

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF TASK-BASED LANGUAGE LEARNING IN AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

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Abstract. This paper examines the significance of Task-Based Learning (TBL) as a versatile pedagogical approach applicable across various disciplines, including language education, Zoology, and Art. It elucidates how TBL integrates real-world tasks into the curriculum, fostering active learning, critical thinking, and collaboration among students. Drawing on interdisciplinary principles, the paper presents a task-based lesson plan incorporating stages tailored for language courses and extracurricular activities. Through pre-visit preparation, during-visit execution, and post-visit reflection, students engage in authentic tasks that bridge multiple subjects, thereby enhancing language proficiency and deepening understanding of diverse topics. The paper highlights the importance of TBL in promoting holistic learning experiences that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries, preparing students for the complexities of the modern world.

Keywords: task-based language learning, task-based lesson plan, interdisciplinary, active learning, extracurricular activities.

There are many approaches to language learning, each with its strengths and focus. Among these, Task-Based Language Learning (TBL) stands out as particularly important because it integrates language instruction with real-world communication, making the learning experience more relevant and engaging. By centering on practical tasks that students might face outside the classroom, TBL enhances practical language skills, aiding better retention and practical application

of knowledge. This approach promotes active learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving as students collaboratively work on tasks. Additionally, TBL supports differentiated learning, allowing students to participate at their level and pace, thereby boosting motivation and confidence. Ultimately, TBL fosters a dynamic, interactive environment that encourages authentic language use and equips students for real-world communication challenges.

In the field of education, employing teaching methods customized for specific disciplines is crucial for cultivating a profound and meaningful comprehension of diverse subjects. [2] In Zoology, students gain a deeper understanding of animal life through Field Studies, Animal Behavior Observation, and Comparative Anatomy. These methods allow students to study animals in their natural habitats, observe their behaviors firsthand, and compare the anatomical structures of different species, promoting a comprehensive understanding of biodiversity and evolutionary relationships. Additionally, engaging in Conservation Projects helps students appreciate the importance of preserving wildlife and their ecosystems. In the Arts, education thrives through Studio Work, Art History Analysis, and Creative Projects. Studio Work focuses on developing drawing skills, enabling students to accurately reproduce reality in their pictures. Students enhance their technical abilities and artistic expression by analyzing photographs and practicing realistic depictions.

While these discipline-specific approaches are crucial, there are also overarching methods that prove effective across various fields. Strategies such as Project-Based Learning, Collaborative Learning, Integration of Technology, and Task-Based Learning (TBL) can be universally applied, fostering a dynamic and holistic learning environment that transcends specific subject boundaries [5, 6, 7].

A new feature for school classes is the introduction of interdisciplinary activities, which use flexible approaches to encourage positive interaction, motivation, and student involvement in their educational process, including learning beyond the classroom through outdoor education. Interdisciplinarity integrates concepts and methods from diverse disciplines to address complex research problems, breaking down academic barriers and fostering collaboration among

experts. By transferring knowledge across disciplines, it fuses diverse perspectives and expertise, promoting a creative and holistic problem-solving process. This collaborative exchange leverages the complementary strengths of various fields, enabling more nuanced and effective solutions.

Task-Based Learning (TBL) is a widespread pedagogical approach used in both language education and interdisciplinary contexts, emphasizing tasks as the core of curriculum planning and instruction. Instead of relying on rote memorization or isolated drills, TBL engages learners in meaningful activities that reflect real-world situations. This method fosters a dynamic learning environment that promotes active participation, problem-solving, and collaboration. As a result, TBL not only enhances language proficiency but also cultivates critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of subjects across various disciplines.

Task-based learning differs from traditional teaching methods primarily in its approach to activities, emphasizing greater student engagement and reducing direct instruction. While the teaching techniques may be similar to conventional methods, the key distinction lies in how activities are arranged and prioritized. Task-based learning places a higher volume of student-driven tasks at the forefront, reducing the emphasis on direct teaching and encouraging active participation and problem-solving among students.

The task-based lesson plan for a language course has three principal stages: the pre-task stage, the task cycle, and the post-task stage. [1] When discussing an extracurricular activity with an interdisciplinary approach, the task-based plan includes three principal stages: the pre-visit stage, the during-visit stage, and the post-visit stage.

