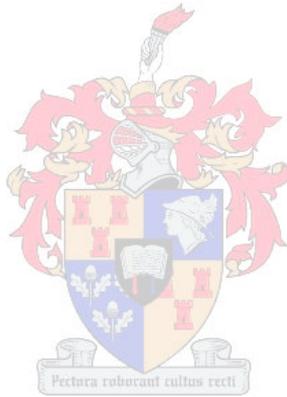


TASK-BASED DESIGN FOR LECTURER-STUDENT COMMUNICATION IN TEACHING XHOSA AS A SECOND LANGUAGE



BY

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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: 18 November 2009

ABSTRACT

This mini-thesis examines the features of a range of communication tasks in Xhosa that characterize lecturer-student conversations in tertiary context as regards problems of some individual students assuming the Task-based Theory of second language learning and teaching. The study is motivated by the need that exists for the development of specific purposes language courses for African languages like Xhosa in South Africa in the light of the constitutional provision for multilingualism and the advancement of the African languages. The introduction of multilingualism and the advancement of the status and use of the African languages are also specified in the National language policy for Higher Education. In order to commence on the kind of research on syllabus design required for quality second language courses for Xhosa within tertiary context the nature of lecturer-student communication relating to the problems of individual students is investigated in this study. The study focuses in particular on the issue of task design, i.e. the features posited by Pica et al (1993) relating to the interactant relationship between the participants, the interactant requirement (one-way or two-way), the communication goal orientation (i.e. convergent or divergent), and the goal outcome option (i.e. one or several outcome options). The analysis of the Xhosa communication tasks is of crucial significance for syllabus design, course design and pedagogic task design for task-based language teaching.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie mini-tesis ondersoek die kenmerke van 'n verskeidenheid kommunikasietake in isiXhosa wat dosent-student gesprekke in hoër onderwys kenmerk betreffende die probleme wat individuele studente ervaar. Die raamwerk van Taakgebaseerde onderrig en leer-teorie word aanvaar. Die studie is veral gemotiveer deur die behoefte wat bestaan vir die ontwikkeling van spesifieke doeleindes taalkursusse vir Afrikatale soos isiXhosa in Suid-Afrika in die lig van die konstitusionele voorsiening wat gemaak word vir veeltaligheid en die bevordering van die inheemse Afrikatale. Die invoer van veeltaligheid en die bevordering van die status en gebruik van die Afrikatale word ook gespesifiseer in die Nasionale Taalbeleid vir Hoër Onderwys. Ten einde te begin met die tipe van sillabusontwerp vir gehalte tweedetaal-onderrig kursusse vir Xhosa binne tersiêre konteks, word die aard van dosent-student kommunikasie buite die klas, betreffende die probleme van individuele studente ondersoek in hierdie studie. Die studie fokus in die besonder op die vraagstuk van taak-ontwerp, dit is, kenmerke voorgestel deur Pica et al (1993) betreffende die deelnemers, die interakteerder-vereistes (een-rigting of twee-rigting), die kommunikasiedoel oriëntasie (d.i. konvergent of divergent), en die doel-uitkoms (een of verskeie uitkomst). Die analise van die Xhosa kommunikasietake is van sentrale belang vir sillabus-ontwerp, kursus-ontwerp en pedagogiese taak-ontwerp vir taak-gebaseerde taalonderrig.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND AIMS OF STUDY

Since the mid eighties theoretical and empirical research in the field of task-based language learning and teaching (TBLL&T) has been extensive and has been shown to interrelate with the practice of effective second language learning and teaching (see Breen 1989, Candlin 1987, 2001, Crookes 1986, Hawkins 1985, Long 1985, 1989, Nunan 1987, 1989, among other). This interrelation between research and practice continues to be explored, extended and refined with respect to a number of research questions which in turn play a determining role in informing task-based syllabus design and the selection, grading and sequencing of pedagogic (or learning) tasks in a task-based syllabus. Some of the theoretical and empirical issues that have received a considerable deal of attention in recent task-based research relate to the following concerns:

- a. the nature of task types in promoting and enhancing second language learning;
- b. the role of input and focus on linguistic forms in optimizing task-based language learning and teaching;
- c. the factors of interaction in performing communication tasks and pedagogic tasks that promote fluency, accuracy and complexity in learner output;
- d. the factors that characterize task difficulty and complexity, and the way in which these factors can promote second language development to continuously more advanced levels.

The above issues will be considered in this mini-thesis with the aim of providing a principled framework for the design of a task-based course for isiXhosa as a second language for generic academic interaction between University lecturers or students who not first language speakers of isiXhosa. The substantial need among especially university lecturing staff to develop a social-interactive proficiency in an African language has been stimulated by the explicit recognition of multilingualism in the South African constitution and in the National Language Policy for Higher Education (2003) of South Africa.

Despite this significant need for well-designed syllabus and course design to serve as a principled scientific basis for informed course design and materials development for teaching basic interactive-social communicative proficiency in an African language to both university lecturers and students who have a need to acquire a proficiency in an African language for communicating with fellow students and/or lecturers who are first language speakers of an African language, virtually no attention has been given to this specific need in research on language teaching and learning of African languages.

This mini-thesis aims to make a contribution to addressing this research gap by examining the nature of a representative range of generic social-interactive communication tasks between University lecturers and students in terms of the needs domain of academic interaction. It presents an analysis of these generic communication tasks in terms of the task types that promote the process of second language learning advanced by Pica et al (1993), and the central linguistic form that realise central communicative segments in these tasks which need to be incorporated in focus on form aspects of task-based syllabus design and pedagogy.

The specific objectives of this mini-thesis are:

- to explore the properties of task-based research as regard the task-design properties of interaction, goal orientation and goal outcome;
- to examine a range of communication tasks in Xhosa characteristic of lecturer-student conversation about problems of individual students at university;
- to characterize the classification of these tasks in terms of the task types of (1) information gap, (2) opinion-giving, (3) jigsaw, (4) decision-making and (5) problem-solving.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

Studies in the field of task-based language learning and teaching over the past twenty years have emerged as increasingly sophisticated works, addressing a range of research issues, from theoretical principles of second or foreign language learning (acquisition) processes to language teaching methodology and task-based syllabus and course design. As in current literature, the term 'second' language is henceforth used to refer to the learning/acquisition of any new language other than the first language. The specific questions relating to these issues are dealt with critically and

comprehensively by especially Ellis (2003) and Nunan (2005). The interrelatedness between teaching methodology that facilitate optimal second (or additional) language learning on the one hand, and the design properties of task-based syllabuses on the other hand, is explored in numerous studies.

One key issue in this regard, concerns the nature of communicative input and interaction in second (or additional) language teaching that facilitate and enhance the acquisition of the second, i.e. target, language in terms of task-based language learning (TBLL). Task-based research has given extensive evidence of the intricate and complex interaction that obtains among language acquisition processes, task-based language teaching methodology, and task-based syllabus and course design. Each of these aspects needs to take into account the other in order for second (additional) language learning to take place optimally.

This mini-thesis adopts the methodology for the analysis of task-design properties that has been developed in studies by Skehan (1996) and Pica et al (1993) within the broader framework of task-based language teaching developed in Breen (1984, 1989), Candlin (1987, 2001), Crookes (1986), Dipietro (1987), Lee (2000), Littlewood (1981), Long (1980, 1985), and Rivers (1987), among others. The methodology employed by Pica et al for analyzing task properties that characterise the impact of such tasks on second language (L2) learning and development has been adopted by numerous researchers for empirical studies (Bygate, 2001; De la Colina and García Mayo, 2007; Ellis 2003, Fernandez García, 2007, Lambert and Engler 2007, and Swain and Lapkin, 2001, among others).

Central to task-based research on task and syllabus design is the concern with the two other dimensions of task-based language learning, namely the psycholinguistic and cognitive nature of second language (L2) learning, and classroom methodology incorporating pedagogic tasks. Research on task design, the focus of this study, is concerned with the question of how the design properties of tasks have an impact as regards the opportunities they present to L2 learners for enhancing acquisition of the target language. The properties postulated by Pica (1993) will be investigated for a range of Xhosa tasks exemplifying lecturer-student communication on problems of individual students. These properties include the impact of the task resulting from the **interactant relationship** (holder, supplier, or requester of information), **interactant requirement** (one-way or two-way information exchange), **goal orientation**

(covergent or divergent goal), and **goal-outcome options** (only one, or different outcome options). Within task-based research the nature of tasks in terms of their impact on L2 learning is viewed as important in order to determine the contribution of tasks in providing opportunities for learning, among the other L2 learning activities that may be employed in the classroom. In particular, the methodology for analysing communication tasks assumes the essential connection between (communicative) meaning and (linguistic) form, in the case of this study, the kind of message meanings that sometimes occur between lecturer and student because of the problems of individual students. The methodology employed in this mini-thesis is therefore characteristic of task research.

The broader methodology of this study entails, that the communicative task content of lecturer-student interaction resulting from the problems of individual students has been determined. This has been done through conversations with lecturing staff and students. The content of the sample dialogues is to be viewed as selective language content for Xhosa, rather than completely exhaustive, as in characteristic of task-based research.

1.3 ORGANISATION OF STUDY

This mini-thesis is organised as follows. Chapter one, entails what will be investigated in the study as a whole. In Chapter Two, a literature review is done on central concepts and properties of task-based language learning and teaching (TBLL&T) on which general consensus has emerged in the development of TBLL&T from earlier communicative language teaching (see Hawkins, 1985; Long, 1980, 1985; Prabhu, 1987; Rost, 1980; Savignon, 1983, and Swain 1985). The issues discussed include the concept of 'task' properties of task-based learning, with particular reference to implicit-explicit knowledge distinction and focus on form teaching. In Chapter Three, the specific rationale of the task typology postulated by Pica (1993) is reviewed. Thereafter a range of Xhosa communication tasks, exemplifying lecturer-student conversation about problems of individual students, is analysed. Chapter Four presents a recapitulation of the key aspects of task-based research invoked in the study and consolidates the main findings.

CHAPTER 2

PROPERTIES OF TASK-BASED THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The central aim of this chapter is to explore insights from research on the rationale and properties of task-based language learning and teaching that utilise focused tasks. These insights and arguments are particularly relevant to the study of how task-based language learning and teaching, contingent with task-based syllabus design incorporating focus-on-form properties, can facilitate and enhance interlanguage development with regard to fluency, accuracy and complexity. The insights relating to task-based syllabus design, in particular, will be invoked in for the purpose of exploring key sentence structures in student-lecturer communication in Xhosa in chapter three of this mini-thesis which are essential to express the central communicative segments. Thus, it will be demonstrated, with reference to the selected Xhosa dialogues representative of some core instances of generic student-lecturer communication in Xhosa in tertiary context, how essential sentence structures can be identified for the purpose of focus-on-form activities in focused pedagogic tasks. In addition, such sentence structures can be considered for the purposes of task-based syllabus design for specific purpose Xhosa syllabus design taking into account considerations relating to task complexity for the selection, sequencing and grading of pedagogic tasks. Thus, it will be demonstrated in chapter 3 of this study how task-based research can be invoked to inform task-based syllabus design for Xhosa, based on real world communication, which, in turn, promotes second language development of Xhosa, and informs language teaching methodology with regard to focused tasks, in particular.

2.2 DEFINING OF 'TASK'

Nunan (2003:1) draws a basic distinction between real-world or target tasks, and pedagogical tasks. Target tasks, as the name implies, refers to use of language in the world beyond the classroom; pedagogical task are tasks that occur in the classroom.

According to Nunan (2003:19) the point of departure for task-based language teaching is real-world or target tasks. These tasks, he states, refer to the things we do with language in everyday life, from writing a poem to confirming an airline

reservation to exchanging personal information with a new acquaintance. These three examples illustrate Halliday's (1986) three macrofunctions of language. Halliday argues that at a very general level, people do three things with language: people use it to exchange goods and services (this is the transactional or service macro-function), we use it to socialise with others (this is the interpersonal or social macro-function), and we use it for enjoyment (this is the aesthetic macro-function).

Long (1985: 89) argues that a target task is: a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. In other words, by 'task' is meant the numerous things people do in everyday life, at work, at play and in between.

Richards .J. Platt Jand Weber (1985:289) states that the use of a variety of different kinds of tasks in language teaching is said-to make language teaching more communicative since it provides a purpose for a classroom activity which goes beyond the practice of language for its own sake.

Breen (1989:23) suggests that the term Task refers to a range of work plans which have the overall purposes of facilitating language learning from the simple and brief exercise type, to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem-solving or simulations and decision-making. Breen argues that a task is 'a structured plan for the provision of opportunities for the refinement of knowledge and capabilities entailed in a new language and its use during communication'. Breen (1989) specifically states that a 'task' can be 'a brief practice exercise' or 'a more complex work plan that requires spontaneous communication of meaning'.

Skehan (1998) puts forward five key characteristics of a task:

- Meaning is primary
 - learners are not given other people's meaning to regurgitate
- There is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities
 - task completion has some priority
 - The assessment of the task is in terms of outcome.

Long (1985) states that a task is 'a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a fence, dressing

a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an airline reservation, borrowing a library book, taking a driving test, typing a letter, weighing a patient, sorting letters, taking a hotel reservation, writing a cheque, finding a street destination, and helping someone across a road. In other words, by "task" is meant the hundred and one things people *do* in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between.

Richards, Platt, and Weber (1985) point out that a task is 'an activity or action which is carried out as the result of processing or understanding language, i.e. as a response. For example, drawing a map while listening to a tape, and listening to an instruction and performing a command, may be referred to as tasks. Tasks major may not involve the production of language. A task usually requires the teacher to specify what will be regarded as successful completion of the task. The use of a variety of different kinds of tasks in language teaching is said to make teaching more communicative since it provides a purpose for classroom activity which goes beyond practice of language for its own sake'.

Crookes (1986) suggests that a task is 'a piece of work or an activity, usually with a specified objective, undertaken as part of an educational course, at work, or used to elicit data for research'.

Prabhu (1987) states that a task is an activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process'.

Nunan (1989) argues that a communicative task is 'a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right'.

Skehan (1996) points out that a task is 'an activity in which meaning is primary: there is some sort of relationship to the real world; task completion has some priority, and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome'.

Lee (2000) states that a task is '(1) a classroom activity or exercise that has: (a) an objective obtainable only by the interaction among participants, (b) a mechanism for structuring and sequencing interaction, and (c) a focus on meaning exchange; (2) a

language learning endeavor that requires learners to comprehend, manipulate, and/or produce the target language as they perform some set of work plans'.

Bygate, Skehan, and Swain (2001) argue that 'a task is an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective'.

It is evident from the above definitions that a 'task' is essentially concerned with the goal of expressing or negotiating communicative meaning.

2.3 COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING AND TASK-BASED TEACHING

According to Nunan (2003:6-7) everything teachers do in the classroom is underpinned by beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of the learning process and the nature of the teaching act. He points out that it is generally accepted that language is more than a set of grammatical rules, with attendant sets of vocabulary, to be memorised. It is a dynamic resource for creating meaning. Learning is no longer seen simply as a process of habit formation. Learners and the cognitive processes they engage in as they learn are seen as fundamentally important to the learning process. Nunan states that in recent years, learning as a social process is increasingly emphasised, and sociocultural theories are beginning to be drawn on in addition to cognitive theory. The basic insight that language can be thought of as a tool for communication rather than as sets of phonological, grammatical and lexical items to be memorised led to the notion of developing different learning programs to reflect the different communicative needs of disparate groups of learners.

Ellis (2003:27) states that communication language teaching aims to develop the ability of learners to use language in real communication. Brown and Yule (1983) characterise communication as involving two general purposes, i.e. the interactional function, where language is used to establish and maintain contact, and the transactional function, where language is used referentially to exchange information. Communicative language teaching then is directed at enabling learners to function interactionally and transactionally in a second language. In this respect, however the goal of communicative language learning is not so different from that of earlier methods such as the audiolingual or oral situational method which also claimed to develop the ability to use language communicatively

Nunan (2003:51) provides some justification for the use of real-world resources in the classroom by the teacher:

- The language is natural. By simplifying language or altering it for teaching purposes (limiting structures, controlling vocabulary, etc.) we may risk making the reading task more difficult. We may, in fact, be removing clues to meaning.
- It offers the students the chance to deal with small amounts of print which, at the same time, contain complete, meaningful messages.
- It provides students with the opportunity to make use of nonlinguistic clues (layout, pictures, colors, symbols, the physical setting in which it occurs) and so more easily to arrive at meaning from the printed word.
- Adults need to be able to see the immediate relevance of what they do in the classroom to what they need to do outside it, and real-life reading material treated realistically makes the connection obvious.

