

Centering Culture in Task-Based Language Teaching

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Outline

1. Defining Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)
2. Relating TBLT to Culture
3. Centering Culture in TBLT
4. Conclusions

Defining Task-Based Language Teaching

- “Meaning-based, communicative tasks” (IATBLT)
- “Stand alone as a communicative act in its own right” (Nunan, 1989).
- “Prioritizes meaning but does not neglect form” (Ellis Et al., 2019)
- “Resemblance to a task that people perform in real life” (Long, 1985)
- “Pedagogic tasks that draw on interesting and familiar content” (Ellis Et. al., 2019)

Defining Task-Based Language Teaching

- Input-based or Output-based
- Unfocused or Focused
- Typically involve three stages

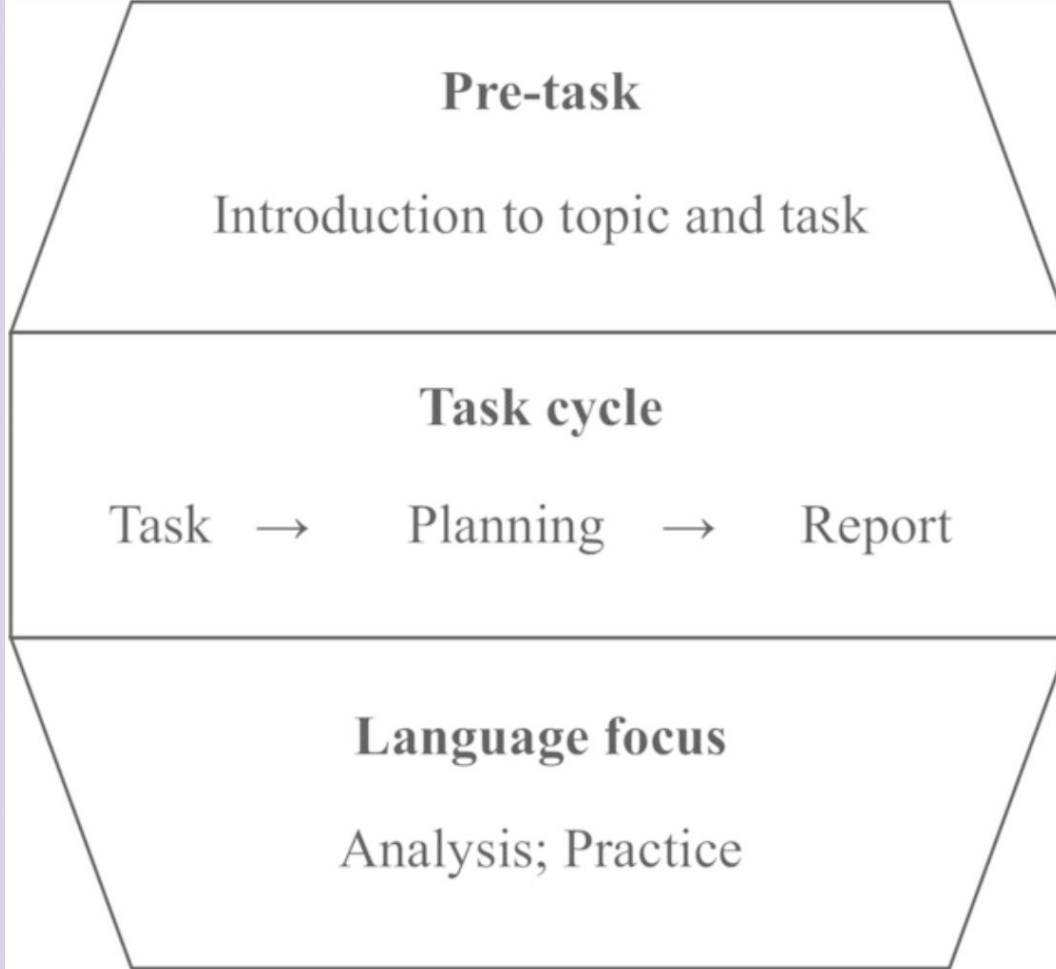


Figure 1.1 Outline of the task-based learning framework

Relating TBLT to culture

“Implicit in the notion of communicative proficiency is the ability **to interact appropriately with L1 speakers**, that is, to understand and negotiate both linguistic and cultural differences. However, **a frequent weakness of so-called ‘communicative approaches’ has been their neglect of the intercultural dimension of language learning**” (East, 2012)