Pre-Visit Stage: This stage aims to prepare learners for the main task by providing clear instructions and presenting the topic. Mini-tasks are used to enhance lexical, grammar, or digital skills, making the process engaging. For lower-level proficiency, the teacher reviews key lexical or grammatical patterns and may present a task model. Students take notes and prepare for the task.

During Visit Stage: During the task stage, students perform the task in pairs or small groups, promoting a student-centered approach. The teacher observes or counsels. Learners enhance both digital and language skills with teacher guidance. After completing the task, students prepare and present a report to the class, receiving feedback from both peers and the teacher, serving as a form of assessment.

Post-Visit Stage: The teacher selects language areas based on student needs, proposing consolidation exercises. Learners, having experienced language in use, engage in practice activities to boost confidence. Homework is assigned for time efficiency in working on exercises.

The Stages of an Interdisciplinary Task-Based Approach

As an example, the stages of a task-based lesson plan designed to incorporate an interdisciplinary approach and encompass three disciplines—English Language, Zoology, and Art courses – are shown in *Figure 1*.

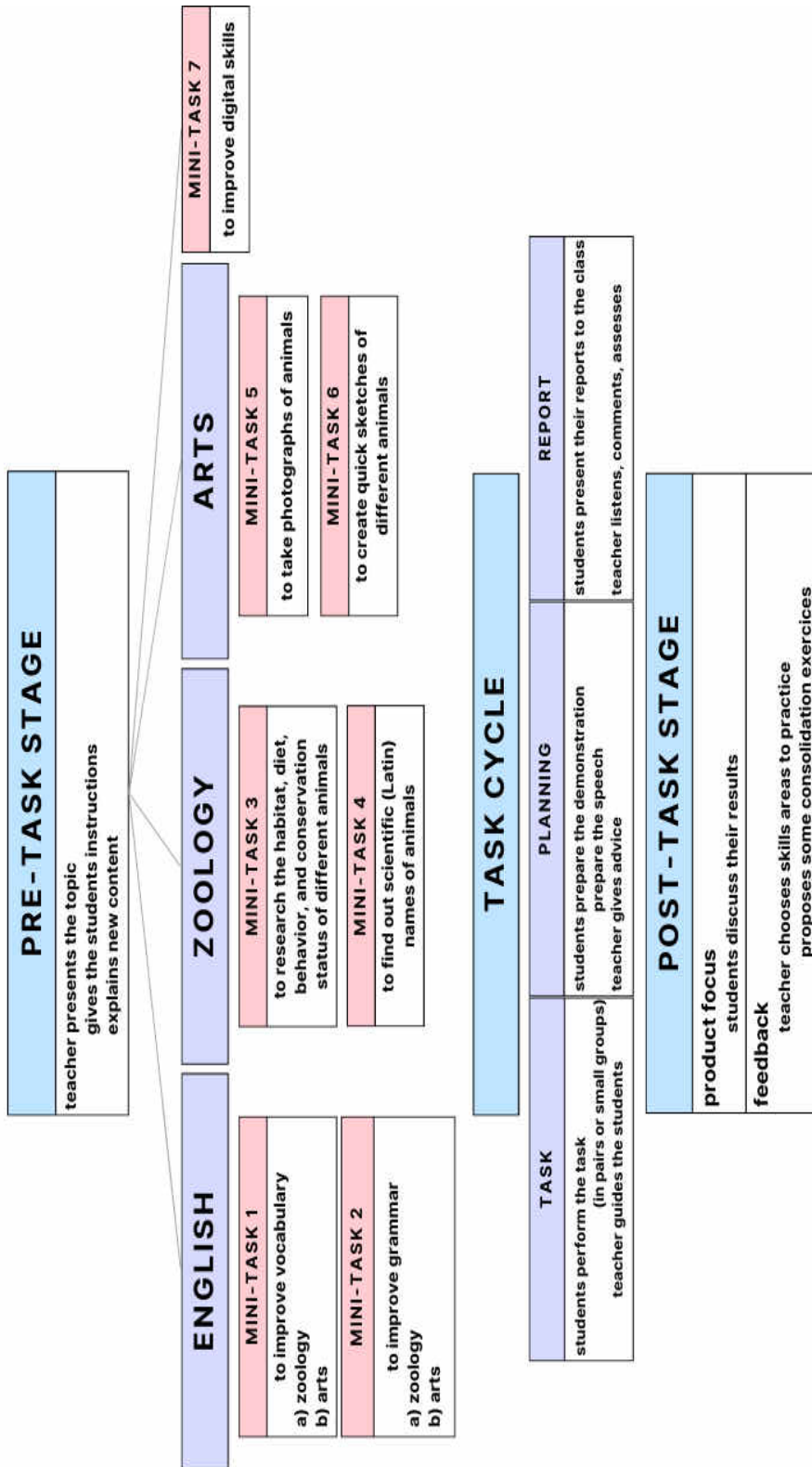


Figure 1. Interdisciplinary Approach: The Stages of a Task-Based Unit

Students could collaborate in small groups on creating a multimedia presentation about a different animal species they observe during a zoo excursion. This task would involve researching the animal's characteristics, behavior, and habitat (Zoology), practicing English language skills by preparing a narration for the presentation (English), and incorporating artistic elements such as drawings, photographs, or other digital media to enhance the visual appeal of the presentation (Arts). The final product would be a comprehensive and engaging multimedia presentation integrating knowledge from multiple disciplines.

During the pre-visit stage, students engage in various activities aimed at enhancing their skills and knowledge in preparation for the upcoming zoo excursion.

In English class, vocabulary development is emphasized, with a focus on both zoology and arts-related terms. Through interactive exercises like word walls and vocabulary games, students expand their understanding and usage of terminology pertinent to animal habitats, behaviors, artistic techniques, and mediums.

Grammar skill development is another key objective during this stage, with exercises related to zoology and arts contexts. Students participate in grammar review worksheets and role-plays, honing their ability to construct grammatically accurate sentences when describing animal characteristics or artistic creations. These activities foster a deeper comprehension of language structures and their application in diverse scenarios.

In zoology class, students are equipped with essential research skills essential for gathering information about animal habitats, diets, behaviors, and conservation statuses. Through workshops and guided research sessions, they learn how to navigate credible sources, take effective notes, and organize their findings cohesively. Additionally, students delve into the fascinating world of scientific (Latin) names, conducting investigations to uncover and present the scientific classifications of various zoo animals.

