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SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING. *Mike Long*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015. Pp. xiv + 439.

Considering the growing body of research on task-based language teaching (TBLT)—albeit not necessarily genuine TBLT that Long has resolutely advocated—and teaching practitioners' ever-growing interest in utilizing various communicative tasks, this long-awaited and timely volume is no doubt likely to contribute to a better understanding and implementation of genuine TBLT. Genuine TBLT is not task-supported language teaching (LT) that has been at the epicenter of most previously published books on tasks in LT. As he has done in his earlier work on focus on form versus focus on formS (e.g., Long, 1991), Long, as an unswerving believer in genuine TBLT, distances himself from other task-based researchers and distinguishes his version of TBLT from other typical task-based (or, more appropriately, task-supported) LT by making an orthographic distinction (i.e., [genuine] Task-Based Language Teaching vs. task-based language teaching).

This three-part volume offers a well-structured and well-sequenced description of genuine TBLT. Part 1 provides a rationale for TBLT, including psycholinguistic underpinnings based on research findings on first language acquisition (L1A) as well as second language acquisition (L2A) and philosophical principles that underlie TBLT. Long then moves on to illustrate detailed features of TBLT in Part 2, using the order of the procedural steps typically involved in the implementation of TBLT (i.e., needs and means analysis, identifying target tasks, analyzing target discourse, designing a task syllabus, materials development, methodological principles, criterion-referenced task-based assessments, and program evaluations). Part 3 consists of a single concluding chapter in which he illustrates his own view of the prospects of TBLT as an alternative to previously ineffective and inefficient LT methods and approaches and recommends more work should be done regarding all aspects of TBLT. Throughout the volume, Long presents various research findings and theoretical arguments and links them to his TBLT framework to support his firm belief that TBLT—in which tasks are not just de rigueur, but more important, are at the core of every aspect of LT—is probably the best option for successful LT at this time. Nevertheless, he admittedly notes that future research may point to better options.

Long expands on the claims delineated in most of his earlier published TBLT-related journal articles and book chapters and systematically incorporates them into this volume, adding new ideas and information and including more thorough discussion of research-based theoretical issues and various logistic considerations in the implementation of genuine TBLT. Also, he provides examples and samples in a number of instances to elaborate on details necessary for readers, whether novices or experts, to get a good grasp of each and every step of genuine TBLT. This feature of the volume makes it even more appealing. The volume also will likely bring much intellectual pleasure to many readers through the humorous cynicism embedded in some of his writing that might make readers laugh even during serious moments of reading, for instance, "To begin with, course content is not determined by a multimillionaire textbook writer

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sipping martinis a thousand miles away on a beach in the Cayman Islands but by a locally conducted analysis of learner needs" (p. 13).

One notable strength of this volume is that Long, well versed in L1A and L2A literature and ongoing theoretical developments, logically shapes his arguments for genuine TBLT by summarizing and discussing numerous research findings evidenced in a myriad of relevant studies to successfully convince potential readers of the utility and, further, the necessity of TBLT, making a compelling case for genuine TBLT. Of course, in doing so, he displays the depth and breadth of his knowledge on varied LT-related issues. For some teaching practitioners, however, especially novice teachers interested in TBLT, his description and discussion of extensive relevant literature in parts of the volume may be an overwhelming amount of information to digest.

This volume certainly affords SLA researchers and teaching practitioners who are interested in TBLT a great opportunity to be better able to understand the essential and practical details of genuine TBLT as well as its research-based theoretical rationale. It should contribute to shortening our journey to a new beginning with genuine TBLT.

REFERENCE

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