2.4 SYLLABUS DESIGN AND TASK DESIGN

Nunan (2003:25) points out that one of the potential problems with a task-based program is that it may consist of a seemingly random collection of tasks with nothing to tie them together. In his own work, he ties tasks together in two ways. In terms of units of work or lessons, they are tied together through the principle of 'task chaining'. At a broader syllabus level, they are tied together topically/thematically, through the macrofunctions, microfunctions and grammatical elements they express.

According to Nunan the task is designed not to provide learners with an opportunity to rehearse some out-of-class performance but to activate the emerging language skills. In performing such tasks, learners begin to move from reproductive language use - in which they are reproducing and manipulating language models provided by the teacher, the textbook or the tape to creative language use in which they are recombining familiar words, structures and expressions in novel ways. Nunan believes that it is when users begin to use language creatively that they are maximally engaged in language acquisition because they are required to draw on their emerging language skills and resources in an integrated way.

According to Nunan (2003:21) the interpretation of task-based language teaching (TBLT) is that communicative involvement in pedagogical tasks is the necessary and sufficient condition of successful second language acquisition. This 'strong' interpretation has it that language acquisition is a subconscious process in which the conscious teaching of grammar is unnecessary; 'Language is best taught when it is being used to transmit messages, not 'when it is explicitly taught for conscious learning

Nunan (2003: 31) suggests the following six steps based on syllabus design:

- **Schema building:** the first step is to develop a number of schema building exercises that will serve to introduce the topic, set the context for the task, and introduce some of the key vocabulary and expressions that the students will need in order to complete the task.
- **Controlled practice:** The next step is to provide students with controlled practice in using the target language vocabulary, structures and functions. One way of doing this would be to present learners with a brief conversation between two people discussing accommodation options relating to one of the advertisements that they studied in step 1. They could be asked to listen to and read the conversation, and then practice it in pairs. In this way, early in the instructional cycle, they would get to see, hear and practice the target language for the unit of work.
- **Authentic listening practice:** The next step involves learners in intensive listening practice. The listening texts could involve a number of native speakers inquiring about accommodation options, and the task for the learner would be to match the conversations with the advertisements from step 1.
- **Focus on linguistic elements:** The students now get to take part in a sequence of exercises in which the focus is on one or more linguistic elements. They might listen again to the conversations from step 3 and note the intonation contours for different question types. They could then use cue words to write questions and answers involving comparatives and superlatives:
- **Provide freer practice**
- **Introduce the pedagogical task:** The final step in the instruction sequence is the introduction of the pedagogical task itself - in this case a small group task

in which the participants have to study a set of newspaper advertisements and decide on the most suitable place to rent.

Ellis (2003:17) argues that irrespective of whether a task is unfocused or focused it will manifest certain design features. He suggests, tasks are comprised of two principal elements, 'input data' and 'instructional questions' that invite learners to operate on the input in some way. He argues that tasks cannot be described in terms of 'output' because tasks can only have discourse potential.

According to Nunan (2003:40) the following elements should be considered for the task to be well designed:

- **Content:** the subject matter to be taught.
- **Materials:** the things that learners can observe/manipulate.
- **Activities:** the things that learners and teachers will be doing during a lesson.
- **Goals:** the teachers' general *aims* for the task (these are much more general and vague than objectives).
- **Students:** their abilities, needs and interests are important.
- **Social community:** the class as a whole and its sense 'groupness'.

Candlin (1987), argues that tasks should contain input, roles, settings, actions, monitoring, outcomes and feedback. Input refers to the data presented for learners to work on.

Ellis (2003:229) points out that in constructing a task-based syllabus, the planning itself will involve the following procedures:

- The starting point is the determination of the goal(s) of the course in terms of its pedagogic focus, skill focus and language focus.
- The designer then needs to make a broad choice of task types and to specify the particular themes the tasks will be deal with.
- The third step would be to specify the nature of the tasks to be used in detail by selecting options relating to input, conditions, processes and outcome.

Ellis (2003:243) states that various design have been proposed which are as follows:

- The first phase is 'pre-task' and concerns the various activities that the teacher and students and students can undertake before they start the task, such as whether students are given time to plan the performance of the task.
- The second phase 'the during task' phase, centres around the task itself and affords various instructional options including whether students are required to operate under time pressure or not
- The final phase is 'post-task' and involves procedures for following up on the task performance.

Only the 'during task' phase is obligatory in task-based teaching. Thus, Ellis argues, minimally, a task-based lesson consists of the students just performing a task. Options selected from the 'pre-task, or 'post-task' phases are non-obligatory but can serve a crucial role in ensuring that the task performance is maximally effective for language development

2.5 TASK TYPES

Nunan (2003:56-7) proposes the following three important task types:

- **Information-gap activity**, which involves a transfer of given information from one person to another or from one form to another, or from one place to another - generally calling for the decoding or encoding of information from thought into language .The activity often involves selection of relevant information as well, and learners may have to meet criteria of completeness and correctness in making the transfer.
- **Reasoning-gap activity**, which involves deriving some new information from given information through processes of inference, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of *relationships or patterns*. The activity necessarily involves comprehending and conveying information, as an information-gap activity, but the information to be conveyed is not identical with that initially comprehended. There is a piece of reasoning which connects the two.
- **Opinion-gap activity**, which involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling or attitude in response to a given situation. The activity may involve using factual information and formulating *arguments to justify one's opinion, but there is no objective procedure for demonstrating*

outcomes as right or wrong, and no reason to expect the same outcome from different individuals or on different occasions.

Ellis (2003:86) considers the task variables of required vs. optional tasks, information exchange, types of required information exchange, expected task outcome, topic, discourse domain and cognitive complexity. The assumption that underlies the approach to be followed is that through investigating tasks 'it ought to be possible to build up a multidimensional classification, organising tasks in terms of their potential for second language learning on the basis of psycholinguistically motivated dimension.

Nunan (2003:52) suggests that some of the tasks are designed as follows for different purposes:

- **Genuine:** created only for the realm of real life, not for the classroom, but used in the classroom for language teaching.
- **Altered:** While there is no meaning change, the original has been altered in other ways (for example, the insertion of glosses, visual resetting, and the addition of visuals).
- **Adapted:** Although created for real life, vocabulary and grammatical structures are changed to simplify the text.
- **Simulated:** Although specially written by the author for purposes of language teaching, the author tries to make it look authentic by using characteristics of genuine texts. Minimal/incidental: Created for the classroom with no attempt to make the material appear genuine

2.6 TEACHER AND LEARNER ROLES

Nunan (2003: 65) maintains that it is not necessary to have a detailed knowledge of these various methods to see the rich array of learner roles that they entail. These include:

- the learner is a passive recipient of outside stimuli
- the learner is an interactor and negotiator who is capable of giving as well as taking
- the learner is a listener and performer who has little control over the content of learning

- the learner is involved in a process of personal growth
- the learner is involved in a social activity, and the social and interpersonal roles of the learner cannot be divorced from psychological learning processes

Nunan (2003:118-9) distinguishes between what they call 'inside the head' factors and 'outside the head' factors. Inside the head factors are all those that the learner brings to the task of processing and producing language such as background knowledge, interest, motivation and other factors that we look at below. Learners bring to the comprehension process their pre-existing knowledge and try to fit new knowledge into this pre-existing framework. In those cases where the new knowledge will not fit into our pre-existing framework, we will have to either modify or adapt the framework or develop an entirely new mental framework altogether.

Ellis (2003: 71) maintains that a conversation is often effortful for learners because they lack both the linguistic resources to understand what is said to them and to make themselves understood. He examines the devices they used to negotiate meaning when there is a breakdown in understanding and also the communicative strategies they employ to overcome their own linguistic deficiencies in order to say what they want to say. He also considers how communicative effectiveness can be achieved.

The author Ellis (2003:211-2) states that the learners are expected to do the following in order for the task to be successfully completed:

- Listening, where the completed outcome is a list;
- Ordering and sorting, tasks that involve sequencing, ranking category or classifying item;
- Comparing, tasks that involved finding differences or similarities in information
- Problem-solving, tasks that demand intellectual activity as in puzzle or logic problem
- Sharing personal experience, tasks that allow learner to talk freely about themselves and experiences
- Creative tasks, projects often involving several stages that can incorporate the various types of tasks above and can include the need to carry out some research

According to Ellis (2003:151) suggests that one views language learning in terms of skill-learning such as process by which controlled or declarative procedures are transformed into automatic procedures through practice. A theory of teaching base on such an account emphasizes the followings:

- The need for declarative knowledge of language to be thought;
- The need for communicative practice as, practice involving 'real operating conditions' to proceduralize declarative knowledge;
- The need for feedback that shows learners where they are going wrong.

He states that focused tasks have a role to play in such a theory by providing communicative practice directed at specific linguistic forms. The second cognitive account views learning as an implicit process that cannot be directly influence through instruction but that can be facilitated by explicit knowledge. A theory of teaching based on such an account emphasises:

- The need for opportunities to learn implicitly through communication.
- The importance of attending to form when communicating such as 'noticing'
- The need to teach explicit knowledge separately as a means of facilitating attention to form.

Based on Ellis point of view, maintains that such a theory obviously lends support to the use of unfocused tasks. He argues that focused tasks also have a role to play here as they provide a means by which learners can be given opportunities to communicate in such a way that they might be able to learn specific linguistic forms implicitly.

2.7 INTERACTION, OUTPUT AND THE NEGOTIATION OF MEANING

According to Nunan (2003:79) one of the first researchers to emphasise the importance of output was Hatch (1978), who argued that we learn how to converse in a second language by having conversations. Rather than learning grammatical structures, and then deploying these in conversation, Hatch argued that interaction should come first, and that out of this interaction grammatical knowledge would develop.

Nunan (2003:35) argues that that there are seven principles that can be considered for task-based language teaching which are as follows:

- **Scaffolding:** Lessons and materials should provide supporting frameworks within which the learning takes place. At the beginning of the learning process, learners should not be expected to produce language that has not been introduced either explicitly or implicitly.
- **Task dependency:** Within a lesson, one task should grow out of, and build upon, the ones that have gone before
- **Recycling:** Recycling: language maximises opportunities for learning and activates the 'organic' learning principle.
- **Active learning:** Learners learn best by actively using the language they are learning.
- **Integration:** Learners should be taught in ways that make clear the relationships between linguistic form, communicative function and semantic meaning.
- **Reproduction to creation:** Learners should be encouraged to move from reproductive to creative language use.
- **Reflection:** Learners should be given opportunities to reflect on what they have learned and how well they are doing.

Pica (1993) as quoted by Ellis (2003:215) posited a classification of interactant relationships. The system is psycholinguistic in the sense that it is based on interactional categories that have been shown to affect the opportunities learners have to comprehend input, obtain feedback and to modify their own output. These categories are:

- **Interactant relationship:** this concerns who holds the information to be exchanged and to whom requested it and supplies it in order to achieve the task goals. It relates to the distinction between one-way and two-way tasks. This category is derived from research that indicates that when there is a mutual relationship of request and suppliance, negotiation of meaning is more likely to occur.
- **Interaction requirements:** this concerns whether the task requires the participants to request and supply information or whether this is optional. Research has shown that the negotiation of meaning is enhanced if the interactional activity is required of all participants in a task.

- **Goal orientation:** this concerns whether the task requires the participants to agree on a single outcome or allows them to disagree.
- **Outcome options:** this refers to the scope of the task outcomes available to the participants in meeting the task goals. In the case of 'closed' tasks a single outcome is required whereas 'open' tasks permit several possible outcomes. Research suggests that closed tasks are more effective in promoting negotiation of meaning

Ellis (2003) argues that interaction contributes to development because it is the means by which the learner is able to crack the code. This takes place when the learner can infer what is said even though the message contains linguistic items that are not yet part of his competence and when the learner can use the discourse to help him/her modify or supplement the linguistic knowledge already used in production.

Ellis (2003:167) discusses the implicit methodological techniques involved in providing feedback on learner's use of the targeted features in a manner that maintains the meaning centeredness of the task. In effect, involves the strategic use of the negotiation of meaning. Thus, from the learner's perspective the feedback is directed at solving a communication problem created by something the learner has said while performing the task. From the perspective of a learner's interlocutor, however, the feedback is targeted very specifically in response to errors the learner makes in using the structure that has been targeted

2.8 TASK DIFFICULTY

Ellis (2003:224) argues that some tasks are psycholinguistically more difficult to complete than others. He bases this claim on research that indicates that one-way tasks promote less negotiation of meaning than two way tasks, which he sees as affecting the complexity of the task. Some research suggests that providing learners with the opportunity to negotiate leads to more successful task outcomes. One possible explanation is that negotiation increases the amount of time learners spend on a task. Other factors known to influence the amount of negotiation, such as information configuration, interaction requirement and orientation may also play a role in task complexity.

Nunan (2003:85-6) maintains that the issue of task difficulty *is* of central importance to researchers, curriculum developers, syllabus designers, materials writers and classroom teachers, and it is therefore not surprising that it has been the subject of considerable research. He argues that without some way of determining difficulty, sequencing and integrating tasks becomes a matter of intuition. Sequencing linguistic exercises is somewhat more straightforward than sequencing pedagogical tasks because one can draw on notions of linguistic complexity and so on. Nunan points out that researchers investigated the issue of what made speaking tasks difficult, and proposed a two-dimensional framework. The first dimension relates to the type of information that had to be conveyed. The second dimension concerns the scale of the task and the interrelationships among the different elements involved.

Ellis (2003:9) points out that the following criteria features of task can be identified:

- A task is a work plan
- A task involves a primary focus on meaning
- A task involves real-world processes of language use
- A task can involve any of the four skills
- A task engages cognitive processes
- A task has clearly defined communication outcome

Ellis (2003:221) argues that tasks complexity is the result of the intentional memory, reasoning, and other information processing demands imposed by the structure of the task on the language learner. These differences in information processing demands, resulting from design characteristics, are relatively fixed and invariant. Ellis states that this can account for intra-learner variability such as variability evident when the same learner performs different tasks. He also identifies factors relating to learners as individuals, which can influence how easy or difficult a particular task is for different participants. These factors include, obviously the learner's intelligence, language aptitude, learning style, memory capacity and motivation. Ellis sees all these factors relating to task difficulty, which is dependent on 'the resource the learner brings to the task.

2.9 RESEARCH IN PEDAGOGIC TASKS

Bygate (2001) examines the effects of repetition of tasks on the structure and control of oral language. He points out that communicative language ability centrally relates

to the ability to use formal linguistic resources (vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, grammatical features, phonological features) to express meanings in order to achieve communicative goals in real context. Thus, Bygate emphasizes, L2 learners must internalise the patterned relationship existing in the target language between form, meaning and use, to develop not only that ability, but also the capacity to use these resources in real contexts and real time. Bygate furthermore points out that much research has addressed the challenge of getting learners to engage successfully in the processes of internalization of a second (or additional) language.

According to Bygate (2001), second language development also entails developing learners' capacity to use resources already available to them. Bygate emphasises that this is important for two main reasons. Firstly, experience of language production enables learners to identify gaps in their knowledge of the target language, and therefore prepare their own knowledge base for reception of new knowledge. Secondly, Bygate points out, research has shown that substantial exposure to meaningful samples of the target language is not sufficient to ensure optimal development in terms of output. Hence output practice is needed to enable learners to cope with these demands in order to integrate language knowledge into productive use. He concludes that communication as a spontaneous and improvised activity needs to be practised in classroom teaching and learning. Selecting and re-using tasks systematically can, according to Bygate, contribute to effective repetition and practice.

Foster (2001) explores the use of multiword phrases and collocations in easing the processing burden of second language learners and improving fluency in language production tasks. She posits that the use of fully or partially fixed combinations of words is a processing strategy in both first and second language use which permits fluent and fast language production. Foster suggests further that this is also a learning strategy adopted by both first and second language learners whereby regularly encountered combinations of words are committed unanalyzed to memory and then analysed for productive grammatical regularities. Foster discusses how an understanding of the role of memorized language in second language acquisition could be exploited in the task-based classroom. She proposed that allowing L2 learners to build a memory store of lexicalized sequences that are subject to reanalysis may be one way for learners to become more fluent and more accurate.

