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TBLT: Authentic Tasks Designed For Second-Language Learners

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TBLT: AUTHENTIC TASKS DESIGNED FOR SECOND-LANGUAGE
LEARNERS

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
English and Writing Studies:
Pedagogy

by
Salma Khan
January 2023

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A Thesis
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Salma A Khan
January 2023
Approved by:

Prof. Sunny Hyon, Committee Chair, English

Prof. Erin Hall, Committee Member

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ABSTRACT

Thesis proposal structure. My thesis, which will be an alternative style thesis, will be organized as follows: 1.) I will define what TBLT is in my own words and how scholars define this term 2.) I will review research other scholars have done on TBLT 3.) I will describe the class I intend to teach, including the texts assigned, writing projects, and supporting TBLT tasks.

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I greatly appreciate my Professor and department chair of Linguistics/Pedagogy concentration, Prof. Hyon for taking the time to accommodate me and help me with the process of completing my thesis. In addition to Prof. Hyon, I also appreciate Prof. Hall for assisting me with the ongoing process of my thesis revisions. Both Professors worked diligently and helped me to make this thesis as polished as possible, and I will keep their help in support in mind. Thank you!

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) is a method teachers use to teach second language learners, and it is permeating across the globe, gaining fame in the educational field because it is "an effective way to teach a language by engaging learners in authentic and communicative tasks that involve real use of language" (Faez & Tavakoli, 2019, vii). In this thesis, I will define what TBLT is and discuss previous research on this method. I will also offer a sample TBLT curriculum for an ESL creative writing and literature class.

Principles Of TBLT

There are several principles of TBLT that scholars have described as facilitating language learning. According to Faez's (2019) principles of TBLT, "Language is a means of communication even if limited linguistic resources are used. Language is a means for making meaning" (p.5). To clarify, Faez views TBLT as a way for language to help language learners communicate. Similarly, East (2021 p. 72) states that TBLT is "directed at ensuring that a task results in language use where learners treat the language as a 'tool' for achieving a communicative outcome rather than as an 'object' to be studied, analyzed and displayed." The purpose of better communication skills is to help learners to conveniently adapt to that language environment, to improve their quality of life in the long run. Every use of language has a purpose and should be enhanced through practical tasks, as in TBLT. Furthermore, Kong (2012: 40) states another

principle of TBLT : "In a task-based language program students should be assessed by task-based criterion-referenced tests, which emphasize students' task performances, not their language performance." Kong is explaining that when it comes to TBLT tasks, students' performance level in the task should not be measured by their good use of language skills. What is important is students should understand the gist of performing the tasks using their creative knowledge. Tasks should be inspirational and enjoyable for students, so students' interest persists, thus they will repeatedly perform the task in the classroom and beyond.

In addition, Erlam & Tolosa (2022) explain that language should depend on certain types of form, such as phonological form (sound), syntactical form (word order), or pragmatic form (underlying/embedded meaning). Erlam and Tolosa (2022) explain that instruction directs learners to be form-focused (p.17). What he means by form-focused instruction is helping learners focus on grammatical tools to understand, write, and read a second language, with the goal still being meaningful communication in the language. Form-focused instruction is an effective strategy for building clarity and sense in learners' production.

Another principle of TBLT focuses on forming a "built-in syllabus" for each learner, so that their specific goals and needs are accommodated in the

classroom . Erlam and Tolosa (2022) explain that teaching should focus on "implicit knowledge of the L2 while not neglecting explicit knowledge. Instruction needs to take into account learners' "built-in syllabus" (p. 17). I agree with Elmar on the "built-in" syllabus because this allows different learners to be accommodated according to their abilities.. Focusing on learners' implicit knowledge helps teachers understand what they can show and explain and what they already know. Having syllabi vary or be customized is the responsibility of every teacher who has learners with varying learning styles, abilities, and levels.

An additional principle of TBLT is holding engaging activities where learners can communicate with each other and experience the benefits of input, output, and interaction: "Successful instructed language learning requires extensive L2 input. Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output. The opportunity to interact in the L2 is central to developing L2 proficiency. Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners" (Erlam & Tolosa, 2022, p. 17). I agree with Erlam's idea of creating an interactive and collaborative environment that considers all types of diverse learners' voices because this helps create equality and social justice in the classroom. We want to treat learners with kindness and respect and allow them to speak for themselves to others. We have to make sure students' voices are not stifled, but used as a means for creative self-expression, so they communicate their feelings with others.

In a related TBLT principle, Nunan (2004) states: "Encourage self-directed rather than teacher-directed learning" (p. 460). When Nunan mentions "self," he means the student. The student should direct and guide himself through the process of learning, rather than the teacher taking an authoritarian role and directing students on what to do; it should always be the students' choice to opt for his style and comfort in learning. Teachers lead classrooms, but students must lead themselves in their learning process, as well.