Relating TBLT to culture

- “Culture as artifact”
 - Cultural knowledge seen as separate from linguistic knowledge and communicative proficiency
 - “The thing that you run out of time to do” (East, 2019)

Relating TBLT to culture

- “Language as a mediator of culture”
 - “Intercultural learning must become a critical engagement with cultural practices as embedded within and integrated with language in use” (East, 2019)
 - “We want more than just cultural knowledge, we want intercultural knowledge” (East, 2019)
 - “Do I have a culture? What is it?” (East, 2019)

Relating TBLT to culture

- Teaching *lo cotidiano* (García-Villada, 2014)
- Advanced Students vs. Elementary Students
- Cultural Nuances vs. Homogeneity and Stereotypes

Centering culture in TBLT

- Focused or Unfocused
- Comprehension Tasks
- Tasks of Opinion Gaps

Culture as Artifact in TBLT

- Input-Based
- Research, Independence, and Motivation

Centering culture in TBLT

- “Task-based digital learning pedagogy offering a real-world, interactive learning experience. It aims to foster intercultural and intergenerational social cohesion and understanding through two-way knowledge exchange” - The ENACT project
- Examples: Juego de Rana, Sevillanas

Culture as Artifact in TBLT

Pre-task: Your Puerto Rican friend wants to make some traditional food for you to try. To broaden your culinary horizons, they don't want to make something you are already familiar with. Tell your friend whether you are familiar with the following Puerto Rican dishes.

Task: Imagine your Spanish class is going to throw a party. Each group will pick a type of food for their menu (argentina, cubana, española, etc.). Discuss what you are going to serve for each aspect of the meal. Write down who will bring each item. Then, present your menu to the class. Pick a Spanish speaking country for inspiration. You may need to do some research.

Post-Task: Which party sounds the most delicious? Vote on which groups' meal you would most like to try.

Pre-task

Las habichuelas con arroz



No las conozco.



La yuca al mojo



El coquito



El mofongo



Los tostones

Las empanadillas



Task

Bebida	Aperitivo	Plato Principal	Postre
	Vamos a servir las habichuelas con arroz. McKenna las trae.		

Language as Cultural Mediator in TBLT

- Link between authentic language and culture
- Identifying sociolinguistic patterns
- Become increasingly independent in performing real-life tasks

Language as Cultural Mediator in TBLT

Pre-task: You are going to study abroad in Barcelona for the summer with two classmates. Your real estate agent (agente de bienes raíces) sent you an email with the following listings. Read the options and answer the questions that follow.

Task: After reading over the three apartment rental options from Señora Martí, you decide to write an email about your first choice apartment. Write an email to Señora Martí stating your first choice apartment. Include two things you like about the apartment as well as one question you have about the listing.

Post-Task: Once you have chosen an apartment to rent in Barcelona, your roommates ask you to assign chores. Work with your roommates to decide who will complete the necessary chores in your apartment.

Pre-Task

Estimado cliente,

Ojalá que todo le vaya bien. Le mando tres opciones de pisos en alquiler adjuntas. Me puede escribir un correo electrónico con sus preferencias y preguntas. Espero su respuesta.

Atentamente,
Señora Martí

PREGUNTAS:

1. Which of the apartments has the largest space?
2. Which of the apartments has the cheapest rent?
3. Which of the apartments has the most bedrooms?
4. Write two things all of the apartments have in common.