2.10 TASKS, PRODUCTION AND SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION/ LEARNING

Over the past decade task-based research has been concerned to an extensive degree with the nature of issues relating to focus on linguistic form in teaching and learning. In particular, a range of questions have been addressed on how the pedagogic focus on morphosyntactic forms and discourse-related structural properties of the target language can advance and accelerate the acquisition of the target language and accelerate second language development. In this respect research studies have made a distinction between focused versus unfocused pedagogic (or learning) tasks, where the former includes the selection of specific key grammatical structures essential to the communication content for deliberate focus in pedagogic activities, while the latter entails no such focus.

2.10.1 Implicit and explicit knowledge

Ellis (2003:103ff) discusses issues relating to how learner language production and acquisition of the target language can be influenced by the nature of tasks characteristics. He first considers the questions of second language learner knowledge, the processing of this knowledge in production, and how actual use of the second language contributes to acquisition. Ellis considers the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge that has been drawn in research on second language learners' knowledge.

Ellis (2003:105f) discusses the distinction often made in both generative and cognitive accounts of language acquisition (learning) relating to the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge of the target language linguistics system by second language learners. Implicit knowledge refers to that knowledge of language that a speaker manifests in performance but has no awareness of. For example, first language speakers have knowledge about the grammaticality and ungrammaticality of sentences, but they are not able to explain why they have these judgments. Explicit knowledge refers to the knowledge about language that speakers are aware of and, if asked, can verbalise. Ellis points out that, whereas implicit knowledge is typically highly proceduralized, allowing rapid access, explicit knowledge is available only via controlled processing. With practice, access to the use of explicit knowledge can be accelerated, but does not quite resemble the immediate access of that characterizes implicit knowledge. Ellis furthermore discusses the research which

holds that explicit knowledge facilitates the development of implicit knowledge. Thus explicit knowledge serves to prime attention to form in the input and thereby activates the processes involved in the acquisition of implicit knowledge.

The significance of the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge in relation to second language acquisition and development is crucial for a principled understanding of language teaching methodology, syllabus and course design and materials development as interdependent and interrelated dimensions of planning and practice. In particular, focus on form considerations are a determining factor in advancing explicit knowledge of communication tasks, provided that the form-meaning connection is established. In chapter three of this study, an analysis is made of key segments of the communication tasks in Xhosa, representative of student-lecturer conversations for the purpose of identifying the linguistic forms that express such central discourse segments.

2.10.2 Language production and implicit and explicit knowledge

Ellis (2003:107f) discusses some views from previous research on the nature of language processing relevant to language production. He points out that it is generally assumed that human beings have a limited processing capacity and hence a complex skill such as speaking requires the performance of a number of simultaneous mental operations, causing speakers to experience considerable processing pressure. One way that second language learners deal with this pressure is to encode their propositional plans by recourse to ready-made chunks of stored language, that is they acquire a solid repertoire of formulaic chunks.

Ellis explores the view that there are necessarily trade-offs as second language learners struggle to conceptualise, formulate and articulate messages. Attention to one aspect of production is likely to be at the expense of others. For example L2 learners who are primarily concerned with conceptualising, may not be much concerned with how they say it, i.e. with formulation, with the result that their speech is full of errors. Conversely, L2 learners' attention to accuracy may interfere with their ability to conceptualise, resulting in considerable disfluency. Ellis refers to two views relating to L2 learners' need to trade-off accuracy and complexity as a result of limited processing capacity. According to the first view, the multiple resources view of attention, task demands affect accuracy and complexity in tandem. Ellis advances the view that accuracy and complexity can pose competing demands on L2 learners'

attention, which can be manipulated by varying the kinds of tasks they are asked to perform.

Ellis furthermore points out that learners' problems in production may be eased if they are given time to plan before they speak. He refers to Skehan's view that production can contribute more directly and centrally to acquisition (or learning). Two basic arguments are in order in this respect. The first is that production enables learners to practice what they already know, thus enabling them to automatise their discourse and linguistic knowledge. The second argument relates to the idea that production engages syntactic processing in a way that comprehension does not. Hence, Ellis points out, the argument that production contributes to automaticity assumes that there is more to language acquisition (or learning) than internalizing new forms and rules: there is also the need to achieve control over what has already been acquired. In this regard Ellis quotes the work of Bialystok (1990), who makes a distinction between two dimensions of language acquisition: analysis and control. Analysis refers to the extent to which linguistic knowledge is differentiated, structured and conscious, with knowledge gradually becoming more 'analyzed' over time. This relates to the implicit/explicit knowledge distinction discussed above. Ellis explains that Bialystok initially used the term 'control' to refer to the ease and speed with which L2 learners could access their knowledge, but more recently, however, she has used it to refer to both the selection of items of knowledge and to their co-ordination in the performance of some task. In terms of this view, then, production can contribute to the control dimension of acquisition by practicing the processes of selection and co-ordination of linguistic knowledge.

Ellis (2003:113) discusses cognitive theories of language acquisition that emphasise the need for practice in the context of 'real operating conditions: Learners need the opportunity to practice language in the same conditions that apply in real-life situations, that is in communication, where the primary focus is on message conveyance rather than linguistic accuracy. This, Ellis argues, provides a strong rationale for task-based teaching, given that the aim of tasks is to afford opportunities for learners to perform their competence in activities that emphasise using rather than learning language. Thus, Ellis maintains, a theoretical case for the importance of production in task-based teaching can be made on the grounds that it will promote greater control and automaticity. A theoretical case can, in addition, be made for production as assisting interlanguage development, either in the sense of adding new

features or in the sense of complexifying it. In this regard, Ellis refers to Swain (1985) who argued that production causes learners to engage in syntactic processing and in so doing promotes acquisition.

Skehan (1998) explores the idea that production sometimes requires attention to linguistic forms by second language learners. He distinguishes three aspects of production: (1) **fluency**, the capacity of the learner to mobilize and garner his/her system of communicate meaning in real time; (2) **accuracy**, the ability of the learner to handle whatever level of interlanguage complexity he/she has currently achieved; and (3) **complexity**, the utilization of interlanguage structures that are elaborate and structured. Skehan suggests that language users may vary in the extent to which they emphasize fluency, accuracy, or complexity, with some tasks predisposing them to fluency, others on accuracy, and yet others on complexity. Furthermore, these different aspects of production draw on different systems of language. Fluency, according to Skehan, requires learners to draw on their memory-based system, accessing and deploying ready-made chunks of language, and using communication strategies to get by. In this case, Skehan argues, the kind of processing learners engage in is semantic rather than syntactic. In contrast, Skehan states, accuracy and, in particular, complexity, are achieved by L2 learners drawing on their rule-based system and thus require syntactic processing.

Skehan (1998) suggests that lexicalized units may be in part be acquired by L2 learners as a result of storing expressions that were generated by the rule-based system in the first place. Thus, L2 learners construct strings consciously and store them as wholes Ellis (2003) points out that learners may break down formulaic chunks into their component parts, and thereby derive syntactic rules. Thus, Ellis concludes, production may constitute the mechanism that connects the L2 learner's dual systems, enabling movement to occur from the memory-based system to the rule-based system and vice versa.

Skehan's (1996) distinction between fluency, accuracy, and complexity is supported by Ellis (2003) who argues that these dimensions are indeed distinct and that they can be measured separately in terms of the following measures:

Dimension	Measures
1. Fluency	Number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words per minute • syllables per minute • pauses of one/two seconds or longer • repetitions • false starts • reformulations • words per defined unit • words per turn
2. Accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of self-corrections • percentage of error-free clauses • target-like use of articles, vocabulary, plurals, negation and verb tenses
3. Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of turns per minute • lexical richness • proportion of lexical verbs to copula • percentage of words functioning as lexical verbs • percentage of multi-propositional utterances • amount of sub-ordination • frequency of use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conjunctions prepositions hypothesizing statements

Ellis argues that the following task design variables can impact on learner production:

- the type of input the task supplies
- the task conditions
- the task outcomes

Input variables of tasks include variables such as contextual support (e.g. pictures, text), number of elements in the task, i.e. the numbers of elements that need to be manipulated by speakers, and the topic, i.e. the learner's familiarity with the particular subject area. The variable of task conditions includes shared vs. split information, and task demands, i.e. single vs. dual or multiple task demands. Task outcomes include the variables of closed versus open tasks, the inherent structure of the outcome, and the discourse mode. Ellis states that the problem-solving task is usually open, while role-play tasks and 'authentic' interaction tasks, require learners

to find out information from each other. The problem-solving tasks usually elicit more spontaneous speech and a wider range of language functions, including the discourse management functions associated with meaning negotiations. In contrast, Ellis states, closed tasks usually lead to a rigid question-answer discourse structure, but elicits greater attention to accuracy and more complex language. Thus, interpretative tasks which are open in nature result in more complex language use, including more 'hypothesizing' than closed decision-making tasks. Another factor that is important in this regard is the task outcome. Ellis points out that open tasks may vary depending on whether the speakers are required to 'converge' on a single outcome or allowed to 'diverge', that is, maintain different viewpoints. Tasks with divergent goals lead to longer turns and more complex language use than tasks with convergent goals, that is, decision-making discussions. However, the discourse mode elicited by the two types of tasks also play a role. The discourse modes distinguished include narrative, description, discussion, argumentation and decision making.

In relation to the inherent structure of the outcome, the term 'structure' refers to whether the product the task elicits has to be creatively constructed by the learners or whether it exists in some kind of pre-structured form. Ellis discusses studies which investigate learner production in relation to the inherent structure of the task content. In addition, Ellis considers the effects of task structure in relation to the opportunities learners had for strategic planning. He suggests that planning has a greater effect on accuracy in tasks with a clear inherent structure. Learners are able to devote attention to accuracy during planning because the clear structure of the tasks removes the need for planning content.

2.11 FOCUSED TASKS AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

2.11.1 The purposes of focused tasks

The aim of this section is to review research assuming cognitive theories of second language acquisition/learning which argue for the need for conscious attention to specific linguistic forms while learners are attempting to communicate, where focused tasks constitute a device for inducing such attention. In this regard, the three major purposes of focused tasks, formulated as follows by Ellis (2003) are discussed:

- (1) Focused tasks can be 'language activating or fluency stretching';

- (2) Focused tasks can be 'knowledge constructing', that is focused tasks can be directed at providing opportunities for L2 learners to use targeted features that are already part of their repertoire or they can be aimed at enabling learners to acquire new forms or to restructure their interlanguage;
- (3) Focused tasks can also contribute to the development of explicit linguistic knowledge in that they facilitate processing of the targeted features and contribute to language acquisition/learning.

In reviewing the research on the above properties of focused tasks, attention will be given to different ways of designing focused tasks, including structure-based production tasks, comprehension tasks and consciousness-raising (CR) tasks. In addition the discussion below will consider structure-based production tasks design which makes use of the feature 'essential'. Some discussion will also be devoted to how focus can be provided methodologically by means of implicit and explicit techniques that draw attention to form as the task is being performed. Thus, Ellis states, the research concerns the question of how to ensure that learners do indeed process the feature that has been targeted. Views are presented that this aim can optimally be achieved through a combination of careful design and planned implementation involving both implicit and explicit techniques.

The research reviewed in this section is of primary significance for the analyses of lecturer-student communication tasks in chapter three of this mini-thesis, where the central communicative segments will be identified to inform the selection of focused tasks for syllabus design, explicit teaching methodology for the purpose of designing structured production tasks and consciousness-raising (CR) tasks. First the psycholinguistic rationale of focused tasks is considered. Thereafter the question of how to introduce focus into task through design is discussed. Finally, ways are examined in which procedures for implementing a task can include a linguistic focus.

Ellis (2003:143) points out that unfocused production tasks are designed to elicit general samples of learner language and they normally require specific modes of discourse such as narrative or description. This may result in L2 learners using specific linguistic features such as past tense, although these tasks were not designed with the intention of eliciting these linguistic features, rather they resulted from the performance of the task. Ellis explores the ways in which tasks can be employed to elicit use of specific linguistic features, either by design or the use of

methodological procedures that focus attention on form in the implementation of a task. These kinds of tasks are referred to as focused tasks. Ellis points out that focused tasks, like unfocused tasks, must meet all the criteria of tasks in general. Thus, there must be a primary concern for message content (although this does not preclude attention to form), the participants must be able to choose the linguistic and non-linguistic sources needed, and there must be a clearly defined outcome. Although the discussion will be mainly concerned with focused tasks that involve production, it is also possible to have focused tasks that are receptive, that is they are designed to induce attention to specific forms in oral or written input. Ellis maintains that focused tasks involving both reception and production are of considerable value to both researchers and teachers. For researchers they provide a means of measuring whether learner's have acquired a specific linguistic feature. For teachers they provide a means of teaching specific linguistic features communicatively.

2.11.2 The psycholinguistic rationale for focused tasks

Ellis (2003) examines two psycholinguistic bases for focused communication tasks. The first relates to skill-building and the notion of automatic processing. The second relates to the notion of implicit learning and noticing-the-gap of learners in the context of focus-on-form, i.e. the attention to form in the context of a communicative activity.

According to Ellis (2003) automatic processing contrasts with controlled processing. He points out that a key difference between automatic and controlled processing is that whereas the former occurs rapidly and in parallel form, the latter occurs more slowly and functions serially, i.e. only one process can be activated at a time. Ellis furthermore explains that automatic processes are easy and rapid. They take up little processing time and thus make it possible for learners to focus on message content rather than form. On the other hand, controlled processes are easily established but they are very demanding on processing capacity. Thus learners who rely on the controlled processing of linguistic forms have a less capacity to attend to content in their communication.

Ellis states that automatization involves more than a speeding up of language processing. It also involves restructuring that is the unpacking of formulaic speech and the reorganization of knowledge into new forms. Learners commonly pass through stages in which knowledge of rules are initially overgeneralised before

eventually the correct use of a linguistic feature. Ellis refers to the view that skill development involves the proceduralization of declarative knowledge, which is factual. In the case of language, it involves explicit knowledge of grammatical rules. Given that communicative language use requires rapid processing, as pointed out by Ellis, there is an obvious need for L2 learners to develop automatic processes i.e. procedural knowledge. Ellis explains that automatic processes develop out of controlled processes/procedural knowledge. Learning involves the transfer of knowledge from short-term to long-term memory and this transfer is regulated by controlled processes. Thus, Ellis states, the learning of any new skill involves an initial stage of controlled processing followed by a later stage of automatic processing. Communicative practice serves as a device for proceduralizing knowledge of linguistic structures that have been first presented. Hence, Ellis concludes, instruction that incorporates such practice can be seen as an attempt to intervene directly in the process by which declarative knowledge is proceduralized. The role of tasks is to provide opportunities for learners to practice forms that have been first presented declaratively and to receive feedback on their mistakes.

2.11.3 Implicit learning

Based on the discussion above on the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge. This section is concerned with the acquisition of implicit knowledge and the role of explicit knowledge in this process. Ellis (2003) emphasizes two main aspects of implicit learning, namely that it takes place unconsciously and it is automatic. Implicit learning is driven by the human mind's ability to detect regularities in the input and to store recurrent patterns. It is responsive to the frequencies and salience of different forms in input.

Ellis (2003) maintains that in terms of theories of implicit learning, the processes by which learner's acquire implicit and explicit knowledge are inherently different and separate. Where implicit learning is unconscious and automatic, explicit learning involves a conscious search for structure and is highly selective. According to Ellis (2003), explicit knowledge can facilitate implicit learning in two major ways. First, it aids the process of noticing. Hence, Ellis states, learners equipped with explicit knowledge of a linguistic feature are more likely to notice its occurrence in the communicative input they receive and thus to learn it implicitly. Thus, Ellis argues, explicit knowledge helps to make a feature salient. Second, explicit knowledge may

assist noticing-the-gap: if learners know about a particular feature they are better equipped to detect the difference between what they themselves are saying and how the feature is used in the input they are exposed to.