An additional principle that Nunan states relates to the type of motivation students should have for performing TBLT tasks. Nunan (2004) states: "Promote intrinsic rather than Extrinsic motivation" (p. 460). When Nunan says, "intrinsic motivation," he suggests motivation that serves to satisfy the student internally. Nunan suggests that intrinsic motivation should be driven by students. On the other hand, "extrinsic motivation" is the motivation for external rewards like perks, prizes, and other reinforcements. The teacher should ensure the student is satisfied that they have made academic achievements to benefit him or herself, not to get rewards from a teacher or outside source. Intrinsic motivation may help with students' self-confidence and self-esteem by raising their mental strength and ensuring that they can achieve the task.

In addition to the above principles, Nunan (2004) states that tasks in TBLT should be authentic: "There is thus an automatic link between the pedagogical world and the experiential world. There should be systematic links between the

world of the classroom and the world beyond the classroom. The closer the link between the pedagogical and the experiential worlds, the greater the task authenticity" (Nunan, p. 461). In other words, teachers should design TBLT tasks that model reality, so students can apply tasks in their daily lives. Going beyond the scope of the classroom is imperative for students' understanding, so they can use TBLT as a tool for resolving their real-life problems.

As East states, another principle of TBLT is that "[l]earners are not specifically taught or directed to the language they need to complete the task" (East, 2021, p. 47) East indicates that TBLT allows learners flexibility by allowing them to opt for materials (used for TBLT tasks) in the language they feel comfortable in; students' are not limited to materials in the target language but any language they feel comfortable sharing to the class as long as they follow the task accurately as directed. However, students may need to show some knowledge of the second language to complete the task, in order to show their fluency in that language.

Furthermore, an additional principle East explains relates to how learners need to be focused on a communicative goal to reach an end result. East (2021) states: "the language is the means to reach the outcome, but not an end in itself" (p.47). East explains that we should benefit from using language by creating a solution to the tasks themselves. A student's goal is not to rush towards the "end"

or home base of their task, but to create an output that shows they have learned something about the task through the process of completing the task itself.

Overall, I believe that these principles are used for promoting learners' progress. The more exposure sought through different environments, the more we can say that learners can achieve proficiency in their target or second language. As a result of using TBLT tasks in ESL classrooms, learners are appreciated by their teachers and can use knowledge gained from classroom learning to communicate with society in the real world.

Task Types. Erlam and Tolosa (2022) explain several tasks that can be used as pedagogical methods in the classroom. Erlam's first task type is production tasks, which focus on guiding learners on how to form a creative piece, which can include the following: a sculpture, poem, dialogue, drawing, and other texts. For example, Erlam & Tolosa(2022) want "to see tasks as requiring learners to produce language output," instead of focusing on task completion (p. 92). This situation occurs in the foundational stages of language learning when learners understand and process information, so they can produce a successful outcome. This task reflects how "Successfully instructed language learning requires extensive L2 input. Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output. The opportunity to interact in the L2 is central to developing L2 proficiency. Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners" (Erlam & Tolosa, 2022,p. 17). I agree with Erlam's idea

about "language learning requires opportunities for output" because this shows how productive tasks result from students' good understanding of material. This understanding provides them the pathway to creative production outside the scope of the classroom environment. .

Another task that primarily aims to create a balance between a learner's native language and second or target language is the information gap, in which learners need to rely on others to fill in information they need to complete an activity. East states: "Gathering the information to fill in the map requires understanding input (com-prehending what the partner is saying)—at the very least understanding a straightfor-ward formulaic expression such as "what's the weather like in...?" (It also requires producing output—making statements about the weather in a range of places across the island ("it's sunny in..."; "it's raining in"))(p. 38). East explains how information-gap tasks allow learners to collect information from outside sources to follow "formulaic expression"; learners have enough information to help them understand and comprehend text, so they can create a successful outcome.

Another task type is the opinion gap in which learners have different preferences on a text they want to share and give their unique opinions about that text. Erlam & Tolosa found that the most authentic task is the opinion gap, which requires learners' to find a text set and to self-reflect or provide an opinion on what the textset means to them. Erlam & Tolosa (2022) explain that sharing

an anecdote or story involves “sharing personal information, not their experiences” (p. 93). These are weak versions of tasks that do not involve cognitive processes because students do not have to think so deeply as if they are trying to find a solution to a problem or make a claim. Students are mindful of other authors' texts and elaborate on why they chose them. Overall, this task allows learners to release their spirits and share personal information that appeals to others. Several researchers have studied TBLT applications in classrooms. Yasuda (2017), for example, explains what content type benefits the TBLT curriculum. She explains the importance of genre-based tasks in the TBLT curriculum. In her article-Yasuda shows how TBLT interplays with genre-based pedagogy. Yasuda (2017) explains how applying systemic functional linguistics concepts, such as genres, benefits the fields of learning, teaching, and evaluating writing in another language. She uses genre-based tasks, language, and content simultaneously. Genres type of content (e.g., fiction poetry, other genre examples) that students learn and write about through analyzing underlying meaning of phrases, terms, and the overall structure of texts(Yasuda, 2017 p. 580). Her study takes place at a Japanese university. The course is about 15 weeks. This semester-long course raises students' awareness of the different genres that are out there in the world, and how each genre focuses on a different style of writing that emphasizes its overall meaning. It was assumed that different genres "help learners expand on the range of lexicogrammatical resources that can be implemented and have them work on complex tasks that

help with their IL development. The "goal of the curriculum is to make learners aware of different types of choices that exist at various strata of the language system in genres, tasks, and context" (Yasuda, 2017, p. 583). What Yasuda means is that the purpose of the curriculum is to help learners understand and analyze the language systems in the TBLT genre, tasks, and contexts.

