumstances. On the other hand, when literacy is viewed as a social practice, language learning is ideological, which helps learn a language. It is reflected when it is efficiently tackled by participating in meaningful interactions. The classic example, Streets (2009) 'how teachers and students interact are already a social

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practice that affects the nature of literacy learned’.

Language is part of existence and survival. There is plenty of research carried out in different parts of the world to help students improve their second language. According to Mottorram (2013) “For young learner’s effective classroom strategies have traditionally involved use of songs, rhymes and traditional stories with repeated language structures”. Teachers focus on rhymes and stories; the students grasp the concept quickly as the process repeats, and the students never hesitate to deliver the concepts.

Chomsky (1965) remarked that language could not be taught; rather, one can present the conditions under which language develops spontaneously. Acquiring a language depends on intelligence, age, motivation, opportunity, and social factors. Teacher plays an integral part in learner as they work closely with the students, which help them find the shortcomings of the students. Language teaching and teaching skill are in two different directions. Language generally consists of morphology, phonology, syntax, semantics etc., and skills are focused on a particular goal.

Hadfield (2008) explained better in the following words:

When you teach a language, you teach ‘what’ as the lesson aims to introduce and practice a new language. When you teach skills, you teach ‘how’: focus.

As part of language teaching, there are various methods to teach the language, and many investigations of language teaching are still in existence. Maintaining the collected records is evaluating the need for change. According to Peterson (1979) the systematic analysis of the student teacher progress will leads to the development of process when the data are kept systematically.

Richards and Rodgers (1987) in *Approaches and methods in Language Teaching*: “Condition-oriented theories emphasise the nature of the human and physical context in which language learning takes place.”

Learning Environment

When we plan to learn a language, we must set a goal and work on that wholeheartedly. Progress will be seen only when the mind and body work simultaneously with determination. As well, the zeal should come from within rather than outer force. Learning by force gets vaporised within a few days or so.

Brown (2006), in *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, states that learning a language is to acquire knowledge of a subject

through study, experience, or instruction from teachers, whilst teaching is meant to direct or assist the learners in putting it into action. Teaching means giving guidelines or imparting knowledge and reason for the learners to understand the concept better.

Bhuvanewari G et al. (2020) the article defined the use of an online platform for teaching and learning during the pandemic. Teaching can be carried out through any platform if the teachers and students are ready to accept the change. Learning cannot be compromised as it should be done regularly. Especially during this pandemic, technology helped the students and teachers get connected to reach the learning outcome. Life becomes miserable without technology.

Task-based Learning

N. Prabhu first drafted Task-based learning. He trusted that effective learning occurs when the students’ minds are focused on the task rather than on language (Prabhu, 1987; as cited in Littlewood, 2004). Prabhu (1987) defined a task as an activity requiring learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some thought process, allowing teachers to control and regulate that process. Nunan (2006) stated that task as a piece of classroom activity which involves learners in understanding, directing, the interacting way in the target language students’ attention is focused on activating their grammatical knowledge to express meaning, and in which the aim is to express meaning rather than to manipulate form. The task should also have a sense of wholeness, standing alone as a communicative act in its own right with a beginning, middle and end.

Long (2015) defined that a task-based course must first begin with a need and analyse it deeper to identify learners’ authentic needs with the language. When the need is stated, the task is assigned as per the pedagogy. The teacher can focus on implementing the task to find the result.

Jayakumar P & Ajit I’s (2017) study showed the implications of the verbs through the Android Application. As we live with technology, grammar can be taught using the Android Application, which will be handy and easy to access. Learners reach the app anytime they choose as there is no time frame. They can commit mistakes without fear as the note gets rectified without regrets. Once the learning goes in handy, the students learn without external force, which bores fruit. Jayakumar P (2019) stated that grammar is the soul of any language that helps be an effective speaker. In order to be an effective speaker, one should strengthen one grammar skills. While designing the task, the

teacher should ensure the use of grammar. Sentence structure gives the meaning for communication as well as the idea gets delivered as it should be. Without grammar, the learners lack communication skills that lead to poor living.

According to Ellis (2009) language - teaching activity must meet four criteria in order to count as a task. The task should focus

- On meaning
- Gap
- Resources
- OUTCOME

Cook (2013) study on *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching* focused on language as one of the aspects of language teaching to serve the needs of the society, especially to enable the people to interact with each other.

Cook defines that language teaching relies on the students' age, motivation factor, interest, and other personality traits. For few learners, grammar alone is adequate to learn a language. In contrast, the other learners have to depend on various methodologies like Direct Method, Audio-Lingual Method, and Communicative Approach, etc. ELT theories in common bring in some approaches and methods to teach language to learners. They feed the learners to find better results. Task-based learning differs from the rest as it gives a better outcome by bringing in an individual's individuality. Henceforth, learners learn a language in different ways rather than traditional ways. Adding to the view of (Cook 2013), learners must be independent than dependent learners to develop language skills both within and outside the classroom environment.