2.12 THE DESIGN OF FOCUSED TASKS

A considerable body of research has been concerned with the properties of focused task. With reference to the proposals by Loscky and Bley Vroman (1993), Ellis (2003) explore the characteristics of three ways for designing structure-based production tasks, that is, tasks that incorporate one or more specific target language features. The first, is referred to as 'task-naturalness', and entails the use of a target structure which, although it may not be necessary for completion of the task, can be expected to arise naturally and frequently in performing the task. The second way of incorporating a linguistic focus is, according to Ellis, in terms of 'task utility'. This case entails incorporating a linguistic feature which may not be essential for completing the task, it is very useful. The third way of designing a focused task is to try to ensure 'task essentialness' of the targeted linguistic feature. This entails, according to Ellis, that learners must use the feature in order to complete the task successfully.

These three ways of designing focused tasks, that is 'task-naturalness', 'task-utility', and 'task-essentialness', present a rich source for researchers and teachers to explore the success of language acquisition and, specifically, the acquisition of the target language linguistic features and the properties of interlanguage development. This three-fold distinction is of particular significance for the analyses of the student-lecturer communication tasks in isiXhosa in chapter three, where central discourse segments will be identified which exemplify useful sentence structures for the purpose of the design of focused production tasks.

2.12.1 Comprehension tasks

Ellis (2003) states that comprehension-based tasks may even be more successful in eliciting L2 learners' attention to a targeted feature than production-based focused tasks because learners cannot avoid processing them. He explores some properties and issues of comprehension-based tasks, also referred to as interpretation tasks and structured-input tasks, that have been addressed in previous research. Ellis asserts that comprehension tasks are based on the assumption that second language acquisition and development occurs as a result of input-processing.

The underlying assumption of this view posits that intake arises as a result of L2 learners paying conscious attention to linguistic forms in the input, that is 'noticing'. Noticing entails attention to form as a learner's attempt to understand the message content. In the case of unfocused comprehension tasks, Ellis points out, no attempt is made to promote intake; thus L2 learners can avoid processing syntactically by relying on semantic processing. In the case of focused comprehension task, however, Ellis states, the input is selectively structured to induce noticing of predetermined forms, and syntactic processing is required. Ellis examines two ways in which this objective has been addressed by researchers, namely input enrichment and input processing.

He explains that input enrichment involves designing tasks in such a way that the targeted feature is (1) frequent and/or (2) salient in the input provided. For example, the input of a task may contain numerous examples of a certain tense form, or of question formation forms. Enriched input of this kind can, according to Ellis, take many forms. It can consist of oral/written texts that learners simply listen to or read, with follow-up activities designed to focus attention on the structure.

Ellis (2003) states that 'input-processing instruction' is a term coined by Van Patten (1996). Its goal is to 'alter the processing strategies that L2 learners take to the task of comprehension and to encourage them to make better form-meaning connections than they would if left to their own devices'. In this regard, Ellis explains the following three key components obtained:

- an explanation of the form-meaning relationship, for example word order in question word sentences, relative clauses;
- information about processing strategies, for example to attend to verb forms to establish the grammatical relations of subject or object; and
- Structured input activities, where learners have the chance to process the targeted feature in a controlled manner.

He suggests that, in some ways, input processing instruction resembles conventional production-based instruction in that it involves a presentation stage followed by a practice stage.

2.12.2 Consciousness-raising (CR) tasks

Ellis points out that consciousness-raising (CR) tasks differ from the other kinds of focused tasks discussed above in two central ways. First, Ellis argues, whereas structure-based production tasks, enriched input tasks, and interpretation tasks are intended to facilitate primarily implicit learning, C-R tasks are designed to facilitate primarily explicit learning. Thus, they are intended to develop 'awareness' at the level of understanding, rather than awareness at the level of 'noticing'. This means, Ellis states, that the desired outcome of a C-R task is awareness of L2 learners of how some linguistic feature works. Secondly, Ellis points out, whereas the previous types of tasks were built around the content of a general nature, for example, stories, pictures of objects, opinions about persons or things, C-R tasks make language itself the content in that it concludes a linguistic point as focus of the task. Ellis states that the rationale for C-R tasks derives partly on the role for explicit knowledge as a facilitator for the acquisition of implicit knowledge. Ellis (2003:163) identifies the following main characteristics of C-R tasks:

- There is an attempt to **isolate** a specific linguistic feature for focused attention.
- The learners are provided with **data** that illustrate the targeted feature and they may also be provided with an explicit rule describing or explaining the feature.
- The learners are expected to utilize **intellectual effort** to understand the targeted feature.
- Learners may be optionally required to verbalize a rule describing the grammatical structure.

It follows from the above characteristics, Ellis states, that a C-R task consists of (1) data containing exemplars of the targeted feature and (2) instructions requiring the learners to operate on the data in some way. Types of operations identification, for example, learners underline the target structure in the data, and sorting into defined categories, the data can be oral or written, authentic or simulated and semi-authentic. Ellis maintains that C-R tasks seem to be an effective means of achieving a focus on form while at the same time affording opportunities to communicate. They appear to be as effective in developing explicit knowledge, and have been shown to promote subsequent noticing of the targeted features.

2.12.3 Implementing focused tasks

Ellis (2003) considers some of the difficulties in achieving a language focus can be overcome methodologically, i.e. by the way in which the task is implemented. Ellis considers both implicit and explicit ways of drawing attention to form. He asserts that implicit methodological techniques involve providing feedback on learners' use of the targeted feature in a manner that maintains meaning-centeredness of the task. Ellis observes that, from the learner's perspective, the feedback is directed at solving a communication problem created by something the learner has said. From the perspective of the researcher or teacher, however, the feedback is, according to Ellis, targeted very specifically in response to errors the learner makes in using the structure that has been targeted. Researchers have examined two ways of providing this feedback, namely clarification requests and recasts.

2.12.3.1 Explicit methodological techniques

Ellis (2003) explains that focus can also be given to a task if learners are provided with explicit information relating to the targeted structure during the performance of the task. He maintains that an explicit focus can be provided either pre-emptively or responsively. In the case of pre-emptive focus the teacher draws attention to the targeted feature by asking a question or by making a meta-linguistic comment. A responsive focus occurs, according to Ellis, through negative feedback involving explicit attention to the targeted feature. Ellis argues that explicit feedback may play a crucial role in enabling learners to make new form/meaning connections. He refers to the view of Lightbown and Spada (2001) who maintain that recasts are most effective in contexts where it is clear to the learner that the recast is a reaction to the accuracy of the form, not the content of the original utterance.

Nunan (2003:94) points out that a key issue for task-based language teaching (TBLT) is whether the tasks themselves should be focused or unfocused. A focused task is one in which a particular structure is required in order for a task to be completed. He continues arguing that for a particular variant of focused tasks that he calls consciousness-raising (CR) tasks. Consciousness-raising tasks are designed to draw learner's attention to a particular linguistic feature through a range of inductive and deductive procedures. The assumption here is not that a feature once raised to consciousness will be immediately incorporated into the learner's interlanguage, but that it is a first step in that direction. In designing CR tasks, the first step is to isolate

a specific feature for attention. The learner's are provided with input data illustrating the feature, and may also be given a rule to explain the feature. They are then required either to understand it or to describe the grammatical structure in question. An unfocused task is one in which the learners are able to use any linguistic resources at their disposal in order to complete the task.

Ellis (2003:100) states that in addition to the language forms inherent in a given task, there is also the procedural language that is generated by two or more individuals in the course of completing a task. This procedural language, which is a kind of 'byproduct' of the task, will include conversational management language such as:

- Bidding for a turn
- Agreeing and disagreeing
- Negotiation meaning
- Hesitating and hedging

According to Ellis (2003: 16) unfocused tasks may predispose learners to choose from a range of forms but they are not designed with the use of a specific form in mind. In contrast, focused tasks aim to induce learners to process receptively or productively some particular linguistic feature for grammatical features. Ellis (2003: 160) argues that the 'structured input' stage of a lesson involves the use of focused task. He lists some general principles for designing this kind of focused task, which he calls 'interpretation tasks'.

- An interpretation task consists of a stimulus to which learner's must make some kind of response
- The stimulus can take various forms
- The activities in the task can be sequenced to require first attention to meaning, then noticing the form and function of grammatical structure, and finally error identification.
- Learners should have the opportunity to make some kind of personal response such as relate the input to their own lives

Swain and Lapkin (2001) examine the effects resulting from focus on grammatical forms through learners' interaction in collaborative dialogues in task performance. In particular they posit that the talk which surfaces when students collaborate in solving linguistic problems encountered in communicative task performance represents

second language learning in progress. Their study relates to properties of focus on form occurring in second language learners' language use in dialogues as learners work collaboratively to express their intended meanings. In these dialogic exchanges noticing, hypothesis formulation and hypothesis testing concerning the realization of grammatical forms take place. Swain and Lapkin argue that this process of noticing grammatical forms and hypothesis formulation is a major rationale put forth in task-based research for using tasks in communicative language teaching. Thus, they state, with reference to Pica (1993), second language acquisition and development is enhanced through the negotiation of meaning, i.e. they negotiate toward mutual comprehension of each other's message meaning.

The analysis of communicative tasks in isiXhosa representative of lecturer-student interaction in chapter three will identify the kind of focus on form aspects about which learners can negotiate meaning, hence form hypotheses in their efforts to negotiate mutual comprehension. Pica (1993) posits that a jigsaw task – one in which each participant has some, but not all, the information needed to complete the task – is the type of task where opportunities for meaning negotiation are most likely to be generated.

Swain and Lapkin (2001) emphasize the importance of second language pedagogy incorporating attention to focus on form. A task can still be communicative even if learners focus quite explicitly on grammatical forms. Swain and Lapkin maintain that this explicit focus on form comes about as learners attempt to express their intended meaning as accurately and coherently as possible. Swain and Lapkin employ jigsaw tasks, viewed as the optimal meaning-negotiation task. They consider ways to encourage learners to focus on the accuracy of their spoken language without losing sight of the meaning they are trying to convey. The two-way information gap tasks for isiXhosa presented in chapter three will demonstrate a kind of jigsaw task in which central communicative segments are identified of which the grammatical realizations can be utilized for encouraging learners to focus on form in order to attain greater accuracy and to enhance their development of isiXhosa through input processing.

Samuda (2001) explores the role of the teacher in guiding activities in order to facilitate form-meaning relationships in task-based language teaching. She argues that rather than studying tasks in isolation, task research on overall second language acquisition and development should be situated within the wider context of factors

such as individual differences, instructional activities, group dynamics, and interaction of task work with other modes of instruction. Samuda's points out that the role and contribution of the teacher warrants closer scrutiny, assuming that one of the challenges of task-based language teaching lies in engaging naturalistic learning processes, on the one hand, with systematically managed pedagogic processes by the teacher, on the other. Samuda poses the question of the extent to which it is possible to identify discourse and interactional features of teacher performance that might be said to constitute elements of task-based teaching? She explores the role of the teacher in task-based language teaching within a Presentation, Practice and Production sequence, as supplier of feedback and engineer of controlled progressions of classroom activity.

In this regard Samuda attempts to operationalise the notions of the teacher as 'adviser', 'monitor', 'language guide', and 'facilitator' with regard to instructional features for which psycholinguistic underpinnings have been claimed, for example, focus on form, positive evidence, negative feedback, and production practice. Given this, Samuda argues central to the role of the teacher in task-based language teaching, must be ways of working **with** tasks to guide learners towards the types of language processing that support L2 acquisition and development. Thus, Samuda explores the complementary relationship between task design and the way teachers implement tasks in terms of three facets: (1) the general pedagogic purpose of the task; (2) the management of attentional focus across a task; and (3) the framing of task input data.

Samuda (2001) draws a broad distinction between the use of tasks primarily to activate, stretch and refine current interlanguage resources and processing capacities, i.e. **language-activating / fluency-stretching** tasks, and the use of tasks primarily to enable new form-meaning connections, i.e. **knowledge-constructing tasks**. She maintains that for language-activating/fluency-stretching tasks, task design features might aim to maximize opportunities for negotiation of meaning around topics with a potential to engage. Knowledge-constructing tasks, on the other hand, might be expected to place different demands on task design and teacher role, particularly in the ways that attentional resources are managed, and opportunities are created for the types of noticing and form focusing believed to enhance second language development.

Lynch and Malean (2001) conducted a study in which they provide evidence for the benefits of task repetition to L2 learners' performance. They argue that opportunities for repetition of specific features of the task content enable learners to exploit and monitor changes in their own performance and noticing useful target language features in the performance of other participants.

Loumpourdi (2005) explores possibilities for focused grammar tasks within task-based language teaching in order to improve accuracy in which learners' noticing of features of grammatical accuracy is encouraged. Birch (2005) conducted a study which aims to balance the development of fluency, accuracy and complexity through responding to various task characteristics. He points out that a potential danger of task-based learning, is that without a conscious focus on form, learners may employ communication strategies or use lexicalized language, resulting in the development of fluency to the detriment of accuracy. Birch investigates ways in which different task characteristics affected L2 learners' oral production.

Poupore (2005) identifies some aspects of quality interaction and successful negotiations in learner interaction in two types of tasks, i.e. problem-solving/prediction and jigsaw tasks. He argues that, in addition to negotiation of meaning contributing to second language development, negotiations of form, task content, task procedure and self-initiated repair also contribute to the overall target language acquisition of learners.

Fernández García (2007) explores the task typology postulated by Pica (1993) with respect to the relationship between negotiation and interaction and second language learning through oral task performance, particularly where the learners are each other's resource for language learning. Their study examines the performance of learners in respectively one-way and two-way information gap tasks, respectively, concerning two different, though related facets of negotiation. First, they examines how the two communication tasks create opportunities for learners to engage in the negotiation of meaning. Secondly, they examines the type of modified input, feedback and modified output that beginner-level L2 learners can provide to each other while engaged in the negotiation of meaning. They concludes that the negotiation observed indeed created conditions for second language development as it offers learners opportunities to obtain L2 input that is adjusted to their

comprehension needs, get feedback on production, produce modified output, and focus learners' attention to relevant L2 structural and semantic relationship.

De la Colina and García Mayo (2007) investigate, in particular, beginning learners' attention to linguistic forms in the performance of collaborative tasks. They take as point of departure for their study the position of the need for the use of communicative tasks which require L2 learners to produce output collaboratively. They assume the view that collaborative focus-on-form tasks are designed to meet the need of integrating attention to language form with a communicative orientation. They conduct their study invoking this view from two different complementary perspectives. According to the first perspective, the psycholinguistic perspective, which is widely assumed in task research, tasks are viewed as devices which can influence L2 learners' information processing.

Task-research from the psycholinguistic perspective is mainly concerned with the influence that task types and task conditions have on learners' performance and acquisition. De la Colina and García Mayo (2007) also adopt the second perspective, the sociocultural perspective, for investigating learner collaboration. This approach posits that knowledge is constructed through social interaction between individuals and is then internalized. According to this perspective, language use and language learning take place simultaneously, and language learning is viewed as a social as well as a cognitive activity. Both aspects are considered necessary for a complete understanding of second language learning. Their research supports the view that different task types focus learners' attention to different features. They conclude that the metalinguistic talk of learners used in their cooperation to complete the task entails hypothesis formulation and hypothesis testing of linguistic forms, and contributes to L2 development.

Gilabert (2007) investigates the effects of manipulating the cognitive complexity of tasks on L2 narrative oral production. He addresses, in particular, the issue of how the three dimensions of production, i.e. fluency, accuracy, and complexity, compete for attention during L2 task production by classifying tasks along the features of pre-task planning and past time reference, (i.e. +/- here-and-now) as a classification of the cognitive complexity of tasks. He points out that the rationale for investigating the concept of task complexity springs from the need to establish criteria for grading and sequencing tasks in a syllabus from easy/simple to difficult/complex in a reasoned

way that will enhance interlanguage development. Thus, Gilabert maintains, syllabi that use tasks as their units focus on task design in order to determine how tasks impose cognitive demands on learners. In this way, he points out, task design allows teachers and researchers to examine the effects that increasing task difficulty or complexity may have on L2 task performance. It is this pre-occupation with sequencing tasks in a syllabus in a principled way that has given rise to the concept of task complexity. Gilabert concludes that his study provides evidence for the view that task complexity is a robust and testable construct for task and syllabus design.

Lambert and Engler (2007) explore the issues of information distribution and goal orientation in second language task design. They point out that in task-based approaches to second language education, communication tasks typically require learners to work together and use the L2 functionally in order to solve problems that approximate (to some degree) the real-world tasks that they have to accomplish outside the classroom. They furthermore point out that certain factors in the design of such tasks may enable teachers and materials planners to organize the nature of the discourse required to complete them and thus improving learning outcomes. Lambert and Engler investigate two design factors for tasks relating to information gap tasks, widely used in materials design on the assumption that they facilitate second language learning.