Furthermore, Yasuda (2017) shows how TBLT has various dimensions of genre that should be included in the curriculum, which provides learners options in the type of content they prefer to analyze. This way, learners can analyze how language is written and used differently in each genre. Including various genres into the curriculum helps learners distinguish how the different genres are unique. Yasuda shows how genre-based tasks serve to create an outcome and meaningful purpose for understanding the different genres.

In her article, Pica (2005) explains how teachers who use TBLT can take a liberal approach to their teaching by accommodating students' learning ability and background. She demonstrates the idea of "info-gap tasks" as a way to analyze form and function (meaning) by using excerpts, and discourse that is taking place in class. She explains why her ideas of using the "info gap task" are helpful. She elaborates by explaining that this task is helpful because it supports student learning and understanding through effectively analyzing form, meaning, and function from excerpts (Pica, 2005, p. 339). For example Pica presents info-gap tasks that require learners to seek an outcome through exchanging verbal information among task-participants. In order to reach this outcome,

learners are required to exchange information that is “accurate and understood.” When one participant feels that information is difficult to process or understand, another participant signals for need of clarity, so the first participant “responds by recoding, rephrasing, and expanding information, often doing so until it appears understood” (Pica, 2022, p. 341). Overall, Pica's implementation of information gap tasks has allowed her students to fulfill their language learning deficiencies, not in a rushed manner but by using practical and easy tasks that students feel comfortable following in class (Pica, 2005, p. 345). These tasks are used to accommodate learners from diverse backgrounds and abilities, so learners feel their voices are heard and accepted in society.

Overall, when reading these two scholars' articles, I observed that they view TBLT as a form of pedagogy that facilitates a better learning environment that helps learners to help build their second-language skills, so they can effectively communicate with society. Yasuda enforces the use of multiple types of genres to help learners' linguistic development and understanding of the content. Similarly, Pica focuses on dialogue from media or films as the prime focus of her study to see how analyzing the grammatical structures and meaning of excerpts helps their learning and understanding of the content. My research on all the different tasks helps me implement a curriculum that can accommodate each student, according to their background and specific needs. I want to create a curriculum that will help students focus on realities outside the scope of the classroom by helping students perform tasks that are authentic and fun. These

tasks will help facilitate an open and liberal classroom environment through which students will benefit from improving their communication skills.

Studies of TBLT Classrooms. Several researchers have studied TBLT applications in classrooms. Yasuda (2017), for example, explains what content type benefits the TBLT curriculum. She explains the importance of genre-based tasks in the TBLT curriculum. In her article-Yasuda shows how TBLT interplays with genre-based pedagogy. Yasuda (2017) explains how applying systemic functional linguistics concepts, such as genres, benefits the fields of learning, teaching, and evaluating writing in another language. She uses genre-based tasks, language, and content simultaneously. Genres type of content (e.g., fiction poetry, other genre examples) that students learn and write about through analyzing underlying meaning of phrases, terms, and the overall structure of texts(Yasuda, 2017 p. 580). Her study takes place at a Japanese university. The course is about 15 weeks. This semester-long course raises students' awareness of the different genres that are out there in the world, and how each genre focuses on a different style of writing that emphasizes its overall meaning. It was assumed that different genres ``help learners expand on the range of lexicogrammatical resources that can be implemented and have them work on complex tasks that help with their IL development. The "goal of the curriculum is to make learners aware of different types of choices that exist at various strata of the language system in genres, tasks, and context" (Yasuda, 2017, p. 583). What Yasuda means is that the purpose of the curriculum is to help learners

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Conclusion of My Research. Overall, when reading about these scholars, I observed that all of them explore how TBLT can help facilitate a better learning environment that helps learners progress, thus allowing them to help build their language skills, close gaps between their deficiencies, etc. Yasuda enforces the use of multiple types of genres to have students' options open when following tasks served to help students' linguistic development and understanding of the content. Similarly, Pica focuses on dialogue from media or films as the prime focus of her study to see how analyzing the grammatical structures and meaning of excerpts can close the gap between their learning and understanding of this content. My research on all the different tasks helps me implement a curriculum that can accommodate each student, according to their background and specific needs. I want to create a curriculum that will help students focus on realities outside the scope of the classroom by helping students perform tasks that are authentic and fun. These tasks will help facilitate an open and liberal classroom environment through which students will benefit from improving their communication skills.

