Reaching Higher Levels through an Innovative Task-Based Skill Integrated Model

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Objectives

- Present an innovative model for task-based (TB) skill integrated activities.

- Present a skill-integrated TB activity for each level of Interagency Language Roundtable Skill Level Descriptions (ILR) with the special emphasis of higher levels (3-4).

Characteristics of ILR Speaking Skill Levels

Level 0+:	Words, memorized utterances, the *"gesturer"*
Level 1:	Short sentences, the *"survivor"*
Level 2:	Speaks in paragraphs, the *"narrator"*
Level 3:	Discusses abstract concepts, the *"thinker"*
Level 4:	Discuss abstract topics, the *"philosopher"*

Task Definitions

- **Focus on Meaning (Nunan, 1989)**
- **Goal-Oriented Activity with Real Outcome (Willis, D, 1996)**
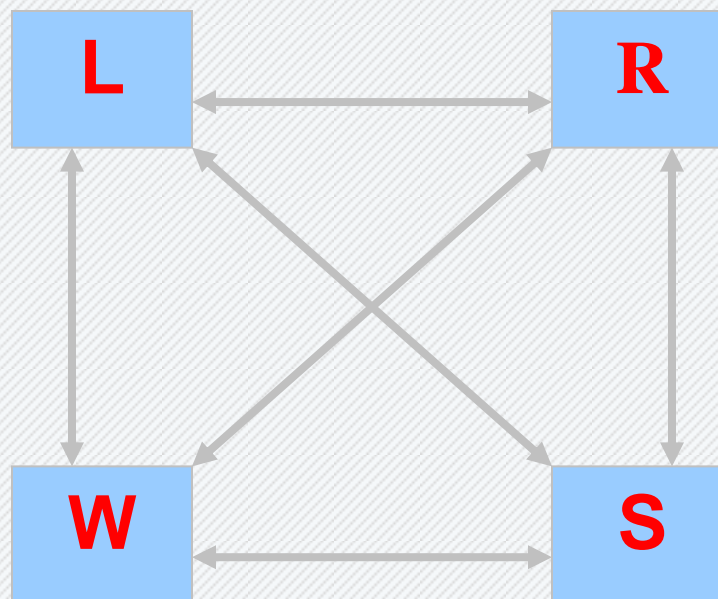- **Work-plan with Content-Oriented Outcome (Ellis, 2003)**

Characteristics of Task-Based Instruction (TBI)

- **Info Gap**

- **Problem Solving**

- **Use of Authentic Materials**

- **Personalization**

- **Linkage between Classroom and Outside Use**

- **Observable Outcome (written and oral)**

Model of Skills Integration

→ task

L – Listening
R – Reading
W – Writing
S –Speaking

Maximizing the Learning through the Skills Integration Model

- Utilizing various sensory channels allows to maximize language acquisition and retention.

- There is some neuroscientific evidence for separate processing of various sensory input.

- Maximizing student potential is critical for intensive courses.

Text Functions

Level	Function	Examples
0+	Enumerate	List of items such as a shopping list
	Collect Information	As in a passport application form
1	Inform (Orientation)	About places and events, such as the location of a place or times
	Announce	Social or public events, such as a wedding or a meeting
	Advertise	Common products and services

Adapted from the DLIFLC Diagnostic Assessment and Text Typology courses

Text Functions

Level	Function	Examples
2	Direct	On how to get to places
	Report - Events	Current events
	Report - Studies	Studies and discoveries, such as a medical discovery
	Explain	How things and processes work, such as a new technological device
	Instruct	How to accomplish regular tasks such as a work assignment
	Narrate	Recounting of personal stories and common occurrences
	Describe	People and places
		Adapted from the DLIFLC Diagnostic Assessment and Text Typology courses

Text Functions

Level	Function	Examples
3/4	Compare	Ideas or complex facts
	Comment	On ideas and events, such as in a letter to the editor
	Analyze	Abstract ideas and complex facts
	Advance Opinion	On a particular issue advocated by an author
	Counter Opinion	Opposition to an idea or opinion expressed by another party
	Hypothesize	On a past or future event
5	Advise	*On social behaviors and courses of action*
		Adapted from the DLIFLC Diagnostic Assessment and Text Typology courses

Example 1: Novice (ILR level 1)

- *Read the weather report for the next five days for Kursk, Russia.*
- *On the basis on what you have read, prepare a weather report for a local radio station.*
- *Record yourself.*
- *Present your recording to the entire class.*
- *Listen to your classmates. Take notes. Compare with your own report.*

Variation for Step 1: *Students ask SIRI to provide weather forecast for Kursk, Russia.*

Example 2: Intermediate (ILR level 1+)

You work as an administrator for a Russian company.

■ *Listen to a voice message from your supervisor on the hotel accommodations she/he would like to have in Yaroslavl (Russia).*

■ *Find on-line descriptions of three hotels in Yaroslavl. Choose one that you think suits your supervisor's requirements best.*

■ *Write an email to your supervisor specifying your selection and the reasons for it.*

Example 3: Advanced (ILR level 2)

- *Read an article pertaining to the Universal Exam in Russia. Answer content questions.*
- *Listen to a radio interview on the same topic.*
- *Transcribe it.*
- *Summarize in writing all you have learned about the Universal exam in Russia using both sources of information.*

Example 4: Advanced Plus (ILR level 2+)

■ *Listen to a passage about a traffic accident in which witnesses disagree on what happened.*

■ *Read a newspaper article pertaining to the same incident.*

■ *Compare the information from both sources. Find similarities and differences.*

■ *Determine as best as you can what probably happened and why.*

■ *Make a presentation to the entire class about your assessment and conclusion supporting your opinion with facts, logic, and inference.*

Example 4: Superior (ILR level 3)

- *Read the Wikipedia article on "Материнский капитал".*
- *Write down all the points supporting this measure.*
- *Find a video interview with Boris Nemtzov from 2007 where he argues against this policy.*
- *Watch the video and write down the main points stated in this interview.*
- *Prepare for a debate: one team will support "Материнский капитал" and the other team will argue against it.*

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Example 5: Distinguished (ILR level 3+/4)

- *Watch the feature movie entitled "Matilda".*
- *Write short reviews of the movie from the point of view of a film critic reporting to*

a). an American audience
b). an émigré audience
c). a Russian audience
Adapt content and level to match the audience to account for differences in local political culture.

Example 5: Distinguished (ILR level 3+/4) (cont.)

- *Read two reviews of the movie given on the Internet, one from a film critic for a TV station and one from a University professor of film. How do they differ in content and style? Why?*

- *With your classmates, hold a film critics' conference to discuss the film and its reviews.*