



AI as a Catalyst for Task-Based Language Teaching: Enhancing Communicative Competence

Mr. Isak Shabbir Pathan¹ & Prof. Dr. Umesh Shivram Jagadale²

¹Research Student Sangamner Nagarpalika Arts, D.J. Malpani Commerce and B.N. Sarda Science College (Autonomous), Sangamner

²Research Centre Department of English & Postgradua, Sangamner Nagarpalika Arts, D.J. Malpani Commerce and B.N. Sarda Science College, (Autonomous), Sangamner

Corresponding Author – Mr. Isak Shabbir Pathan

DOI - 10.5281/zenodo.20474734

Abstract:

The accelerating progress of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping educational practices, particularly in the teaching and learning of English language and literature. Conventional approaches often prioritize grammar drills and memorization, which may fall short in cultivating learners' communicative competence. In contrast, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) emphasizes authentic communication through purposeful tasks and interactive engagement. This paper investigates how AI can serve as a catalyst for task-based instruction, supporting the development of communicative competence among students of English language and literature.

The study explores the role of AI-powered tools—including conversational agents, automated assessment systems, adaptive learning applications, and generative technologies—in designing interactive tasks that strengthen speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. By simulating real-world communication scenarios, offering individualized support, and delivering instant feedback, AI enhances the effectiveness and appeal of task-based activities. Integrating AI into TBLT frameworks also extends opportunities for authentic language practice beyond the classroom.

Additionally, the paper presents AI-assisted task models that foster collaboration, creativity, and critical engagement with literary texts. It further examines pedagogical considerations such as ethical use, teacher preparedness, and equitable access to technology. The findings suggest that when thoughtfully embedded within task-based approaches, AI can substantially advance communicative competence by promoting interactive, learner-centered, and context-driven language learning experiences.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Task-Based Language Teaching, Communicative Competence, English Language Teaching, Digital Pedagogy

Introduction:

Over recent decades, the teaching of English language and literature has experienced profound changes. The rise of digital technologies has encouraged educators to adopt innovative strategies that make language learning more engaging and interactive. Among these innovations, Artificial Intelligence (AI) stands out as a transformative force. AI offers adaptive learning environments, automated evaluation, and

interactive practice opportunities that can reshape the teaching–learning process.

Meanwhile, communicative competence has become a central aim in English language education. This concept highlights not only grammatical accuracy but also the ability to use language effectively in authentic contexts. Yet, in many traditional, exam-driven classrooms, learners often struggle to acquire practical communication skills despite years of instruction.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has emerged as a promising solution to this challenge. By emphasizing real-world tasks, TBLT encourages learners to engage in problem-solving, negotiation, and collaboration, thereby strengthening communicative abilities. Integrating AI into task-based approaches creates new opportunities for designing authentic tasks, delivering real-time feedback, and building immersive learning environments. This paper examines how AI can be strategically combined with TBLT to enhance communicative competence in English language and literature classrooms.

Objectives of the Study:

The study seeks to:

1. Analyze the role of AI in English language and literature teaching.
2. Explore how TBLT principles foster communicative competence.
3. Investigate the contribution of AI tools to task-based strategies.
4. Propose practical AI-supported tasks that strengthen students' communicative abilities.

Concept of Communicative Competence:

Dell Hymes (1972) expanded Noam Chomsky's idea of linguistic competence into the broader notion of communicative competence, which refers to the ability to use language appropriately across social contexts. Canale and Swain (1980) further identified four components:

- **Grammatical Competence** – mastery of grammar, vocabulary, and syntax.
- **Sociolinguistic Competence** – appropriate language use in varying social situations.
- **Discourse Competence** – ability to produce coherent and cohesive texts.
- **Strategic Competence** – use of strategies to overcome communication barriers.

Effective language instruction should aim to develop all these dimensions through meaningful communicative activities.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT):

TBLT is a learner-centered approach that places authentic tasks at the heart of instruction. Rather than focusing narrowly on grammar rules, it encourages learners to use language in purposeful activities. A typical lesson includes:

- **Pre-Task Phase** – introduction of the topic, vocabulary, and task instructions.
- **Task Cycle** – learners engage individually or collaboratively in completing the task through interaction and problem-solving.
- **Post-Task Phase** – learners present outcomes, reflect on language use, and receive teacher feedback.

Through these stages, TBLT helps learners build communicative competence by simulating real-life communication.

Artificial Intelligence in Language Education:

AI refers to computer systems capable of performing tasks that require human-like intelligence, such as language processing and decision-making. In language education, AI applications include:

- Intelligent tutoring systems
- Conversational chatbots
- Automated writing evaluation tools
- Speech recognition software
- Personalized learning platforms

These tools enhance interactivity and adaptability, supporting both teachers and learners.

AI Integration in Task-Based Learning:

AI technologies enrich task-based learning by creating interactive environments for practicing communication skills. Examples include:

- **Chatbots for Conversational Tasks** – learners simulate dialogues such as ordering food or booking accommodation.
- **AI-Assisted Writing** – tools provide instant feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and coherence.
- **Literary Interpretation Support** – AI generates prompts and thematic insights to aid text analysis.

Collaborative Tasks – AI platforms facilitate group storytelling, brainstorming, and digital projects.

Benefits of AI-Supported Task-Based Learning:

Integrating AI with task-based learning offers several advantages:

1. **Personalized Learning:** AI systems can adapt tasks according to students' proficiency levels.
2. **Immediate Feedback:** Students receive instant feedback on grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.
3. **Increased Student Engagement:** Interactive AI tools make learning more engaging and motivating.
4. **Real-Life Communication Practice:** AI can simulate authentic communication situations.
5. **Enhanced Critical Thinking:** AI-based tasks encourage students to analyze, evaluate, and create content.

Challenges and Limitations:

Despite its promise, AI integration faces challenges:

- **Digital Divide** – unequal access to technology.
- **Teacher Training** – need for professional development.
- **Ethical Concerns** – issues of privacy and integrity.
- **Overdependence** – risk of reducing human interaction.

Addressing these requires careful planning and policy support.

Pedagogical Implications:

AI-supported TBLT calls for a shift in teaching practices. Teachers should act as facilitators, guiding learners in responsible and effective use of AI tools. Institutions must:

- Provide training programs for educators.
- Develop AI-enhanced learning materials.
- Encourage collaborative learning environments.
- Promote ethical and equitable use of technology.

Conclusion:

Artificial Intelligence is opening new pathways for transforming English language and literature education. When combined with TBLT, AI can significantly strengthen communicative competence by offering interactive, authentic, and personalized learning experiences. Through conversational practice, collaborative projects, and creative language tasks, learners can acquire the skills needed for effective communication in a globalized world.

The success of AI integration, however, depends on thoughtful pedagogical design, adequate teacher preparation, and ethical implementation. With these conditions met, AI-supported task-based learning can play a vital role in shaping confident, competent communicators for the future.

References:

1. Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing.
2. Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching*.
3. Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence.

4. Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. (2014). *Fostering Personalized College English Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching.*
5. Chapelle, C. (2003). *English Language Learning and Technology.*
6. Huang, X., Wu, Y., & Dou, A. (2024). *AI-Enhanced Task-Based Language Teaching: Perspectives on Integrating AI Chatbots in English Classrooms.*
7. Ling, Y., & Jan, J. M. (2025). *Teacher Perspectives on Integrating AI Chatbots in English Classrooms.*