CHAPTER TWO

MY ESL COURSE USING TBLT

I will use the principles and concepts of TBLT to teach an advanced ESL class that will involve grammar, creative writing, and literature. The diverse subjects will give students more practice with different aspects of reading and writing in class and the real world. This class will be a community college course composed of students between the ages of 16-65 who come from all around the world, including Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. There will also be refugees who are living in the US taking this course in order to adapt to American culture and communicate with others. My class will focus on different texts, which will serve as fodder for tasks whereby the students will interpret meanings, thematic elements, and parts of speech of different words and phrases. Also, the class will focus on writing, such as self-reflection or journalism, using vocabulary words creatively. Towards the end of semester, students will be required to complete a final project, in which they analyze, memorize, and depict what the texts mean to them. This class will be interesting to teach because it involves bits of all the genres, topics, and styles of English; also, this class will help me build a foundation to teach upper-level classes in college. It will be a fun start if I am willing to teach multiple aspects of English. In this section, I describe the texts that I plan to use for this course, as well as the writing assignment and supporting tasks.

Text Set. For my students, I will focus on the theme of "Hope and Ambition." My texts form a coherent text set that includes two poems and one fiction book. The first poem is called "Dreams" by Langston Hughes. It is about a Black man dreaming of a life that will be fulfilled by giving people the motivation for hope and ambition. The second poem, "Still I Rise," by Maya Angelou is a call for African Americans to be able to stand up for their rights. It is written from the female author's point of view expressing that she has hope and ambition to rise from the way she is treated by white supremacy. The fiction book we will read is called *Prepared: What Kids Need for a Fulfilled Life*, by Diane Tavenner. From this book, I chose the first chapter called "Because Graduation Should Mean More." This chapter talks about a girl who gives importance to walking on stage and finally graduating. Her hard work has given her the hope and ambition to become a teacher, and she does become one. For her fellow classmates, she knew they were prepared to go to college and had the hope and ambition to succeed. She describes how students want to fulfill their dreams. For learners' final portfolio or project, they will be provided two additional text sets called "Dusk in Touch with Apex" and "Human Struggle at Dusk," both written by Salma Khan. These poems reflect personal experiences and life hardships. The poems show that human life is a struggle, and that one should stand firm when dealing with harsh times in their life.

Overall, the texts in my text set describe the struggle individuals go through and how they have such hope and ambition to step up in life. The texts

evoke a positive theme of never giving up on your dreams. This text set will motivate students to work diligently by not losing hope in their cultural identity, family, life, and education. The poems I have selected will teach learners how to understand figurative or nonliteral language, so they will be able to use it to communicate with society. The ~~fiction~~ book's first chapter is a great opening to a girl's hopes and dreams on her graduation day; this text is important because it will give students practice in reading longer texts and understanding the meaning of a theme, plot, and opening of a chapter. They will get a basic grasp of the fundamentals of fiction. These texts form a basis for tasks that will help students to become better readers, writers, and speakers, so they can communicate clearly in the real world.

Assignment Sheet. My assignment sheet will focus on the meanings of the assigned poem called "Dreams" by Langston Hughes. I will require students to read the poem and find the meaning in each stanza, and how these themes could be incorporated into their personal lives; basically, I want them to reflect on their personal experiences or those of someone they know in light of the poem. This has to be a 300-word response based on the meanings of the stanzas of the poem and its reflections on it through their own experience. In the "background" section of my assignment sheet, I will briefly summarize the themes of the poem, and add a non-fiction analysis to this based on my experience. I will also write the background information of the author in relation to his work. The prompt for

the assignment is: How are "hope and ambition" illustrated in the authors' work, and how is this theme reflected in your own life?

From the poem "Dreams," some students may focus on Stanza 1, Line 3: "Life is a broken-winged bird." They may read this as a statement about life being hard because a bird's wings are broken. They may write a reflection on the difficult times they may have experienced. Also, other students may choose Stanza 2, Line 4: "Frozen with snow." This may depict that the world can be cold or dark. In a small-group task that prepares students for this assignment, students may elaborate, "Because all this snow would be frozen in the world." Then, some learners say, "Frozen with snow" may mean that an individual's life would not be fun, it would be sad. This activity will be very engaging because it will allow students the opportunity for self-reflection.

Vocabulary Task. My vocabulary task will focus on words that stand out or create meaning in the poem "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou. Students will play a game in which they will count the lines of the poem without looking at the content. Then, they will randomly choose a number within the range of lines they counted. The number they choose will correspond to the line they are assigned in the poem. I will then ask students what several vocabulary items each represents in the poem. I will also have the students find synonyms for the vocabulary in their line. Then, they will write a poetic sentence figuratively using the synonym. These words are relevant to this poem because they add significance to the

overall meaning of the poem, especially when learners try to express the poem's theme using non-literal or figurative language as used in creative writing. Also, these vocabulary words are relevant to the writing assignment because students will find the meaning of an entire line from a poem, as well as the meaning of only the individual words within that line. How the task will work is explained in the following steps:

A.) Students will count the lines of an entire poem called "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou.

B.) Students will choose a number within the range of lines they counted.

C.) Students will use that number as the numerical placement the line lands at.

D.) Students will find interesting words that are significant in their chosen line.

E.) Students will guess what the word means in the poem and come up with a synonym of the word. They will be provided with a dictionary for this task.