With reference to Long (1989), Lambert and Engler (2007) point out that information distribution among task participants, and goal orientation are two task design factors that are directly related to the nature of the discourse learners produce on task. The first of these refers to the way the information required to complete the task is distributed (between the participants) at the outset. Lambert and Engler explain that, in contrast to tasks in which the essential information is shared by the participants completing it, a distinction can be made between distributions which produce a one-way and a two-way flow of information. In a one-way configuration, all of the task-essential information is allotted to one learner who must communicate it to the other. In a two-way configuration, on the other hand, the task-essential information is distributed among all of the learners who must share and integrate it.

The second design factor which Long (1989) discusses pertains to the way the task orients learners towards the goal of completing it. For an open goal orientation learners know that there is no one correct solution to the task, whereas for a closed

goal orientation they know there is only one, or a small range, of possible solutions. Lambert and Engler's study explores whether either of these design factors may be useful for sequencing tasks to support a dual-mode learning system in which well-organized exemplars are available to respond to real-time pressures, but a rule-based system can still be accessed when the need for precision or creativity arises.

Lambert and Engler refers to the study of Skehan (1996) who posits fluency, accuracy and complexity as goals for second language instruction. Accuracy is described by Lambert and Engler as the capacity to handle a current level of interlanguage (IL); fluency is the capacity to handle such an IL system in real time; and complexity is the elaboration of an IL system. Lambert and Engler points out that since attention is essential for learning, and the capacity to pay attention to things while learning, is limited, an L2 learner will not be able to meet the demands of real time communication and pay attention to new L2 forms at the same time. Thus, Lambert and Engler maintains, it seems likely that there will be a trade-off between fluency and accuracy of production. Furthermore, since the tasks employed in task-based L2 courses generally focus learners' attention on meaning, fluency development can dominate at the expense of interlanguage development over time. It is thus important, they emphasize, that task-based instruction support a dual-mode system, consisting of both rule-based learning and exemplar-based learning.

Lambert and Engler explain that rule-based processing will be characterized by complex production, a slower speech rate, reformulations, hesitations and redundancies. Exemplar-based processing, on the other hand, will be characterized by fluent and accurate production of known forms or expressions, including formulaic expressions, and avoidance of new or partially mastered forms. Lambert and Engler argue that for balanced language development, instruction needs to provide learners with constant cycles of such analysis and synthesis by sequencing tasks so that an emphasis on restructuring and interlanguage development is followed by an emphasis on fluency and accuracy. Thus, Lambert and Engler maintain, if task-design factors can be found which produce a trade-off effect between the fluency and the complexity of production, they can be used to support a dual-mode processing system in which rule-based and exemplar-based learning combine in a synergistic manner, so that the learning outcomes are more than the sum of the parts. Lambert and Engler provide evidence from their study on the efficacy of information distribution and goal orientation in support of such a system. Recall, as regard goal

orientation, that convergent tasks require learners to work together to reach a common solution, whereas divergent tasks require them to defend opposing views.

Robinson (2007) investigates criteria for classifying and sequencing pedagogic tasks in terms of the Cognition Hypothesis, which assumes, as the starting point, for pedagogic task design, the behaviour descriptions of target tasks for populations of L2 learners. Based on these behaviour descriptions the interactional demands of target tasks are classified using the task characteristics distinguished in terms of participation and participation variables. Robinson classifies the cognitive demands of these tasks, distinguishing them in terms of cognitive/conceptual and performative/procedural demands. Robinson argues that the more task conditions are practiced in pedagogic versions, the more elaborate and consolidated the scripts become for real-world performance. He argues that cognitive demands of pedagogic tasks are to be **graded and sequenced**. Simpler versions with respect to all cognitive demand characteristics are performed first, and then task complexity (i.e. cognitive demands) is gradually increased on subsequent versions to target task levels. Robinson emphasizes that task complexity is the only basis of pedagogic task sequencing.

Robinson (2007) proposes that there are two stages in which task complexity is increased, and which are decision points for task and syllabus design. In each sequence of pedagogic tasks, relevant resource (i.e. memory and attention)-dispensing variables are first increased in complexity. For example, Robinson explains, if the target task requires dual task performance, without planning time, then planning time is provided and the dual task characteristics are performed separately. The rationale for this, according to Robinson, is to first promote access to, and consolidate the learner's correct L2 interlanguage system during pedagogic task performance. Subsequently, a gradual increase of performative and procedural demands to target task levels is introduced, thereby promoting increased automatic access to, and learner control over the current system in response to pedagogic task demands. In the second stage, Robinson explains, once the performative/procedural demands have reached target like levels, then cognitive/conceptual demands are gradually increased to target like levels. Robinson argues that these can **direct** learners attentional and memory resources to aspects of the L2 system needed to code increasingly complex concepts, and to meet increasingly complex functional demands in terms of linguistic expression. This, according to Robinson, promotes

analysis and development of the L2 learner's current interlanguage system. Increasing these demands, Robinson argues, should lead to more **accurate** and **complex** learner production, more **noticing** of task relevant input, and heightened memory for it, and so lead to more **uptake** of forms made salient in the input through various focus on form interventions.

2.13 SUMMARY

The main purpose of this chapter was to explore the key concepts and issues in research on task-based language learning and teaching. One of the important perspectives that emerged from research is that a strong interrelationship obtains between the three areas of (1) psycholinguistic and cognitive properties of second language learning, (2) syllabus and course design, and (3) classroom methodology, including the properties of interaction between second language learners and their interlocutors (whether the teacher, or other learners). Thus, a considerable body of research on task-based language learning and teaching gives evidence of the important interaction among these three dimensions and the need for each of the areas to take into account the nature and properties of the other dimensions for the purpose of situating research in any one of these areas to the contribution of activities or processes in the other areas.

The chapter discussed the central properties of input and classroom interaction, specifically the nature of communication tasks in relation to the interaction between the teacher and learners, or among learners themselves. The nature of the communicative input (i.e. language learning materials and activities) that is characteristic of task-based language learning and teaching has been discussed in the first part of the chapter, where particular attention has been given to the notion of 'task'. In the second part of the chapter extensive attention has been given to task research as regard the psycholinguistic and cognitive nature of second language learning and teaching within a task-based approach. In this regard, the distinctions between focused and unfocused tasks, implicit and explicit knowledge, and implicit and explicit teaching were discussed. These psycholinguistic and cognitive properties in second language learning/acquisition and teaching are particularly significant for a principled understanding of the impact of incorporating the different task types, examined in the next chapter, for creating opportunities for learners of second language development.

CHAPTER 3

A TASK-BASED ANALYSIS OF LECTURER-STUDENT COMMUNICATION TASKS IN XHOSA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this chapter is to present an analysis of a range of communication tasks that characterize conversations between lecturers and students outside the formal classroom, on matters relating to problems individual students may experience. The nature of these problems has been determined through discussions with academic staff on the needs domain of communicative content relating to such individual student problems. Given the rationale for this study, namely the concern with the nature of regularly occurring student-lecturer communication on individual problems, the analysis of the content, representative of the range of selected generic tasks, within the theoretical framework of the task typology of Pica (1993) is crucial for determining the psycholinguistic properties of these tasks relating to the impact they create for opportunities for L2 learning of Xhosa. In particular, the contribution of the incorporation of these communication tasks within the wider context of the learning and teaching process of Xhosa as a second language in tertiary context needs to be established. This aim then, constitutes the main focus of this chapter. The theoretical properties of these target tasks for Xhosa second language learning need to be understood and taken into account for the purpose of syllabus design, course design and methodology as well as materials development for Xhosa second language.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first part of the chapter gives an overview of the theoretical issues and principles that constitute the underpinnings of the task typology postulated by Pica (1993) for classifying communication tasks in terms of their psycholinguistic properties contributing to L2 learning. In the second part of the chapter an analysis of ten communication tasks for Xhosa is presented, invoking the task typology of Pica (1993). The task types classified include the five task types of (1) information gap, (2) jigsaw, (3) opinion exchange, (4) decision-making and (5) problem-solving. A range of language functions are identified which are expressed by language structures that need to be made salient in the input during the process of instruction of Xhosa as a second language. The general English meanings of the

various Xhosa sentences are provided but this is done merely for the convenience of readers who do not know Xhosa – these meanings should not be seen as translations in a technical sense. The sentences in both the sample dialogues and in the list of language functions are numbered for the purpose of convenience of cross-referencing.

3.2 THE TASK TYPOLOGY OF PICA (1993)

Pica (1993) invokes the interaction-theoretic principles of second language acquisition and development for positing a typology of communication tasks. The major rationale for proposing this task typology is, according to Pica et al, to enable researchers and teachers to classify communication tasks in terms of their participant interaction, goal and outcome properties in order to determine the nature of these tasks in facilitating negotiation of meaning and interaction as key factors for second language acquisition and development. Pica et al argue that their research validates the communication task as an important tool in the light of perspectives on second language learning, particularly in terms of the opportunities they provide to learners to work toward comprehension, feedback and interlanguage modification. They point out that although the usefulness and importance of communication tasks have been discussed extensively in the literature on communicative language teaching, it has not been made clear, however, exactly what features constitute a communication task and make it distinctive from other activities used in teaching.

Pica et al argue, in order for teachers and researchers to be able to identify, create and employ communication tasks with confidence and success, it is crucial that they understand the unique contribution that these tasks can make to their work with second language learners and be able to distinguish them from the wide range of other activities and materials, and help them to choose and use these tasks effectively. According to Pica (1993) these features of activity and goal entail that, in order to carry out and complete a task, language learners must take initiative in seeking help with whatever they do not understand and in making themselves understood whenever their own message is unclear. In this way they are provided with an opportunity to activate and apply comprehension and production processes. Pica et al assert that greater explication of communication task as a teaching and research construct is necessary so that when teachers ask their learners to talk in class they understand how such activities promote their objectives for their learners'

efficient learning and provide researchers with insight into the learning process. Thus, Pica et al provide a typology of communication tasks, consisting of five tasks, each with a different configuration of task and goal. The five types of communication tasks are: (1) information gap, (2) opinion exchange, (3) jigsaw, (4) problem-solving, and (5) decision-making tasks.

Pica et al (1993) propose that, in order to pinpoint the kinds of activities and goals that are possible when learners and their interlocutors communicate, the broad task features of activity and goal, they are given greater specificity as **interactional** activity, and **communication** goal, which are in turn elaborated in relation to the categories of **interactant relationship**, **interaction requirement**, **goal orientation**, and **outcome** options (see table 1).

TABLE 1: Task relationships, requirements, goals and outcomes and their impact on opportunities for L2 learners' comprehension of input, feedback on production and modification of interlanguage

Task activities and goals	Impact on opportunities for learner		
	Comprehension of input	Feedback on production	Interlanguage modification
<p>A. Interactional activity</p> <p>1. Interactant relationship of request and suppliance activities, based on which interactants hold, request, or supply information directed toward task interaction and outcomes:</p> <p>a. Each interactant holds a different portion of information and supplies and requests this information as needed to complete the task</p> <p>b. One interactant holds all information and supplies it as other(s) request it</p> <p>c. Each interactant has access to information and supplies it if other(s) request it</p>	<p>expected</p> <p>possible</p>	<p>expected</p> <p>expected if repeated, with roles reversed</p> <p>possible</p>	<p>expected</p> <p>possible</p>
<p>2. Interaction requirement for activity of request-suppliance directed toward task outcomes:</p> <p>a. Each interactant is required to request and supply information</p> <p>b. One interactant is required to request, the other(s) required to supply information</p> <p>c. Each interactant is expected to request and supply information, but not required to do so.</p>	<p>expected</p> <p>possible</p>	<p>expected</p> <p>expected if repeated, with roles reversed</p> <p>possible</p>	<p>expected</p> <p>possible</p>
<p>B. Communication goal</p> <p>3. Goal orientation in using information requested and supplied:</p> <p>a. Interactants have same or convergent goals</p> <p>b. Interactants have related, but divergent goals</p> <p>4. Outcome options in attempting to meet goals:</p> <p>a. Only one acceptable outcome is possible</p> <p>b. More than one outcome is possible</p>	<p>expected</p> <p>possible</p> <p>expected</p> <p>possible</p>	<p>expected</p> <p>possible</p> <p>expected</p> <p>possible</p>	<p>expected</p> <p>possible</p> <p>expected</p> <p>possible</p>

TABLE 2: Communication task types for L2 research and pedagogy analysis based on: Interactant (X/Y) relationships and requirements in communicating information (INF) to achieve task goals

	INF holder	INF requester	INF supplies	INF requester-supplier relationship	Interaction requirement	Goal orientation	Outcome options
Task Type							
Jigsaw	X & Y	X & Y	X & Y	2 way (xX to Y & Y to X)	+ required	+ convergent	1
Information gap	X or Y	Y or X	X or Y	1 way > 2 way (X to Y/Y to X)	+ required	+ convergent	1
Problem-solving	X = Y	X = Y	X = Y	2 way > 1 way (X to Y & Y to X)	- required	+convergent	1
Decision-making	X = Y	X = Y	X = Y	2 way > 1 way (x to Y & Y to X)	- required	+ convergent	1+
Opinion exchange	X = Y	X = Y	X = Y	2 way > 1 way (X to Y & Y to X)	- required	-convergent	1 +/-

Pica et al (1993) present Table 1 as a framework for distinguishing and elaborating interactional activity and communication goals and linking them with opportunities for learners to gaining assistance with comprehension of L2 input, to receive feedback on the comprehensibility of their interlanguage output, and to respond to feedback through modification of their interlanguage. They present in Table 2 this information in the form of the task typology. Pica et al explain that in Table 1, the interactional activity has been separated into the categories (1) **interactant** relationship and (2) **interaction** requirement. They further explain that the category of interactant relationship pertains to the responsibilities given to the task participants to hold, request, and/or supply the information needed to achieve task goals and thereby serve either as mutual information requesters and suppliers or as independent requesters to suppliers and suppliers of requesters. They point out, with reference to Long (1980, 1985), that participants engaged in a relationship of mutual request and suppliance, exchange information in a **two-way** direction. However, as their relationship of request and suppliance becomes less mutual and more differentiated, information flows in a **one-way** direction from supplier to requester.

Pica et al (1993) posit that the **interactional** activity, which is derived from the interaction requirement category (2), is based on whether obligations to request or supply task-related information are required or optional. They maintain that a task which requires that information be exchanged among participants also promotes interaction. On the other hand, a task which gives participants the option of contributing or choosing not to contribute to information exchange can result in little interaction. He state that, the theoretical rationale which supports the use of communication tasks is that which posit that language is best learned and taught through interaction. They state further that in interaction-based pedagogy, classroom opportunities to perceive, comprehend, and ultimately to internalize L2 words, forms, and structures are most abundant during activities in which learners and their interlocutors, whether teachers or other learners, can exchange information and communicate ideas. Such activities are structured so that learners will talk to share ideas and opinions, to collaborate toward a single goal, or compete to achieve individual goals. They furthermore point out that input and interactionist theories of L2 acquisition posit that language learning is assisted through the social interaction of learners and their interlocutors, particularly when they negotiate toward mutual comprehension of each other's message meaning. To accomplish this goal, Pica

(1993) argue, learners request their interlocutor's help in comprehending unclear or unfamiliar linguistic input, and obtain interlocutor feedback on the comprehensibility of their own interlanguage form and content. Then they respond accordingly through modification of emergent and acquired L2 structures.

In discussing perspectives on tasks from pedagogy and research, Pica (1993) states that two recurrent features of tasks stand out. The first is that tasks are oriented toward **goals**. Participants are expected to arrive at an outcome and to carry out a task through their talk. The second feature of task is **activity**, which suggests that participants take an active role in carrying out a task.