Swan (2005) stated that there is broad agreement on the following principles:

- Language learning should primarily be naturalistic with a meaningful activity rather than language.
- It should not be teacher-centred rather student centred.
- Activity should not focus on accuracy or promptness.
- Opportunities for the students will grab the attention to linguistic elements.
- Traditional approaches are ineffective as they are more of passive instruction.

Jayakumar, P. & Ajit, I. (2016) stated that language can be taught through Android App to fulfil the current generation's needs. Learners find the app interesting when they are exposed

to activities. The app helps the students upscaling grammar skills, and they find it flexible as they are given an option to rectify their errors to reach the next phase. Language learned by doing helps to retain the function of language.

Roles of Teacher and Learner in Task-based Learning

Teachers and students have a different roles to play in task-based learning. Richards and Rogers (2001) stated the roles in task-based learning for both teachers and students. Certain criteria are to be followed by the teachers to keep task-based learning activities.

Mentor Roles

- Create the task by fulfilling the learners need
- Preparing learners for the tasks
- Consciousness-raising

Learners parts are essential in task-based learning, and they should play the roles stated below.

Learner Roles

- Active participation
- Observer of the task
- Risk-taker

Stages of Task-based Learning

Teachers can't pre-determine the choice of language as it is based on task completion. Frost (2004) shared certain stages to be followed with task-based learning

Pre-Task

The beginning stage of learning or the preparation stage. Students are given directions by the teachers on dealing with the task. Ellis (2006) stated that teachers could explain the concept before carrying out the activity as preparation.

Task

Students work in a pair or a group to complete the task. The second phase should include the risk, and the final should include the goals.

Planning

Students are placed in the group to jot down the necessary points about the activity that must

be shared within the class. Teachers help the students when they require language clarity or with the rules.

Report

Students report to the class as per the instruction by the teacher.

Analysis

Teachers can give suggestive measures about the activity and highlight the interesting features of the activity.

Practice

Teachers select the target language areas to practice the task in the final stage.

Review on Earlier Studies about the Usage of Comics in Task-based Learning

The task is set based on the learner's, which determines the learners' movements. One such task is introducing comics to the students, and many researchers proved that comics help learners understand the concept. Parsons and Smith (1993) stated commercial comic books could induce learners to learn the language effectively. The researchers believed that comics could directly be used for teaching a concept. Jones (2004) study defined that children in a general skip reading books after getting into school-mandated literature. As per the researcher's views, children who neglect reading general stuff like novels, stories, etc., show much interest in reading comic magazines. Comics have increased the literacy rate in the USA. The researcher adds that educational authorities do not consider comic books as intensive reading material. In contrast, comic books are part of the literary work and reading material for the young and those who hesitate to read traditional books.

Liu (2004) stated the role of comic strips in the reading comprehension of English learners. The analysis clearly shows that beginner level students who received a high-level text with comic strips scored higher than those who received only text. It is evident that comics are used in instructional material, and the reading intake is higher.

Cheesman (2006) examined the use of comic strips in the classroom available in newspapers and magazines. The major aim is to grab attention for critical thinking. The researcher also defined that comics helped the students focus on lessons and critical thinking. Based on the age group, comics can be introduced in the

classroom. Wolschke-Bulmahn and Groning (1994) defined that comics can be used in the classroom to attract students' attention. Further discussed the impacts of the comics published in magazines and newspapers that could teach environmental issues to the children. The researcher concluded that students should not be forced into the mission while teaching comics.

Beard and Rhodes (2002) implemented comics for the assessment process. It has experimented with an MS degree in outdoor management program. The researcher preferred comics with empty balloons for capturing subjects' reflections. The result proved that comics were very well reflected to express their thoughts and anxieties. The major advantages of using comics are reflected in reading comprehension.

Dalacosta et al. (2008) made a research study on animated cartoons in multimedia application to evaluate the supportive teaching material. The study was carried out in various elementary schools to see the usage of cartoon-style multimedia. Researched with 179 pupil's between the age group of 10-11 to provide evidence of the usage of animated cartoons. The research proved that knowledge and understanding of the difficult concept were easy to comprehend. The fact is children learn many things through cartoons.

According to the study of Muniran and Yusof (2008), the usage of comics novels in school libraries will help promote literacy among the students, especially the students. The presentation of storytelling through visual aids not only makes them interesting in reading but also help them to understand a difficult concept. They are not exposed to comics or below the poverty line.