F.) Students will create a sentence using the synonym.

Here is an example of how this task will work: In the first stanza of "Still I Rise," students may select the line that contains the word "trod." They may guess that it means "drag" or "dip." Then I will ask them what the synonym "stomp"

means, according to the context of this definition: "Stomp; to set a foot on top of someone." I also said they could use "tread," instead of "trod." I correct learners by explaining that the present tense of "trod" is "tread."

When students are invited to use the word in a sentence in a figurative way, they might come up with sentences like: "He treads me into the pool of blood."

In the second stanza, students may find the word "springing." They may think of the synonym of "jumping." They may make up a sentence for this word like the following: "My heart is "springing" high for my grandpa." For the third stanza, they may choose the word "soulful." They may define this word as "alive" or "giving." I will correct them and say it means "emotional." Then they may make up a sentence using this word figuratively such as the following: "Donna is soulful for her father because he is very ill." These vocabulary tasks reflect Nunan's principle of authenticity in TBLT, which emphasizes how task authenticity is important because those tasks are an advantage to be used in the real world. Helping learners perform tasks that increase vocabulary skills allow learners to understand use of figurative language in non-literal jokes presented in the real world. Furthermore, these tasks also reflect Faez's principle that language serves the purpose of making meaning. If learners are able to understand and comprehend what they are writing, reading, and saying, then they will be effective communicators in the real world. Allowing learners to create meaning

from the tasks they perform will allow them to understand reality outside of the classroom environment.

.Grammar Task. My grammar task is focused on students choosing different parts of speech from chapter one of the book called *Prepared: What Kids Need for a Fulfilled Life*. Students will play a game in which they will close their eyes and run their finger on the text back and forth for thirty seconds until it lands on a word-. They will then identify the part of speech of that word. These vocabulary words represent adjectives, nouns, pronouns, verbs, and so on. used in the text; there are the different parts of speech focusing on the theme of hope and ambition." The text is connected to the writing assignment because it focuses on meaning, writing sentences, and reflecting why the word represents that part of speech. I want the students to choose the word that their finger lands on, identify its part of speech,, what it means in the chapter, and why it represents that part of speech, and then write a sentence using that word with the same theme of hope and ambition.

Students may write complete sentences like the following: "Graduation from high school will allow me to go to college"; "I was the speaker who encouraged students to not give up on their dreams"; and "The ceremony made me excited because I want to go to college." Students may identify several verbs such as, "wanted," "borrowed," "approached." Students may explain that "wanted" is a verb because it expresses something someone desires. "Borrowed" is a verb

because it means taking something with permission. "Approached" is a verb because it shows that something has gone. I will correct the students on the word "approached" and explain that it is a verb because it means something has gotten nearer. Like "graduation has approached its end."

The students may write sentences using these words in the following lines: "I wanted to graduate, so I can be a teacher." "I borrowed a pencil for the test, so I can pass it." "I approached the teacher, so I could get help and pass the test."

Students may land their finger on several adverbs, such as "intentionally" and "statistically." They may have no idea what these words mean. So, I will explain to them that "intentionally" means to do something on purpose; you are aware of your actions. "Statistically" has to do with counting and math, when some output is developed through calculations. This task is an example of a form-focused task, specifically one that gives students practice with identifying the grammatical class of a word. Such tasks are useful for building students' explicit knowledge of the language, which can also help them with selecting the right word forms when communicating messages. .

In her chapter, "Teaching Grammar," Freeman explains understanding specific areas in grammar that allow learners to make more sense of content. Freeman (1993) states, "Choosing a particular dimension of grammar to focus on will enable teachers to adopt or adapt a teaching activity so that students'

attention is focused where it will do the best" (p. 258)." Freeman shows how a grammar task is focused on a particular dimension of grammar, that is the parts of speech. Understanding this dimension will help students create meaningful sentences, and they will improve their level of register, or how the word should be used appropriately in conjunction with other words in the sentence. Focusing on parts of speech, I believe students will gain a profound understanding of the meaning of each word, and which context each word should fit into. Each vocabulary word will have to be chosen carefully, so it can make sense.

Larsen-Freeman(1993) states, "Other times when students have a particular cognitive style that is not well suited for language analysis or when a particular linguistic rule is rather convoluted, it may make sense to present a grammar construction deductively" (p. 268). Larsen-Freeman shows how grammar tasks can be difficult for some students because of the ways they learn. I should adjust the task accordingly to each specific student's level of understanding and strength. Also, Larsen-Freeman shows that each student has a different learning style, and the appropriateness of the type of task assigned to each student will vary. This shows my task is already deductive because students are following directions that require them to identify the different parts of speech from a sample chapter.

Frodesen (2014) also states, "This grammar serves as a resource for effective communication, not just an isolated body of knowledge" (p. 239). F My

grammar task may help students with communicating using the correct grammar. Overall, these grammar tasks reflect one of Erlam's (2022) principles, which explains that TBLT instruction should be form-focused. If students focus on the grammatical aspect of their reading, writing, and dialogue, they will be able to effectively communicate with society. Learners need to make sense of the grammar they are presented with in texts, and this skill will give them an array of opportunities for success in the real world.