They furthermore posit that the **communication goal** component of the framework is broken down into (3) **goal orientation**, i.e. the collaboration or **convergence** or independence or **divergence** required of interactants in meeting the goals of their communication task, and (4) **outcome options**, i.e. the range of acceptable task outcomes available to interactants in attempting to meet task goals. He explain that several of the categories in Table 1 are closely linked. For example, they state, links can be seen among the 'a' categories. When task interactants each hold different portions of the information necessary to meet the task goal as in interactant relationship 1a, they also meet conditions for interaction requirement 2a, i.e. the interaction among them is required in order to supply and receive this information. Since no one interactant holds all of the necessary information, but all of this information is crucial to the task goal, interactants would have to pool their partial but crucial information to obtain the full range of the information content. Thus, Pica et al (1993) argue, they would work toward convergence, to achieve the one acceptable task outcome within goal orientation 3a and outcome option 4a. He points out that a variation on the 'a' category configuration could occur when interactants' goal orientation is convergent, and only one outcome option is possible, but there is a gap in the distribution of information for carrying out the task. If one interactant held all of the information, which others needed to obtain for task completion, this could, according to Pica et al (1993), link goal orientation 3a and outcome option 4a with interactant relationship 1b and interaction requirement 2b.

Pica et al (1993) explain that the interactants in interactant relationship 1c have access to either identical information or overlapping portions of a pool of information which they are expected to use in carrying out the communication task – to solve a

problem, to make a decision or to offer or exchange an opinion. They point out that any participant could carry out the task using the information given, without depending on others to supply it. Interaction would therefore be possible, even expected, Pica et al conclude, but not necessarily required. They further state that, although information could be exchanged in a two-way direction, the task could be completed without such an exchange. In this way, Pica et al state, interactants in interactant relationship 1c could also meet interaction requirement 2c.

Pica et al maintain that in some instances task interactants may be asked to solve a problem or make a decision, and in so doing, converge toward a single goal orientation 3a. On the other hand, if convergence toward a single goal were not required, this would mean, according to Pica et al, that any number of goals could be realized, with participants working within goal orientation 3b, and thereby maintaining their own opinions, even listening to those of the other participants. This would hold also for the category of task outcome. In outcome option 4a, there is one preferred outcome to a task, e.g. the solution to a problem. For outcome 4b, on the other hand, a finite or even infinite number of outcomes could be acceptable e.g. in the rendering of a decision or the registering of an opinion.

Task features as indicators of opportunities for L2 comprehension, feedback and modified production

According to Pica et al, the analysis in Table 1 suggests that a task which promotes the greatest opportunities for learners to experience comprehension of input, feedback on production and interlanguage modification is one which meets the criteria in the 'a' categories for interactant relationship, interaction, requirement, goal orientation and outcome option. As such, they point out, it is a task in which the following four conditions are present:

1. Each interactant holds a different portion of information which must be exchanged and manipulated in order to reach the task outcome.
2. Both interactants are required to request and supply this information to each other.
3. Interactants have the same or convergent goals.
4. Only one acceptable outcome is possible from that attempts to meet the goal.

Under such conditions, Pica et al conclude, learners and their interlocutors must work together to understand each other and to supply each other with feedback when mutual comprehension becomes difficult or impossible. Opportunities for negotiation and its consequent impact on learners' comprehension, their opportunities to receive feedback and to modify output are, according to Pica et al, more likely to occur under these task conditions than those in which participants have no obligation to exchange information or have a variety of goals and task outcome options available to them. Pica et al present in Table 2 a communication task typology which has been generated from the categories interactant relationship, interaction requirement, goal orientation, outcome option and the potential impact of their various realizations on opportunities for learners to comprehend L2 input, be given feedback on their production, and to modify their output, as discussed above and outlined in Table 1. Thus, Pica et al argue, the communication task types, as delineated in Table 2, present clear differences in their effectiveness as a means of providing learners with opportunities to work toward comprehension, feedback, and interlanguage modification. The most effective task types appear to be the jigsaw and information gap tasks, while the least effective is the opinion exchange task.

3.3 ANALYSIS OF XHOSA COMMUNICATION TASKS IN TERMS OF THE TASK TYPOLOGY

3.3.1 Task 1

ULizo uyasilela emsebenzini wakhe wemfundo ephakamileyo, ngoku umhlohli uxhalabile ngale ngaki, yaye ufuna ukuqonda ukuba kuqhubeka ntoni.

Lizo has delay in his institution work, now the lecturer is concerned about this problem and likes to know what is happening

*Mnu Maso: Lizo mfo wam ingaba ukhona na undonakele empilweni yakho? (1)
My son, is there any problem in your life? [Enquiry about possible problem] [Ukuqonda ngeyona ngxaki ingunobangela]*

*Lizo: Utsho kuba kutheni, mfundisi? (2)
Why are you asking, Sir? [Enquiry about reasons for question]
[Ukuqonda esona sizathu sokubuza]*

Mnu Maso: Nditsho kuba izinga lakho lomsebenzi lehlile. (3) I say so, because your performance is low. [*Providing reasons for enquiring*][*Ukunikezela ngezona zizathu zokuqonda*]

Lizo: Ingxaki yam mfundisi kukuba ndisilela kwicala lezemali. (4)
I have a financial problem. [*Statement of problem*] [*Unobangela wengxaki*]

Mnu Maso: Loo nto ingenaphi ezifundweni zakho? (5)
How does this affect your studies? [*Probing specific area of effect of problem*] [*Ukuqonda banzi mayela nonobangela wengaxaki*]

Lizo: Kaloku mfundisi, ngezinye iimini ndilala ngaphandle kwento eya ethunjini. (6)
Some other days I sleep without eating. [*Providing further specific details of consequence of problem*] [*Ukunikezela ngesona sizathu sengxaki*]

Mnu Maso: Zambi ke ezo ndaba mfo wam. (7) Kanti wena uxhomekeke kubani ngokwemfundo? (8)
That is bad news! Who is responsible for your education? [*Expression of shock. Enquiry about source of funding*] [*Umothuko. Ukuqonda mayela nengeniso*]

Lizo: Ndaswelekelwa ngabazali bam ndiseyimveku ngoku bendikhuliswa ngumalume osuke wapheliswa ngumsebenzi ngesaqophe. (9)
My parents died when I was a child, now my uncle is taking care of me but now he is jobless. [*Statement of parent and current caregivers*][*Isizathu sobume babazali*]

Mnu Maso: Ndiza kuzama ukukufunela umsebenzi wokuncedisa apha kweli ziko, kodwa ke loo nto iza kuthatha ixeshana ndiyakucela ke ukuba ibe yeyakwamkhozi. (10)
I will try to get you an assistance job in this institution, but that is going to take time. Keep that between the two of us. [*Expression of undertaking to help, caution about length of and confidentiality*]
[*Ukubonakalisa uncedo, mayela nobungakanani kunye nokuzithemba*]

Lizo: Kunyanisiwe xa kuthiwa 'usana olungakhaliyo lufela embelekweni amazwi akho atsho andinika ithemba lokuzimisela njengakuqala. (11)
It is true that if you keep quite, nobody can help you. Your words have given me hope to be serious like before. [*Expression of appreciation and renewed courage*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo ongazenzisiyo nokuzinikezela]

Mnu Maso: Ndikuthembile ke mfo wam ukuba uya kwenza njengendoda usiphuhlise ngokuzimisela isakhono sakho. (12)

I trust you my son, and I hope that you will do well in your career. [*Expression of confidence in making a success*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuzimisela ekwenzeni impumelelo]

Lizo: (*etsho ngoncumo*) Ndiyabulela mfundisi ngento yonke. (13)
(*with a smile*) Thank you Sir for everything. [*Expression of thanks*][*Amazwi ombulelo*]

The example content of Task 1 displays the characteristics of a predominantly information exchange task in which the lecturer and student as interactants exchange information as regard the enquiry of the lecturer about the student's recent poor performance, and the student's information about the reasons for his underperformance. The task has a convergent goal, namely that the two interactants should obtain a mutual understanding of each other's concerns and reach an agreement about an acceptable way forward to overcome the student's problem of underperformance. Thus the interactants both are requesters and suppliers of information in terms of interactant relationship. The lecturer requests information from the student about the reason for his poor performance and supplies information about possibilities for a part-time job. the student participant is mostly a supplier of information in explaining the reasons for his unsatisfactory work, although he requests help through his explanations. The task has a limited range of outcome options to meet the goal of the communication task, namely to find an acceptable way forward for dealing with the student's problem. Thus, the task also exemplifies the features of a problem-solving task. Task 1 therefore represents a communication task which provides ample opportunity for comprehension through interaction, feedback on production and interlanguage modification through the attempts of the participants' attempts to express the message-meaning. The following language

functions represent key communicative segments of the task. The vocabulary and sentence structures through which these language functions are expressed need to be made salient in the input and teaching activities.

Language Functions

1. *Ukuqonda mayela neyona ngxaki (1)*
Enquire about possible problem
 Ingaba ukhona ...
 Is there any...
2. *Ukuqonda mayela nesona sizathu (2)*
Enquire about possible reason
 Utsho kuba kutheni?
Why are you asking?
3. *Ukunikezela ngesizathu (3)*
Reason giving
 Nditsho kuba ...
 I am saying so because...
4. *Oyena nobangela wengxaki (5)*
The real problem
 Ingxaki yam kukuba
 My problem is...
5. *Inkcazela kunye nemvakalelo (6)*
 Clarity and feelings
 Ngaphandle kwento
 Except...
6. *Ukubonakalisa umothuko (7)*
Showing of shock
 Zambi ke ezo ndaba
 That's bad news
7. *Ukunika inkxaso (8)*
To show support

Uxhomekeke kubani?

You depend on who?

8. *Ukubonakalisa uncedo (10)*

To show help.

Ndiza kuzama...

I will try...

9. *Ukubonakalisa umbulelo (11)*

To show appreciation

'Usana olungakhaliyo...' (idiom)

'If you do not complain ...

10. *Ukubonakalisa ukuzithemba (12)*

To show confidence

Ndikuthembile ...

I trust you...

3.3.2 DIALOGUE 2

Unkosikazi Mvumbi ukhalazela ukusoloko kungena mva kwemisebenzi kaSipho kwaye kungabekwanga sizathu.

Mrs Mvumbi is complaining because Sipho's work is always late without any reason.

Nksk. Mvumbi: Sipho kunento endingayiqondiyo ngawe andazi nokuba uyadelela na, okanye unempakamo, khawundichazele. (1)

Sipho there is something that I don't understand about you I don't know whether you are taking chances or you think too much about yourself, just tell me. [*Enquiring about possible problem*] [*Ukuqonda ngeyona ngxaki ingunobangela*]

Sipho: Indlela obuza ngayo Mem iyandibhida. (2)

The way you ask me Mam confuses me. [*Enquiring about reason of question*][*Ukuqonda mayela nesizathu sokubuza*]

Nksk. Mvumbi: Utsho ukuba awuyazi into endithetha ngayo? (3)

You mean you have no idea what I am talking about? [*Expressing about enquiring questions*][*Ukuqononondisa mayela nombuzo*]

- Sipho: Uxolo Mem ingxaki yam inye yeyokuba umsebenzi wakho uyaguqulwa kwaye ke mininzi neminye imisebenzi endiyenzayo. (4)
Sorry Mam, my problem is that your work needs to be translated and there is other work which supposes to be done. [*Statement of problem*] [Unobangela wengxaki]
- Nksk. Mvumbi: Kutheni ungandixeleli nje ukuba ixesha endilinkayo lincinci kwaye alikwanelisi? (5)
Why didn't you tell me that the time I give you is minimal and not enough? [*Enquiring about statement of problem*][Ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki]
- Sipho: Bendicinga ukuba asiyiyo ingxaki leyo yokuba ndikwazise ukuba ndiza kufaka kade umsebenzi wam, egameni nje lokuba ndiwufakile bendingaboni sikhwasimla mna kulo ndawo. (6)
I thought it won't be a problem of telling you about my late submission, as long my work will be submitted and I didn't see a problem in that.[*Providing further specific detail of consequence of problem*] [Ukuchaza ezona zizathu zengxaki]
- Nksk. Mvumbi: Yonke ke into apha inemiqathango yayo, kwixesha elizayo kufuneka uyithathele ingqalelo imini yokungena komsebenzi okanye awusayi kufumana manqaku. (7)
There are rules and regulations for everything , take note of the submission day in future or you won't get marks. [*Opinion about the statement of problem*][Ukunika uluvo mayela nesizathu sengxaki]
- Sipho: Ndikuvile Mem kwaye ndiyathembisa ukuba ndiya kukwenza njalo kwilixa elizayo. (8)
I heard you Mam and I promise that next time I will, as told. [*Opinion about the outcome of the statement of problem*][Ukunika uluvo mayela neziphumo zengxaki]
- Nksk Mvumbi: Hayi, Sipho musa ukuthi uza kuzama (9)
No, Sipho don't say you will try. [*Expression of warning about the statement of problem*][Ukubonakalisa isilumkiso ngokuchazwa kwengxaki]

- Sipho: Ewe, Mem. (10)
Yes, Mam [*Expression of agreement*][*Isivumelwano*]
- Nksk Mvumbi: Kaloku umsebenzi waseDyunivesiti awufani nowasesinaleni kuyasetyenzwa apha kwaye ke kufuneka uzimisele. (11)
The work of the University is totally different from that of a high school; you have to work very hard and be serious. [*Giving more opinion about the statement of problem*][Ukunika uluvo oluphangaleleyo ngokuchazwa kwengxaki]
- Sipho: Ngamanye amaxesha ndiye ndiwonqene kuba mninzi kakhulu. (12)
Sometimes I become lazy because there is a lot of work. [*Providing further details of consequence of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngakumbi ngenkcukakca mayela neziphumo zengxaki]
- Nksk Mvumbi: Kutheni le nto usuka uthethe ingathi awungomfundi waseDyunivesiti nje? (13)
Why do you speak as if you are not a University student? [*Expression of shock. Warning of behaviour*][Ukubonakalisa umothuko. Nokuyala ngendlela yokuziphatha]
- Sipho: Ndenziwa kukubhidwa ngumsebenzi omninzi, Mem. (14)
The work confuses me, Mam. [*Providing more details about the statement of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngakumbi ngenkcukankca mayela nonobangela]
- Nksk Mvumbi: Mamela ke apha, ukususela namhlanje kufuneka uzicwangcisele phantsi ixesha lokufunda, uyandiva? (15)
Listen here carefully, as from today you should draft down your time-table, do you here me? [*Giving advice about the statement of problem*][Ukucebisa ngokuchazwa kwengxaki]
- Sipho: Lelona cebo elo, Mem futhi ingathi liza kundisebenzela. (16)
That is a good plan Mam, and it looks like it is going to work for me. [*Appreciation of the advice*][Ukubonakalisa umbulelo wengecebiso]
- Nksk Mvumbi: Ukuba wenza njalo awusokuze uliphose ixesha lemisebenzi yakho, uyandiva? (17)

If you are doing like that you won't miss your studying time, do you hear me? [*Expression of anger and emphasis of the advice*]
[ukubonakalisa umsindo kunye nokungxininisa isiyalo]

Sipho: Enkosi Mem ngecebiso lakho. (18) Ndiyabulela kakhulu. (19) [thank you Mem for your advice. [*Expression of thanks*][Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

Nksk Mvumbi: Ndiyathemba ukuba le nto ndikuxelele yona uza kuyithathela ingqalelo. (20)
I hope that you will take this into consideration. [*Expression of the concern*] [Ukubonakalisa ukukhathala]

Sipho: Ewe, ndakwenza njalo ,Mem. (21)
Yes, I will do so Mam. [*Appreciation of concern*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

The content of communication task 2, exhibits the features of information-exchange and opinion-giving task types. The interactant relationship in this communication task entails that both participants are suppliers of information, although the lecturer participant is mainly the requester of information. The lecture participant reprimands the student participant about his constant late submission of assignments and insists that the student explains his reasons for this unacceptable habit. The interactant requirement entails that a two-way information exchange must take place. The two interactants, the lecturer and the student, exchange information and give their opinions to the student participant about his views about university study. The student participant, in turn, supplies information about his views about the lecturer's work that it must be translated, it is a lot of work, and he finds it confusing. Thus, the communication task exemplifies in part a divergent goal in that each interactant presents his/her own opinions and they seem not to be able to reach a common consensus opinion about the student's late submission. In the second half of the communication task a convergent goal emerges in that both interactants come to a mutual opinion after the student interactant accepts the lecturer interactant's opinion to draw up a timetable for his work. Thus, the task culminates with one outcome option characteristic of a problem-solution task.

The following key language functions can be identified in the content of Task 2. The grammatical structures that realize these functions are therefore significant for (i) the purpose of making them salient in the input, and (ii) for focus-on-form pedagogic activities.

