Task-based Language Teaching for Beginner-Level Young Learners

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to discuss how task-based language teaching (TBLT) can work with beginner-level learners by using input-based tasks. It begins by dismissing a common critique of TBLT, namely that learners need to be taught some language before they can perform tasks, by arguing that input-based tasks make TBLT possible with beginner-level learners and that such an approach is entirely compatible with what research has shown about the early stages of L2 acquisition. A review of the research that has investigated input-based tasks follows and serves to identify key features in the design and implementation of tasks.

Designing input-based tasks involves considering the choice of topic, the non-verbal devices that are central to the tasks, the pre-selection of target language, the verbal input for the task, and the task outcomes. Implementation options include task preparation, use of the learners' first language, input modification and elaboration, focus-on-form and feedback, and task repetition.