Opinion Gap Task. For my class's final project, students will be assigned an opinion gap task by having the opportunity to analyze two of the poems I have written. They will use literary and poetic devices, provided in the appendices, to critique these two poems by comparing and contrasting the poems' structure, themes, language, and overall meaning. The appendices will have definitions included to aid them with decoding language and critically thinking about the poems. The first text is "Dusk in Touch With The Apex" and the second poem is "Human Struggle at Dusk," both by Salma Khan. They will answer some of the following questions and add their opinions: What are the themes of each poem? Are there any shifts or turns in the poems? If so, please identify them. Can you identify metaphors or similes? How do these metaphors/similes create an allusion to something or someone? Can you identify the sound-letter relationship of alliteration? In addition to answering these questions, each student will call on a peer to present their opinion on how an excerpt from the poem relates to their

life. For example, one student calls on another student who shares the following lines from “Dusk in Touch With Apex”:

I am a creature and adore my patience/I've held inside myself for so long/I saw the earth, so indifferent/Full of smoke, dissipating by Creatures corrupt dynamics

He explains his own opinion about this stanza by explaining how the "dark" images reflect the author's sorrow and end to life. Then the student starts self-reflecting by relating the stanza to his own personal life, such as the depression he experiences on and off after his father passed away. Then that student calls on the next student to present in a similar manner. This task reflects one of Erlam’s principles, which explains that communicative tasks should include engaging activities and be interesting to students. If students are invited to share their opinions about and personal connections with the text, they will remain interested in the task.

Information Gap Tasks. Another task that students will complete for their second portion of the final project is an information gap task. Students will compete against each other to present something challenging, so they can be better prepared for real life situations. The text set remains the same as above (“Dusk in Touch with the Apex” and “Human Struggle at Dusk”). In this project, students will do one of the following:

1) Memorize and present a stanza from the poem; 2) Create a physical or digital set design to depict one of the poems' themes or scenes; 3) Create an artifact that may symbolize one of the poems; 4) Write a creative piece that serves as a reflection or imitation of one of the poems.

A student may end up with any of these options; I will have students spin the wheel of fortune that will have a tip landing on only one number from 1 through 4. A student may land on option 1 and present a stanza from the poem "Human Struggle at Dusk." They will memorize the stanza and then present it to the class without looking at it. It may be the following: Myself, scanning this earth/ Knives passed along entities / Like flying saucers/ Shattering human worth/ Why happening? / Spell cast? Or Could it be a curse? / From our mother / Or may it be mother earth? The student would find this very challenging to memorize but the task will help him or her compete communicatively in the world. Some students would find this task difficult to memorize because they are not able to pronounce or do not understand some of the words from the poem. So the student will seek interaction with a peer or a thesaurus to help fill their knowledge gaps for this option or for any of the other options. . Overall, this task reflects Nunan's principle of task authenticity by allowing learners to seek different sources they need, which they may also do in real-world communication outside of the classroom. . Also, this task reflects how in TBLT often "[l]earners are not specifically taught or directed to the language they need to complete the task" (East, 2021, p. 47). When students seek sources to complete tasks, they are not limited to one

source because they can seek sources in any language they feel comfortable to help them aid their understanding of the task. Granting students flexibility allows them to remain focused and intrigued by the task, so they find it fun to use in the real world.

Learning From TBLT. Overall, this curriculum has been fun to create, and I hope that it is successful for my future students. This project has expanded my creativity in making tasks for students more enjoyable. I have understood that a task should not be simple, but should be interesting. TBLT has taught me how students can expand their knowledge about language through collaborative, interesting activities. I have learned how words should not be taught in a literal sense, but should be creatively used as figurative language. This helps students understand what non-literal phrases are, why they are used, and how they are useful in active communication. I love TBLT tasks because students will go beyond the basic meaning of language and learn how to use it in unique ways. TBLT tasks have helped me think about how students' writing could be more sensible. I have learned that TBLT not only helps learners in education, but also practically in life, like at job interviews that involve writing resumes, letters of intent, or cover letters. Also, these tasks help them with their communication in an academic or professional setting. What I am most excited about my “Hope and Ambition” curriculum is to include TBLT tasks that expands students’ horizons to use the skills they have learned from the classroom into the real

world. I want students to know that TBLT is a practical form of learning they can use to benefit socially with society.

APPENDIX A
TEXTS SETS

Dreams by Langston Hughes - Poems | Academy of American Poets

Still I Rise by Maya Angelou - Poems | Academy of American Poets

Fiction Book

Prepared: What-Kids-Need-Fulfilled(e-book) by Diane Tavenner | Amazon

APPENDIX B
WRITING ASSIGNMENT SHEET

Self-Reflection based on the theme of "Hope and Ambition"

Rough draft Due (At least one page. Typed, 300 words): Friday May 21

Typed Full Submission Due: Friday 6/5 Revision Due: Friday 6/12

Background

Langston Hughes' poem *Dreams* is about not giving up hope in life, otherwise you will view the world as depressed and gloomy. He focuses his main theme on hope and ambition. He uses figurative language to symbolize life as sad if the individual loses hope. The word "Hold" is used as a connotation for the persistence the individual has to keep on going in his life, that is his personal "dream." You will get a more narrow understanding of the meaning of the poem by understanding its creative language.