Language Functions

1. *Ukuqonda mayela noyena nobangela wengxaki (1)*
Enquire about the main reason for the problem
 Kunento endingayiqondiyo...
Something that I don't understand ...

2. *Ukuqonda mayela nesizathu sokubuza (2)*
Enquire about the reason for asking
 Indlela obuza ngayo...
You questioning...

3. *Ukubonakalisa ukufuna ukuqonda mayela nombuzo (3)*
Expression of wanting to enquire about the question.
 Utsho ukuba awuyazi....
 You must say it if you don't know...

4. *Oyena nobangela wengxaki (4)*
The main reason for the problem
 Ingxaki yam ...
 My problem...

5. *Ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki (5)*
Enquire about the main reason for the problem
 Kutheni ungandixeleli nje...

Why don't you tell me...

6. *Ukunikezela ngenkcukankca ezingakumbi mayela nonobangela wengxaki (6)*
Giving more clarity about the reason for the problem
 Bendicinga ukuba asiyiyo ingxaki...
 I thought that is not the problem

7. *Uluvo mayela nonobangela wengxaki (7)*
Opinion about the reason for the problem
 Yonke into apha inemiqathango yayo ...
 Everything here has got its regulations...
8. *Ukubonakalisa isivumelwano (10)*
Showing of agreement
 Ewe, Mam
 Yes, Mam
9. *Ukubonakalisa umothuko (13)*
Showing of shock
 Kutheni le nto...
 Why...
10. *Ukubonakalisa umbulelo (18-9)*
Showing of appreciation
 Enkosi Mem ngecebiso lakho...
 Thanks, Mam for your advice

3.3.3 TASK 3

Umnumzana Bhekile ufuna ukwazi lo mkhuba kaZukiswa wokufika mva kunabanye abantwana kwigumbi lokuhlohlela yonke imihla le ishushu.

Mr Bhekile wants to know why Zukiswa is always coming late in the class, compared to other children on daily basis.

- Mnu. Bhekile: Uhlala phi wena wedwa Zukiswa? (1)
 Where do you stay alone, Zukiswa? [*Enquiring statement of information*][Ukuqonda mayela nengxaki]
- Zukiswa: Utsho kum Mfundisi? (2)
 Are you speaking to me Sir? [*Enquiring about reason for question*]
 [Ukuqonda mayela nesizathu sombuzo]
- Mnu . Bhekile: Kanti sibangaphi apha? (3)
 How many of us here? [*Expression of anger*] [Ukubonakalisa umsindo]

- Zukiswa: Ndim nawe mfundisi! (4)
It is me and you Sir. [*Expression of respect*] [Ukubonakalisa intlonipho]
- Mnu. Bhekile: Ungaphenduli umbuzo nje ndiyakhumsha apha kuwe? (5)
Why are you not answering the question, am I speaking English?
[*Expression of anger and enquiring of statement of problem*][Ukubonakalisa umsindo nokufuna ukuqonda ngokuchazwa kwengxaki]
- Zukiswa: Uxolo Mfundisi, ndihlala elokishini eKhayelitsha. (6)
I am sorry Sir, I am staying by the township in Khayelitsha.
[*Expression of regret. Providing reason for enquiring*][Ukubonakalisa ukuzisola. Ukunika isizathuu sokubuza]
- Mnu. Bhekile: Ayinguwe wedwa nje ohlala elokishini, awuguli kodwa? (7) You are not the only one staying by the township, are you not sick?
[*Expression of anger. Enquire more statement of problem*][Ukubonakalisa umsindo ,nokuqonda ngakumbi ngonobangela]
- Zukiswa: Hayi Mfundisi andiguli. (8)
No Sir! I am not sick. [*Expression of regret*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuzisola]
- Mnu. Bhekile: Ubethwa yintoni? (*atsho ecaphuka*) (9)
What is your problem? (He becomes angry) (Esiba nomsindo)
[*Expression of anger*] [Ukuba nomsindo]
- Zukiswa: Ingxaki yam ndiyonqena ukuvuka ngonyezi into ebangela ukuba uloliwe wangentsasa andishiye. (10)
My problem is that I am lazy to wake up early, which causes me to miss the morning train. [*Providing further specific details of consequence of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngezizathu ezingakumbi mayela nonobangela]
- Mnu. Bhekile: Kucacile ukuba awuzimiselanga kwizifundo zakho, le nto uyithethayo ayinakuthethwa nalusana kwaye ke sisi, ukuba ubetha

ngolo nyawo awuzukulunga apha . (11)

It is clear that you are not serious your studies, even a baby can not say that, if you are behaving like this you won't fit in here. [*Expression of anger and giving some opinion to the statement of the problem*] [ukubanomsindo kunye nokunikezela ngakumbi ngoluvo kunobangela]

Zukiswa: Ewe, mfundisi! (12)

Yes, Sir! [*Expression of appreciation*][Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

Mnu .Bhekile: Ngomso ke sisi ndifuna ube ngowokuqala ukufika. Ndigqibile nawe (13)

Tomorrow I want you to be the first one to arrive. I am finished with you. [*Expression of emphasizing the outcome of the statement of problem*] [Ukungxininisa mayela neziphumo zengxaki]

Zukiswa: Kulungile, Mfundisi. (14)

Alright,Sir. [*Expression of thanks*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

Mnu Bhekile: Umntu athi emdala abe enengqondo zobuntwana, umntu omdala wenza njalo na? (15)

How can a mature person behave like child? [*Expression of anger*] [Ukubonakalisa ukucaphuka]

Zukiswa: Hayi, Mfundisi. (16)

No, Sir [*Expression of humility*][Ukubonakalisa ukuzithoba]

Mnu Bhekile: Uthini ngaba bantwana bahlala elokishini nabo bafika ngexesha, bayaphosisa bona? (17)

What about those who arrived early while they are also staying in the township, are they mistaken? [*Emphasizing the expression of anger*][Ukungxininisa ekubonakaliseni ukucaphuka]

Zukiswa: Hayi, Mfundisi! (18)

No, Sir [*Sign of humility*] [Uphawu lokuzithoba]

Mnu Bhekile: Khawuhambe ke uye kwenza umsebenzi wam, ndiwufuna ngoku, uyandiva? (19)

Go and do my work, I want it now. Do you hear me? [*Providing some more details about the outcomes of the statement of problem*][Ukunikezela ngenkcukankca eziphangaleleyo ngeziphumo zokuchazwa kwengxaki]

Zukiswa: Ewe, Mfundisi! (20)

Yes, Sir! [*Expression of humility*][Ukubonakalisa ukuzithoba]

Mnu Bhekile: Ndingaze ndiphinde ndikuve uxolisa ngezinto ezingabambekiyo apha kum, uyandiva? (21)

You should never come and apologize for unnecessary things to me, do you hear me? [*Expression of warning*] [Ukutyityimbisela umnwe]

Zukiswa: Ewe, Mfundisi! (22)

Yes, Sir. [*Expression of appreciation*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

Mnu Bhekile: Khululeka ke ndigqibile ngawe. (23)

You can go, I am done with you. [*Expression of conclusion*] [Ukubonakalisa isiphelo]

The sample content of communication task 3 displays a predominately information gap task. The task requirement entails a mostly one-way information-giving conversation in which the lecturer interactant reprimands the student interactant for regularly coming late to classes. The student interactant needs to provide justification for his regular late-coming in class to the lecturer. Her statement that she is lazy to wake up and therefore misses the train annoys the lecturer, who then reprimands her strictly.

The interactant-requirement of this communication task entails that both interactants, lecturer and student, supply information relating to the information gap of creating a mutual understanding about the student's regular late arrival in class. The opinion exchange that takes place stems mostly from the lecturer's dismay at the irresponsibility of the student when he hears her flimsy excuse. The outcome option of the communication task is singular, namely an understanding of the lecturer of the reasons for the student's coming late to class. At another level, more than one outcome is possible as regard the ways to rectify the problem. In this regard the student expresses regret and apologises for her habit of coming late. Thus, the task has a convergent goal orientation as the two interactants work together to come to a

common understanding. Although the task is representative of a mainly one-way information-giving, the task features entail that it provides considerable opportunities for learners in a second language learning context for (1) comprehension of input, (2) feedback on production, and (3) interlanguage modification. The following language functions are central to the acquisition of the key vocabulary and grammatical structures. Thus, pedagogic activities relating to focus on form need to invoke these linguistic aspects for the purpose of consciousness raising and noticing of these forms by L2 learners in order to enhance their learning.

Language Functions

1. *Ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki (1)*
Enquire about the reason for the problem
 Uhlala phi ...
 Where do you stay...
2. *Ukuqonda mayela nesizathu sombuzo (2)*
Enquire about the reason for the question
 Utsho kum...
 Do you speak to me...
3. *Ukubonakalisa umsindo (3)*
Expressing anger
 Kanti sibangaphi apha?
 How many of us here?
4. *Ukubonakalisa intlonipho (4)*
Expressing respect
 Ndim nawe, mfundisi!
 Its me and you, Sir
5. *Ukubonakalisa ukuzisola (6)*
Expressing regrets
 Uxolo mfundisi,...
 Sorry, Sir
6. *Ukubonakalisa umbulelo (14)*
Expressing appreciation

Kulungile, mfundisi.

Ok,Sir

7. *Ukubonakalisa ukuzithoba (16)*

Expresssing humbleness

Hayi, mfundisi!

No,Sir!

8. *Ukunikezela ngenkcukankca ngakumbi mayela neziphumo zonobangela wengxaki (20)*

To give more explanation about the matter of the problem

Khawuhambe ke uye kwenza umsebenzi...

Go and ...

9. *Ukubonakalisa ukuqosheliswa kwemicimbi (23)*

Expressing way forward

Khululeka...

Be free

3.3.4 TASK 4

Unkosikazi Ndawo ufuna ukudlana indlebe noPhelisa kuba engenzanga kakuhle kwiimviwo zesiqingatha sonyaka

Mrs Ndawo is concerned about the performance of Phelisa because she didn't do well in her mid- term exams.

Nksk. Ndawo: Phelisa ungoyena mntwana oqhele ukuba neziphumo ezihle kodwa emva kwezi mviwo ndizive ndinodano, kwenzeke njani sisi? (1)

Phelisa you used to perform very well in your exams but after this mid- term exams I feel so disappointed. What happened to you?
[*Enquiring about possible problem*] [Ukuqonda mayela nengxaki]

Phelisa: Indlela imibuzo yakho ibingayo bendingakwazi ukuyiphendula. (2)
The way your question were asked it was hard for me to answer.
[*Providing reason for enquiring*] [Ukunikezela ngesizathu zokubuza]

Nksk Ndawo: Kaloku ngoku wenza elinye inqanaba kufuneka uzikise ukuqonda.
(3)

Now you are in different stage you must try to make up your mind.
[*Expression of giving opinion*] [Ukubonakalisa ukunika uluvo]

Phelisa: Imibuzo yakho Mem ibintsokothile kwaye ke awungazange usiphe nentluva yokuphendula imibuzo ke mna ndichanwe yiloo nto nje kuphela. (4)

Your questions were very tricky and you didn't even give us an idea of those types of questions. That was my only problem. [*Providing further specific detail of consequences of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngeenkucukankca ezithe vetshe zezizathu zonobangela]

Nksk. Ndawo: Ndiyabulela ngezimvo zakho nam ke kwixesha elizayo ndiya kuzama ukuninika intluva yokubuzwa kwemibuzo yovavanyo.(5)

Thanks for your opinion next time I will try to give you some clue concerning the questions for exams. [*Promise to consider the statement of problem*] [Uthembisa ukuqaphela ukuchazwa kwengxaki]

Phelisa: Ndiyathemba ke izinga lam lokuphumelela liza kutsho lifane nakuqala xa uza kuphinda uqhube ngaala ndlela yakho, Mem. (6)

I hope that my performance will be like the previous time , if you are going to do that way ,Mam. [*Expression of giving opinion about the statement of problem*] Ukubonakalisa ukunika uluvo mayela nokuchazwa kwengxaki]

Nksk Ndawo: Ngelinye ixesha ubokuya nakwithala lencwadi ujonge amaphepha eminyaka edlulileyo. (7)

Sometimes you should go to the library and look at previous question papers. [*Provide some advice to the statement of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngengcebiso mayela nonobangela]

Phelisa: Ucinga ukuba loo nto ingenza umahluko ekupaseni kwam? (8)

Do you think that can make a difference in my performance?

[*Enquire about the advice*] [Ukuqonda mayela nengcebiso]

Nksk Ndawo: Ewe, kaloku naxa ufunda ezinye iincwadi ezingezinye zikunika ulwazi oluphangaleleye. (9)

Yes, of course when you read different books and then you get a

broad knowledge. [*Provide more opinion about the statement of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngoluvo oluphangaleleyo mayela nonobangela wengxaki]

Phelisa: Unyanisile Mem ndiye ndibone abanye abafundi besenza njalo kodwa Zange khe ndiyizame mna loo nto. (10)

You are telling the truth Mam because I have seen other students doing that but I have never tried it. [*Appreciation of the advice*] [umbulelo wengcebiso]

Nksk Ndawo: Ukususela namhlanje ke mtan'am kufuneka uzazi izinto ezibalulekileyo apha ebomini. (11)

As from today my child you should know what is important in life. [*Expression of encouragement*][Ukubonakalisa inkuthazo]

Phelisa: Ndiyabulela ngoluvo lwakho Mem ndiyathembisa ukuba andiyi kuphozisa maseko ukwenza oko. (12)

Thank you for your advice Mam I promise that I won't waste any time to do that. [*Expression of confidence in making a success*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuzithemba ekuphuhliseni ikamva]

Nksk Ndawo: Ikamva lakho lixhomekeke kuwe kaloku nguwe ekufuneka uzikhuthaze. (13)

Your future depends on you, you are the one who has to encourage yourself. [*Giving emphasis to the solution of the problem*] Ukungxininisa ekufumaneni isisombululo sengxaki]

Phelisa: Manditsho ndisiya kwithala lencwadi ngoku. (14)

Let me go to the library now. [*Expression of confidence in making a success*][Ukubonakalisa ukuzithemba ekuphuhliseni ikamva]

Nksk Ndawo: Masibonane kwixesha elizayo, Phelisa. (15)

Lets see each other next time, Phelisa. [*Appreciation of meeting next time*] [Isithembiso sokubonana kwakhona]

Phelisa: Kamnandi , Mem. (16)

Stay nice, Mam [*Expression of thanks*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

The sample content of communication task 4 exemplifies the features of a predominantly two-way information gap task and an opinion exchange task. Some elements of a problem-solving task and decision-making are evident in addition. The participants in the communication task, the lecturer and the student, enter into a two-way communication task, exchanging information about the student's mediocre performance in the mid-term examinations. The communication gives evidence of opinion-giving in that the student gives her opinions about her unsatisfactory performance, which she ascribes to the fact that she found the questions tricky, and that the lecturer did not give the students a preview of the kind of questions in the exam paper. The problem-solution elements in the communication are evidenced by the suggestion of the lecturer that the student should go to the library to read books on the work. Thus, the interactant relationship in this communication task entails that both interactants hold information, and are suppliers and requesters of information. The interactant requirement entails a predominantly two-way information exchange with features of problem-solution and decision-making in that the lecturer receives information and opinions from the student about the reasons for her poor marks in the test, and the student gets information and opinions from the lecturer on how to improve her marks.

The goal orientation of this task is convergent in that the two interactants' messages to each other are directed towards a solution, namely a strategy for the student to improve her marks. Thus, there is only one goal outcome option. The content of this communication task therefore exhibits the features that strongly encourage comprehension of input, feedback on production, and modification of interlanguage in a second language learning content. The following language functions are central to the contents, hence the vocabulary and linguistic structures that realize these language functions need to be made salient in the input and invoked in focus-on-form activities directed to accomplish optimal acquisition.

Language Functions

1. *Ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki (1)*

Understanding about reason for the problem

Uhlala phi ...

Where do you stay...

2. *Ukunikezela ngesizathu sokubuza (2)*
Giving reason of asking
 Indlela imibuzo ...

 Your questions were difficult ...
3. *Ukubonakalisa ukunikezela ngoluvo (3)*
Expression giving of opinion
 Kaloku ngoku wenza elinye inqanaba...

You are in a different stage...
4. *Ukunikezela ngenkcukankca ezingakumbi mayela nonobangela (4)*
Providing more details about the reason.
 Imibuzo yakho ibintsokothile.