Pre-Task

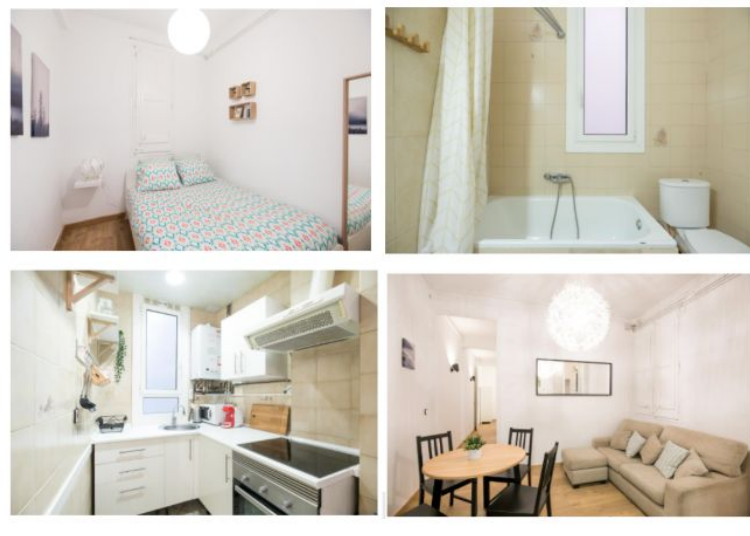
Piso en alquiler #1

Location: 08001 Carrer De La Cendra

Precio: 990€/mes

Info: 75 m2 | 3 dormitorios | 1 baño | Amueblado

Este piso se encuentra en Carrer de la Cendra, 08001, Barcelona, situado en el distrito Raval cerca del mercat de Sant Antoni. Es un apartamento amueblado, construido en el año 1974. Tiene 3 habitaciones y 1 baño. Incluye balcón, cocina amueblada, ascensor y cocina equipada. Tiene buen estado y calefacción de gas natural central. Además, hay terraza. Internet está incluido en el precio.



Pre-Task

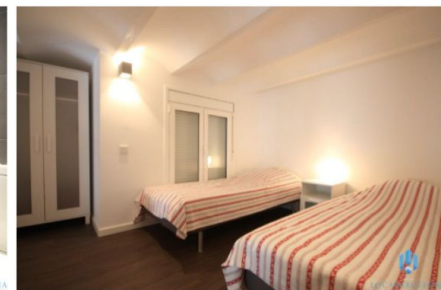
Piso en alquiler #2

Location: 08005 Carrer D'espronceda

Precio: 890€/mes

Info: 55 m2 | 2 dormitorios | 1 baño

Este piso reformado se encuentra en Carrer d'Espronceda, 08005, Barcelona, situado en el distrito de Poble Nou, en la planta baja. Es un piso, construido en el año 2010, que tiene 2 habitaciones y 1 baño. Incluye cocina amueblada, ascensor, cocina equipada y aire acondicionado. Tiene calefacción eléctrica, wifi, lavavajillas e internet. Es perfecto para los estudiantes.



Pre-Task

Piso en alquiler #3

Location: 08004 Carrer D'elkano

Precio: 850€/mes

Info: 52 m2 | 2 dormitorios | 1 baño | Amueblado

Este piso se encuentra en Carrer d'Elkano, 08004, Barcelona, en la zona del El Poble Sec - Parc de Montjuïc, en la tercera planta. Es un piso amueblado que tiene 3 habitaciones y 1 baño. Incluye sala amueblada, cocina equipada y wifi. Además, tiene aire acondicionado y calefacción individual. Internet está incluido en el precio.



Intercultural Exchange in TBLT

- Interculturally reflective tasks

Intercultural Exchange in TBLT

Pre-task: Your new virtual penpal Lisbeth from Guatemala sent you a video message! Pay attention to the way she answers the question: ¿Qué haces en Navidad? Complete the timeline of events according to Lisbeth's video.

Task: Create a short video (1 to 2 minutes) in Spanish responding to your penpal Lisbeth's video message. Think about your own family celebrations when you were a child (such as Christmas or New Year's Eve). Then, compare your childhood celebration with Lisbeth's video. Consider the following questions: ¿Tenías algo en común con la celebración de la Navidad que relató Lisbeth? ¿Qué hacías diferente en tus celebraciones?

Post-Task: After sending your video, you realize you have a few questions for Lisbeth. Write at least three questions you want to ask Lisbeth about her childhood in Guatemala.

Conclusions

- TBLT often focuses on mimicking “real-life” tasks
- TBLT offers unique opportunities to incorporate the target-language culture into lessons
 - Authentic language resources
 - Pre-task, task, post-task stages

Fruit of the Dead, Rachel Lyon

I could ask her, I suppose. I could try, anyway, but so much of what I mean would be lost in translation. All my conversations with our Chinese hosts seem desaturated somehow, drained of the rich hues of subtext, implication, connotation. Without a common tongue, language is not much more than an exchange of information. Like everything, it becomes a kind of commerce.

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