This self-reflection will give you a chance to understand the author's figuratively spoken verses and how to incorporate its meaning into your own life, and exude your own feelings about yourself or someone you know in writing.

Assignment: 1 page min. (Typed, Single-Spaced, One inch margins, 12 pt. Font)

For this assignment, you will focus on the theme of "Hope and Ambition." You will select a verse from the poem by Langston Hughes *Dreams*, and compose a self-reflection based on what the verse means to you, your life, or someone you know.

Important information below:

-You should not shift your writing away from the theme of "Hope and Ambition."

-Try to discuss the losses or rough times you have had in life.

-You do not need outside sources. Just use your own experience.

Also, remember to choose one vocabulary word from the poem that gives importance to that chosen verse. Tell me why you chose that word amongst other words in the verse, and how it symbolizes your, or someone else's life.

APPENDIX C
VOCABULARY TASK HANDOUT

A.) Still I Rise by Maya Angelou - Poems | Academy of American Poets

Vocabulary Task Directions: Students should complete the following steps in order.

Selecting a verse:

A.) Students will count the lines of an entire poem called, "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou.

B.) Students will choose a number within the range of lines they counted.

C.) Students will use that number as the numerical placement the line lands at.

Selecting a Word:

D.) Students will find interesting words that are significant in each stanza.

E.) Students will pick words and write them on a small piece of paper.

Practical Fun and Creativity with Vocabulary

F.) Students will collect all the crunched papers in one box, and pick one from it without looking.

G.) Students will guess what the words mean in the poem and the synonym to each word they have chosen.

H.) Students will create a sentence figuratively using the synonym.

APPENDIX D
FINAL PROJECT TEXT SETS

Text Set

Dusk in touch with the Apex

Young spherical ball like the earth

Child who had the right to stay still

But was I granted that right

Not for a few milliseconds....

I remember walking into the murkiness

Of the apex, known as my "dark end"

Of Salma Khan—The boldest

Not to say I was not gone

But felt as if I was transparent from the earth

And seem to not belong

Though our beliefs are inherent of one another

We tend to use them for our benefit

To decide and resolve

Why we have become like it

I am a creature and adore my patience

I've held inside myself for so long

I saw the earth, so indifferent
Full of smoke, dissipating by
Creatures corrupt dynamics

I was at the apex
But far from it
Almost like I was split
Away from earth's pit
That dissolved all corrupt entities into
A neighboring black hole
BUt do you know such a fact before?
Before humankind?
Evidently, Almighty God so wise
Enables all flowers of this earth to sprout from
Laudative seeds and rise
With arms and hands, but where are the fingers?
You know God doe snot want me
To linger
There is time to wake up
With my handy-dandy ringer
In the dawn without fear
Implicating my close proximity with this
The ever so shining light—so near

Myself, alleviated to the cast of a light's spell
But recalled this moment surely not spelled
Completely and not
Abbreviated
Until a time approached for me to
Reach my full stop
Knowing I was lost
And about
Not knowingly doubt
Such scorching pain
Of slipping away into
Fast motion
Though, my responses were no emotion

Held responsible for laying bricks
On my mother's back
As my universe doorway shut
And transparent
Only seen as black

My body is round
Like the earth, but as I
Reached the apex
It carved itself out

To become acutely curved

I am still living and still will

Breath in my routine with a grand heart

For mother who bore me from

Early start

Beware of the skeptics of silence

They say if you not

Express with letters, words

You will surely regress

In this world

Though the skin of yourself not matter

Fact is

Earth is composed of such matter

Is why you and I matter

Our words matter

Dusk has touched my hand

And now

I will prepare myself

For my apex

Dark end

Not to pretend
But I myself am
Only one who could defend
This could be situation
Of such lament

Poem #2 Below:

Human Struggle at Dusk

Myself, scanning this earth
Knives passed along entities
Like flying saucers
Shattering human worth
Why happening?
Spell cast? Or
Could it be a curse?
From our mother
Or may it be mother earth?

Such a blade, a rigid figure
Your skin dragged against
Such an agony and torture
OH God save me from

That approaching
Boulder
Now I feel it
We all do feel
That pointy surface
Digging inside our flesh
Oh living God
Oh mother of earth
Would I ever reach
Road of success

I myself pull that jagged
Figure out
I hear my ego shout
Oh God help me
Bare the pain as our
Father did on the very cross
Gasping out loud
I know I can censor my open mouth

Such pain of guilt
I feel my bosoms lagged
Behind my back
My vigor is dissipating

Finally delayed
Now my feet walk and speak
Of such dismay

Now time has touched my memory
I recall mother and
The bodies of her creation
Such dimensions
And multiplicity
Of her worlds
Portrayal

Though truth is...
No one can overcome mother earth
She is why I stand steady and tall
On both feet on tough grounds
Until my echoes announced

I am proud to undergo the pain she caused
With a closed heart
Eventually will pour out blood of elation
Is why she created us
Her beloved human creation

APPENDIX E
FINAL PROJECT TASKS

Advanced ESL Class-College Adults/Children

Lesson plan#1: Opinion Gap Task

Poems: Salma Khan's "Dusk in Touch with the Apex" and "Human Struggle at Dusk."

