

Abstract 34

A Study on the Contribution of Task Based Language Teaching towards the Enhancement of the Students' Oral Skills in English

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Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a language teaching approach, which focuses on using tasks as the core unit of planning and giving instructions in teaching. In TBLT, teacher does not pre-determine what language items to be taught. The language study is determined by what happens as the students complete the tasks. The research problem centers on the fact that whether the TBLT activities on grade 10 English curriculum are sufficient to enhance students' oral skills. The objectives of this research are to identify different kinds of TBLT activities used in Sri Lankan English curriculum, and to find out whether the TBLT related activities in school textbooks are sufficient to enhance student's oral skills. In addition, the study attempts to detect whether the TBLT related activities prescribed in grade 10 English textbook and workbook are suitable for the grade 10 students' proficiency level. Data for the study was collected by analyzing the grade 10 school textbook, workbook and Teachers Instructional Manual and reviewing sixty questionnaires collected from grade 10 English teachers and interviewing six instructors. With the findings of the investigation, it can be concluded that the priority given by Sri Lankan English curriculum to enhance students' oral skills is not sufficient. Writing and reading skills were prioritized while speaking was less considered. Teachers could introduce flash cards, role-plays, exchange ideas and dialogues as the most frequently used TBLT related activities. However, some tasks such as role-plays, writing conversations and singing were ineffective to develop students' oral skills though these were specified to engage students' communicating in English. The students could not reach the expected proficiency levels, face interviews with confidence and present arguments logically as stated in Teachers Instructional Manual.

Key words: Flash Cards, Oral Skills, Proficiency Level, TBLT, Teachers Instructional Manual