In art class, students are immersed in activities designed to cultivate their artistic talents and creative expression. They receive instruction on photography

basics, exploring concepts such as composition, lighting, and perspective to prepare them for capturing captivating images during the zoo visit. Furthermore, students partake in guided sketching sessions, where they practice drawing different animals using fundamental shapes and lines, honing their observational and artistic skills.

Finally, digital skills development is integrated into the pre-visit stage to equip students with the necessary technological competencies for effectively engaging with digital resources during the excursion. Through tutorials and hands-on practice, students learn how to utilize digital note-taking tools and optimize digital photography techniques, ensuring they are well-prepared to document their zoo experience digitally and engage with technology-enhanced learning opportunities.

In the second stage, *the During-Visit Stage*, students engage in a structured sequence comprising task execution, planning, and reporting. Collaborative group work in the classroom fosters collaborative learning, cultivates diverse perspectives, enhances communication skills, promotes problem-solving abilities, allows for the division of labor, encourages peer learning, facilitates conflict resolution, and ultimately leads to increased engagement among students.

When presenting their reports to the class, students gain valuable advantages, including the development of public speaking skills, confidence building, honing communication skills, fostering preparation and organization abilities, mastering time management, achieving subject proficiency, acquiring persuasion and influence techniques, and experiencing enhanced memory retention.

During the Post-visit stage, students participate in post-task activities, which involve discussing the results and providing feedback. Engaging in round table discussions, students actively partake in open dialogue, promote collaboration, enhance listening skills, exhibit flexibility and adaptability, resolve conflicts, establish relationships, make informed decisions, and learn from peers—all while maintaining a focused approach to the content being considered.

In conclusion, Task-Based Learning (TBL) emerges as a powerful pedagogical tool, not only within language education but also in interdisciplinary contexts. By prioritizing authentic tasks that mirror real-world scenarios, TBL fosters active engagement, critical thinking, and collaboration among students across diverse subjects. This approach not only enhances language proficiency but also

deepens understanding and application of knowledge in fields such as Zoology and Art. Through structured stages encompassing preparation, execution, and reflection, students embark on a journey of discovery, leveraging their skills in language, research, creativity, and technology. As education continues to evolve towards more dynamic and integrated approaches, Task-Based Learning stands as a beacon, illuminating pathways to meaningful learning experiences that transcend disciplinary boundaries and prepare students for the complexities of the modern world.

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