Please analyze these poems using literary/poetic devices. Write a 250 word analysis paper for each poem. Explain how the poems compare and contrast each other? Why? Continue by adding your own personal experiences or thoughts in relation to one or more of the poems.

Steps to the process.....

1. What are the themes of each poem?
2. Are there any shifts/turns in the poems? If so, please identify them?
3. Can you identify metaphors/similes?
4. How do these metaphors/similes create an allusion to something or someone?
5. Can you identify the sound-letter relationship of alliteration?
6. Furthermore, are you free to use any additional poetic/literary devices to analyze both poems?
7. Lastly, reflect on your personal experiences in connection with one or more of the poems.

Part#2 : Creative Model

This part of the project serves to physically activate students' minds, and hands to be creative and imagine how they can depict one of the poems using the tools and skills they are equipped with.

In this portion of your project, you will do one of the following:

- 1.) memorize and present a stanza from the poem
- 2.) Create a set design physically or digitally to depict one of the poems' themes, scenes, etc
- 3.) Create an artifact that may symbolize one of the poems
- 4.) Write a creative piece that serves as a reflection or imitation to one of the poems

APPENDIX F
ELEMENTS OF POETRY STUDY GUIDE

IMAGERY—IMAGES THAT APPEAL TO THE 5 SENSES OF TOUCH, SOUND, SMELL, SIGHT, ETC

RHYTHM—A TEMPO THAT KEEPS THE POEM STEADY AND GOING. THE REPEATING OF VOWEL SOUNDS OF WORDS CLOSE TO EACH OTHER IN THE SAME LINE OR LINES.

SOUND—THIS ALSO MAKES UP THE RHYTHM OF THE POEM.

(TWO TYPES OF SOUND BELOW:)

EUPHONY—THIS IS A SOFT SOUND TO THE EAR.

EX: BIRDS HUMMING—SENSE OF RELIEF

CACOPHONY--THIS IS A JARRING OR HARSH SOUND TO THE EAR.

EX: BLACK BOARD SCREECHING UNDER TEACHER'S NAME—UNCOMFORTABLE FEELING.

DENSITY--WHAT DIFFERENTIATES POETRY FROM LONG PROSE. DENSITY IS THE WEIGHT OF WHAT IS BEING SAID IN SO LITTLE SPACE OR TIME.

EXAMPLE; POEM IS DENSE THAN PROSE POEM BECAUSE IT IS SHORTER, AND TELLS A STORY IN JUST A FEW LINES, RATHER PARAGRAPH AFTER PARAGRAPH(LIKE IN PROSE).

SHIFT—THIS OCCURS TOWARDS THE MIDDLE TO END UP THE POEM. THERE CAN BE MULTIPLE SHIFTS OR TURNING POINTS IN THE POEM. USUALLY THIS HAPPENS WHEN A CONFLICT ARISES OR IS RESOLVED. IT IS LIKE A SPARK OF THE MOMENT.

APPENDIX G
POETIC DEVICES STUDY GUIDE

Alliteration—repetition of similar letter sound occurring one after the other, or closely adjacent to one another in a sentence, phrase, poetic meter or line.

Ex: Snake slithered on slimy sauce sneakishly

Ambiguity—A word, phrase, thought, dialogue being open to interpretation, having multiple meanings.

Ex: Her voice echoed high pitch bursting of excitement

For her husband's new job.

Few interpretations Examples: maybe her husband got a higher paying job, or maybe her husband had a dream job may be a few reasons why the wife is excited.

Irony—An event that occurs as it was unexpected, or not supposed to happen.

Ex: In the story "Her," when both lovers planned to get married, they realized each of them had a secret relationship with someone else. Both lovers drifted in their opposite directions.

Simile—Using "Like" or "As" to compare two unlike things.

Ex: She was tweedling like a bird.

Metaphor—Use of symbolism by representing someone or something as something else, more abstract.

Ex: She was a panda bear, gullible, yet bold at heart.

Personification—a person or thing, embodying some type of quality, or characteristics through use of different figures of speech.

Ex: Her face was glowing with a cheerful atmosphere that struck me the first time she pulled down her black niqab.

Onomatopoeia- imitates, and suggests the sound pronounced.

Ex: clink, clink

Slant Rhyme-Half rhyme, may partially have similar vowel sounds that steer towards slightly different directions.

End Rhyme-two rhyming words have the same vowel sound at the end of the sentence.

Ex:I sat world full of trouble/Never knew I was trapped in bubble

Middle Rhyme-a rhyme occurs in the middle of its verse.Example: Was she my mom so soft?/ Or was she a con full of deception?

Appendix H

Creative Models for Project





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