



3. Examples of Task-Based Learning

This Section contains further concrete examples of TBLL. Firstly, there is a task from no-materials; secondly, six different tasks generated from one piece of material, a photograph; and thirdly, six different tasks using a newspaper article as material input (See also 101 ways of making the most of what you've got – Section 5.4.) Each task demonstrates the flexibility of TBLL. Focus is always on the activities at each stage of the framework (the process) with language being elicited and supplied at the appropriate times to facilitate successful task realisation (the end product). In this way, language used should be authentic to the needs of the learners, in their quest to realise the task.

The choice of task will be dictated by the profile of participants. Some indications of levels and group sizes are given as guidelines for

certain tasks, but facilitators will learn to modify and adapt activities and tasks to suit individuals and groups. TBLL is not prescriptive and most tasks can be adapted for all levels, mixed levels, mono-lingual groups and multi-lingual groups. The essential point is to focus on the task, the activities needed to realise the task and provide language as it is needed. A well-chosen piece of material will help this process, but tasks from no-materials are equally valid. (See Section 4 "Selecting and using materials".)

All the examples given in this Section should work if followed to the letter, but we hope facilitators will experiment with them, finding different activities, cutting out parts which seem less authentic to a specific context and so on. Above all, we hope you will enjoy facilitating TBLL!

3.1 Task from 'No Materials'



This task demonstrates that it is possible to create meaningful activities and tasks using only the context and people as resources.

Context: "I'm a language facilitator working with a monolingual group in Romania. I have no materials! What can I do? You've just arrived; you know nothing about Romania, so ask the group to produce a leaflet to help you while you're here!"

Materials: None (apart from Stationery)

Group Size: Any (if very large numbers, divide into working groups of 4/6)

Level: Lower levels

Task: Producing a poster with useful information for a first-time visitor to Romania

PRE-TASK

- What do your senses tell you? What do we have to do? Identify things which might be strange to a visitor. How do we do it? Use your senses and common sense!
- In the group. Close your eyes and listen. What can you hear? Open your eyes and compare with others (draw what you heard and the facilitator will give the words).



- Walk around the locality and use your nose! What smells can you identify? Find the words from the facilitator.
- Stand still and look around. Identify five things which mean *home* to you (for the visitor five things which are *not* home).



TASK PREPARATION

- What shall we put on the poster?
- Selecting, sharing, comparing, negotiating, deciding (can be done in mother tongue if appropriate).
- What will we need to make the poster?

This phase should generate language around the areas selected for the poster and will probably include modes of transport, times and prices, words for shops and services, designing a poster – layout, spatial language and so on.



TASK REALISATION

- Gather the materials necessary to produce the poster(s). (This should generate the language of stationery and craft materials)



- Produce the poster and display
- Comment on the poster

POST-TASK

The facilitator looks at the poster and talks about its usefulness. The facilitator's role at this stage is to be the visitor and help participants to express themselves as they present their completed task. Some practice of the target language can occur with small conversations around the information on the poster.



In addition some exchange of language can take place, for example '*in my language we say*' ... '*and in your language you say*' ... These exchanges may identify linguistic similarities or differences, for example: agreement of adjectives, word order, use of articles, capital letters and so on.

Comments

- A follow-up task could be for the facilitator to produce a poster for visitors to his/her country. This could be used to re-enforce the language and encourage further intercultural awareness.
- The same task used with intermediate and higher levels would be equally valid. It would generate more advanced language and lead to more in-depth exchanges in the target language. It could also be very useful for mixed level groups.

NB. The task in Section 2.4 Preparing a meal is a further example of a task from nothing.