Song (2008) experimented that comics are not only used in teaching but can be used as an assessing tool in the classroom. It can be assessed in three ways. Firstly, it can be used to assess students' thoughts which they carry to the classroom. Secondly, it can assess the learning difficulties by asking them to complete the blank. Thirdly, to assess the application skill of the students

Patel (2009) designed and processed the Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) to train grammar for grade VIII students. The study's objective was to study the effectiveness of CAI material in teaching grammar. Various modes used for the experiment were:

- Only CAI
- CAI with repetition
- CAI with discussion

The study's outcome showed that CAI was upscale than the traditional method of teaching grammar. Repetition had more impact rather than the traditional method.

Micheal and Van (2011) researched using cartoons as a teaching tool, with empirical investigation using qualitative and quantitative research. The research was carried out for teaching economics issues of South Africa. The study's outcome disclosed that cartoon-based teaching enhanced the communication skill to a greater extent. The students participated actively, which helped them understand the country's real scenario. Mohammad (2011) initiated research on the effects of Multimedia-based Instructional Cartoons of ZEP schools. The project's main aim is to set pedagogical material for the Primary level. Before initiating, the students' background was kept in mind as they belong below the poverty line. Though the students learn a lot in school, they were not able to follow up, which led to the major problem. The students were behind in all four skills. This study was to implement animated cartoons in a multimedia application. The result was evident that there was an increase in the understanding and knowledge of the students was exceptionally at a higher level.

Aleixo, P., & Sumner, K. (2017) investigated the impact of comics for undergraduate level bio-psychology material. Ninety participants read seven comic pages about the rudiments of sleep, the same content with text format where original images were replaced with inappropriate images. Participants were tested on the content through MCQ. The participants scored higher outcome when exposed to comic conditions rather than text. Furthermore, findings provided preliminary evidence to support the general idea of using comic books to create instructional materials. Results also provided some support for dual coding theory as a theoretical basis for comics in educational contexts. Jayakumar, P., & Manivannan (2019) stated that newspaper advertisements would enhance students' creativity and productive skill. So teachers should encourage the students to exhibit their creativity rather than imitate online sources. Nowadays, the uniqueness of the students is missing. Teachers should plan to execute the measures to take forward.

Comics in Law

Botes, M. (2017) expressed in the examination that the utilisation of funnies as instructive material in law has been acquiring force and funnies are currently additionally progressively used to convey contract agreements. Standard agreements, which structure the reinforcement of deals, don't dependably catch the reason for why the

individual gatherings go into contract and their actual comprehension of the agreement terms conditions, particularly where one of the agreement parties is uneducated or needs sufficient schooling. Macaulay (2003), significant contrasts may exist between the composed agreement and the genuine understanding between parties when going into basic deals, such as purchasing a used car. Using funnies contract arrangements will support dynamic commitment, improve cognisance of authoritative outcomes, and connect language and instructive obstructions. Giddens (2012) funnies that normally work at the limit among discernment and feel make it an astoundingly reasonable mode for fundamentally captivating a discipline like law. Douzinas and Nead (1999) the paradox of the appropriate mix is that the craft of comic picture is allocated to inventiveness and even fun-loving nature, while the law is centred around control, discipline and realities. Weisberg (1984) stressed the need to enhance texts with different methods of information, like pictures, as the utilisation of language alone has its impediments with regards to clear correspondence. Varnum and Gibbons (2001) for the mix of text and picture to sufficiently convey legitimate substance, appropriate reconciliation should permit funnies to peruse as a solitary correspondence arrangement. Transporter (2000: 38-39) characterised the funnies medium as a story grouping with discourse inflatables. The discourse expands a characterising component of the funnies since it builds up a word/picture solidarity. The comic medium is neither a verbal nor a rigorously visual fine art. However, something drastically new is composite craftsmanship with verbal and visual components flawlessly consolidated. Eisner (2008) saw letters as images conceived out of pictures and contends that a peruser is needed to practice both verbal and visual translation abilities in understanding funnies, which contains both text and pictures. Hatfield (2005) recognised images that 'show, for example, pictures addressing account occasions, and images that 'tell, for example, the text utilised in discourse inflatables.

The above perspective on funnies on the specialised technique and worth plainly expresses that literary language isn't the main strategy for correspondence to cause individuals to comprehend contract agreements. The message and pictures present in the funnies make it a rich type of basic commitment with contract agreements that will work with a satisfactory understanding of agreement privileges and commitments.

Conclusion

English is the medium of instruction globally, but language acquisition is still at the border level regarding the second language. An earlier investigation of the study related to task-based learning serves as an insight for the teachers regarding language learning. The study also brought in the idea of developing task-based learning by introducing comics. Moreover, this review disclosed the techniques used in the classroom to improve the students' potential. When the teachers implement comics, they can find the progress in knowledge with better understanding. Furthermore, the study clearly proved that the students' learning outcome has drastically improved when exposed to task-based learning. It also helps the students remove the language barriers to express their ideas. Hence the review clearly states that task-based language learning is effective when used wisely.

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