Your questions wre tricky.
5. *Ukubonakalisa ukwenza isithembiso (5)*
Expressing making a promise
 Ndiya kuzama ukwenza...

I am going to try to do...
6. *Ukubonakalisa umbulelo (16)*
Expressing appreciation
 Kulungile, mfundisi.

 Allright, Sir
7. *Ukuqonda mayela nengcebiso (8)*
Enquire about the advice
 Ucinga ukuba ...

 Do you think...
8. *Ukubonakalisa ukukhuthaza (11)*
Expressing encouragement
 Ukususela namhlanje...

As from today...

9. *Ukubonakalisa ukuzithemba ekuphuhliseni ikamva (14)*

Expresssing self-confidence in making a success.

Manditsho ndisiya

Let me go

10. *Isithembiso sokubonana kwilixa elizayo (15)*

Promise of seeing each other a next time

Masibonane kwilixa ...

Let us see each other

3.3.5 TASK 5

Injingalwazi ekwangumhlohli ifuna ukwazi isizekabani sokuba uZola aphinda-phindane nebanga elinye minyaka le ngokuthi idlane naye indlebe.

Professor who is also a lecturer wants to know the reason for Zola repeating the same course and now he wants to interview him.

Prof: Uyayazi into yokuba kudala wafunda kule Dyunivesiti? (1)

Do you know that you have been studying at this university for a long time?

[Enquiring about the possible problem] [Ukuqonda mayela nengxaki]

Zola: Ewe Prof. (2)

Yes, Prof. [Shows respect] [Ukubonakalisa imbeko]

Prof: Uliqonda nexesha eli phofu ukuba liyahamba? (3)

Are you aware that the time is also running? [Expression of concern about possible problem][Ukubonakalisa inkathalo mayela nengxaki]

Zola: Ewe Prof (4) (uyasazi isizathu sakhe sokubuzwa le mibuzo yiloo nto engabuzi nje)

[Yes Prof! (He knows why he has been asked those questions) [Expression of respect][Ukubonakalisa intlonipho]

Prof: Khawundinabisele ke ukuba ubethakala phi na zininzi nje? (5)

Can you tell me what your real problem is because there are many?

[Providing reason for enquiring] [Ukunikezela ngesizathu sokubuzwa]

- Zola: Apha esikolweni unikwa imisebenzi emininzi ngexesha elinye loo nto ke iyandichana ke mna. (6)
Here at school they give you a lot of work in the same time, that is my failure. [*Statement of the problem*] [Ukuchaza ingxaki]
- Prof: Ye, wethu apha akukho sikolweni, ngoku wawusenza isicelo wawucinga ukuba uyaphi xa ungazukuzimisela. (7)
This is not high school! What were your intentions by the time you apply if you are not going to be serious? [*Probing specific area of effect of problem*][Ukubuza ngezona zizathu zengxaki]
- Zola: Ndandisazi Prof, qha ngoku ndibhidwe yimbiza ukungavuthwa. (8)
I was aware but now I am stuck. [*Providing further specific detail of consequence of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngezona zizathu zengxaki]
- Prof: Mamela apha ke ndikucebise, ukuba usabetha ngolu nyawo inye into oza wusuke uyibone kukusuka ugxothwe qha apha. (9)
Let me give you a tip, if you are still behaving likes this you will be excluded. [*Providing reason of enquiring about the statement of problem*] Ukunikezela ngesona sizathu mayela nonobangela]
- Zola: Ndiyayiqonda loo nto Prof kwaye ke ndiza kuwuyeka lo mkhwa mbi. (10)
I am aware of that Prof and I will get rid of that attitude. [*Expression of concerned about the statement of the problem*] [Ukubonakalisa ukukhathala mayela nonobangela]
- Prof: Masithembe ke ukuba awenzeli mna loo nceba? (11)
Let's hope that you are not doing a favour for me? [*Warning about the statement of the problem*] [Isilumkiso mayela nokuchazwa kwengxaki]
- Zola: Ewe, Prof Ndiyayazi ukuba ikamva lam lixhomekeke apha kum. (12)
Yes ,Prof I know that my future is in my hands. [*Give opinion about the statement of the problem*] [Ukunika uluvo ngokuchazwa kwengxaki]
- Prof: Khawutsho ukhe uzinike ithuba lokujonga ezi zifundo zakho nakwezinye incwadi ezibhalwe ngabanye abantu? (13)
Tell me, do you ever give your self a chance by consulting other authors'

books? [*Enquire more about the statement of the problem*] [Ukuqonda ngakumbi mayela nokuchazwa kwengxaki]

Zola: Ibalulekile na loo nto, Prof? (14)
Is that important, Prof? [*Expression of lack of knowledge*] [Ukubonakalisa ukungabi nalwazi luphangaleleyo]

Prof: Uthi izincoko ezi uza kuzibhala njani xa ungazukwazi ukuthelekisa uluvo lwabanye ababhali? (15)
How are you going to write essays if you can't compare the opinion of the authors? [*Enquire more about the statement of problem*] [Ukuqonda ngakumbi mayela nokuchazwa kwengxaki]

Zola: Bendingayenzi mna loo nto yokujonga ezinye incwadi, bendibhala ngale ndinayo qha. (16)
I have never done that, I always used the one I have. [*Providing further specific details of consequence of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngezona nkukankca mayela nonobangela]

Prof: Ndaze ndakuva zwindini, uthini na apha kum? (17)
That is knew to my ears, what are you saying to me? [*Expression of shock, enquire more about statement of problem*] [Ukubonakalisa umothuko nokuqonda ngakumbi mayela noyena nobangela]

Zola: Nyhani, Prof? (18)
It's true, Prof? [*Expression of sincerety*] [Ukubonakalisa ukunyaniseka]

Prof: Ukuba wenza loo nto ke sokuze upase apha, (19) kule indawo kaloku kufuneka abantu abakwaziyo ukwenza uphando ngomsebenzi wabo. (20)
If you are doing that you won't pass here at this place, we expect people who can conduct reasersch about their work .[*Expression of opinion about the statement of the problem*][*Ukunikezela ngoluvo mayela noyena nobangela wengxaki*]

Zola: Ndikuvile kakuhle ke Prof. (21)
I heard you clear, Prof. [*Expression of understanding*][Ukubonakalisa imvisiswano]

Prof: Khawuhambe ke uye kwenza le nto ndikuxelele yona. (22)
Go now and do what ever I told you. [*Expression of anger*] [Ukubonakalisa umsindo]

Zola: Ndiyabulela, Prof (23)
I thank you Prof [*Expression of thanks*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

The conversation content exemplified in communication task 5 exemplifies the features of a predominantly information exchange task. In addition, some features of a problem-solving and an opinion-giving task are present in this communicative content. The interactant relationship entails an intensive two-way information exchange. Both interactants hold information and supply information. The lecturer interactant mostly requests information in this two-way information exchange. Thus, the interaction requirement entails that both interactants must request and supply information. The task has a convergent goal orientation in that both interactants work toward accomplishing an understanding of the lecturer-participant's question of why the student repeats his course. In the process of coming to a convergent goal, namely of understanding the reason for the student-interactant's repeating the course, the communication content also exemplifies features of opinion-giving by both the lecturer and the student. The lecturer expresses the opinion that the student needs to change his working habits in order to remain at the university and the student expresses the opinion that the university work is too much at once. The feature of decision-making is exemplified in that the student accepts the lecturer's advice to do more reading to ensure that he can study successfully henceforth. Thus the communication task has one goal-outcome option. The communication task gives evidence of the kind of features that encourage comprehension of input, feedback on production, and opportunity for modification of interlanguage which is essential for facilitating interlanguage development. The language functions identified below constitute key expressions in communicating about the task content. The range of vocabulary and sentence structure that realise these functions need to be incorporated in focus on form activities to promote consciousness raising of form-meaning relationships and facilitate language development.

Language Functions

1. *Ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki(1)*
Enquire about the reason for the problem

Uyayiqonda phofu into...

Are you aware...

2. *Ukubonakalisa imbeko (2)*
Expression of respect
Ewe!
Yes!
3. *Ukubonakalisa ukukhathala mayela nonobangela*
Expression of care based on the possible problem
Uliqonda nexesha ukuba liyahamba
Are you aware that time is running...
4. *Ukunikezela ngezona zizathu zikanobangela (8)*
Giving clarity about the cause of the problem
Ndibhidwe yibhiza ukungavuthwa
I got stuck
5. *Isilumkiso mayela nengxaki (11)*
Warning about the possible problem
Masithembe ukuba ...
Lets hope that...
6. *Ukuqonda ngakumbi mayela nonobangela wengxaki (13)*
To enquire more about the reason for the problem
Khawutsho ke...
Say it...
7. *Ukubonakalisa ukungabinalwazi luphangaleleyo (14)*
Expression of agreement
Ibalulekile na lo nto?
Is that important?
8. *Ukubonakalisa isivumelwano (18)*
Expression of agreement
Nyhani!
Is it!

9. *Ukubonakalisa imvisiswano (21)**Expression of agreement*

Ndikuvile kakuhle!

*I heard you clearly!*10. *Ukubonakalisa ingqumbo (22)**Expression of anger*

Khawuhambe...

*You can go...***3.3.6 TASK 6**

UThemba unengxaki yokungazihambi kakuhle iiklasi zakhe ngoku umhlohli wakhe uMnumzana Skade ufuna ukuqonda unobangela.

Themba is having a problem of not attending his classes regularly and now his lecturer Mr. Skade wants to understand his problem.

Mnu. Cuba : Ude ukhule xa kutheni? (1)

When are you growing up? [Enquire about possible problem]

[Ukuqonda mayela neyona nengxaki]

Themba: Utsho ngoba kutheni, Mfundisi? (2)

Why are you asking, Sir? [Counter-enquiry about reason for question] [Ukufuna ukuqonda mayela nesizathu sokubuza]

Mnu. Cuba: Kutheni ungahambi iklasi? (3)

Why are you not attending class? [Enquire again about possible problem] [Ukuqonda kwakhona mayela neyona ngxaki]

Themba: Phuma egusheni, Mhlekaazi! (4)

Make it clear Sir! [Expression of not understanding] [Ukubonakalisa ukungaqondi]

Mnu. Cuba: Kwenzeka ntoni ngawe? (5)

What is happening with you? [Providing reasons for enquire] [Ukunikezela ngezona zizathu zokufuna ukuqonda]

Themba: Ingxaki yam, mfundisi yeyokuba wena uyakhawulezisa xa uhlohla. (6)

My problem is that you are very fast when teaching. [*Statement of the problem*] [Ukuchazwa kwengxaki]

Mnu Cuba: Ngoku ubethakala phi ? (7)
So now what is your problem? [*Probing specific area of effect of problem*] [Ukuqonda ngezona zizathu zikanobangela wengxaki]

Themba: Ngelinye ixesha ndiphuma eklasini ndingevanga nenye zininzi nje. (8)
Sometime I end up hearing nothing from your class, [*Providing further specific detail of consequence of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngezona nkcukacha mayela nonobangela wengxaki]

Mnu Cuba: Ungatsho nje xa ndikhawulezisa, kutheni? (9)
Why don't you tell me, if I am fast? [*Enquire about possible solution*] [Ukuqonda mayela nesisombululo sengxaki]

Themba: Ndiye ndoyike ibe ngathi uza kundiphoxa, mfundisi. (10)
I become scared as if you will reprimand me. [Giving more details about the statement of the problem] [Ukunikezela ngenkcukankca ezingakumbi mayela nonobangela wengxaki]

Mnu Cuba: Kanti ithini imiqathango yedyunivesiti ngokuphathelele kule nto uyithethayo? (11)
What is the university rules based on what you are saying? [Enquire about the possible problem] [Ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki]

Themba: Ithi unelungelo lokubuza xa ungevanga nakangaphi na ude ucacelwe. (12)
It says you have a right to ask as many times as you can if you didn't hear. [*Statement of university procedure*] [Inkcukankca mayela nomgaqo wedyunivesiti]

Mnu Cuba: Ndikuvile ke mf' wam. (13)
I heard you my son. [*Expression of concern*] [Ukubonakalisa inkathalo]

- Themba: Ewe kunjalo, mfundisi. (14)
Yes, it is like that, Sir. [*Expression of emphasis*] [Ukubonakalisa ukugxininisa]
- Mnu Cuba: Xa unengxaki kwixesha elizayo uthethe nam ungasuke uthule nje ndingazi ukuba kuqhubeka ntoni na ngawe. (15)
If you have a problem next time you can talk to me, don't keep quite because I wont know what is going on . [*Expression of understanding to help*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuncedo]
- Themba: Ewe, mfundisi (etsho enethemba) (16)
Yes Sir! (With a big hope) [*Expression of appreciation*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]
- Mnu Cuba: Sakubonana ke Themba, hamba kakuhle. (17)
See you Themba, go well. [*Expression of appreciation*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]
- Themba: Kulungile, Mfundisi. (18)
Ok, Sir! [*Expression of thanks*] Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

The sample content of communication task displays the features of an information exchange task and a problem-solution task. The interactant relationship entails that both interactants, the lecturer and student, hold information and they are suppliers and requesters of information in this two-way communication task in terms of the task requirement. The lecturer-interactant reprimands the student-interactant for not attending class with the purpose of determining the reason for his absence from class. The student informs the lecturer that the reason for his absence from class is that he does not hear or understand the lecturing of the lecturer. This response creates the problem-solving feature of the task in that the lecturer has to respond in a way that can solve the student's problem of not understanding the lecturer's language use in class and hence not attending. The goal orientation of the task is therefore convergent in that both interactants work toward a mutual understanding and a solution to the problem. This solution is provided by the lecturer's response that the student can ask for clarity in class as many times as he wants, and that he should come to the lecturer if he has a problem. Thus, the task has one goal-outcome option, namely to find a satisfactory strategy to address the student-

participant's problem. The task typology features of this task are favourable to have a positive impact on opportunities for second language learning, the task types of information exchange and decision-making being particularly conducive to comprehension of input, feedback on production and modification of interlanguage through clarification requests, comprehension checks and confirmation requests. The language functions identified below are representative of key segments of the communication task content. The vocabulary and sentence structures that realize these language functions should therefore be made salient in the input and be invoked in pedagogic tasks concerned with focus on form for the purpose of enhancing the L2 learner's acquisition.

Language Functions

1. *Ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki (1)*
Enquire about course for the problem
 Ude ukhule...
When are you growing up...
2. *Ukubonakalisa ukungaqondi (4)*
 Expression of lack of understanding

 Phuma egusheni!
 Speak out your mind
3. *Ukunikezela ngezona zizathu zokufuna ukuqonda (5)*
Giving reasons for asking
 Kwenzeka ntoni ngawe?
 What is happening with you?
4. *Oyena nobangela wengxaki (6)*
The main course of the problem
 Eyona ngxaki yam kukuba ...
 My main problem is...
5. *Ukunikezela ngezona nkucankca mayela nonobangela wengxaki (8)*
Giving main reason reasons for the cause of the problem
 Ngelinye ixesha ndiphuma ...
Sometimes I got out...

6. *Ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki (11)*
Enquire about the cause of the problem
 Kanti ithini imigaqo...
What are the rules...?
7. *Ukubonakalisa ukukhathala (13)*
 Expression of care

 Ndikuvile ...
 I heard you
8. *Ukubonakalisa ukugxininisa (14)*
Expriession of emphasis
 Ewe, kunjalo...
 Yes, it is like that...
9. *Ukubonakalisa ukunceda(15)*
Expression of help
 Xa unengxaki...
 If you have a problem...
10. *Ukubonakalisa umbulelo (18)*
Expression of appreciation
 Kulungile!
 Alright

3.3.7 TASK 7

Umhlohli uMnumzana Yenge ufuna ukwazi ukuba kutheni uNokwanda esenza kakuhle kumsebenzi awunikiweyo esilela kumsebenzi othethwayo.

The lecturer Mr. Yenge wants to know why Nokwanda is doing well in her assignments but her oral performance is not good at all.

Mnu. Maqanda : Kwenzeka ntoni ngawe kwezi ntsuku? (1)

What is happening to you these days? [Enquire about the cause the problem] [Ukuqonda ngoyena nobangela wengxaki]

- Nokwanda: Ngumsebenzi mninzi mfundisi! (2)
The work is too much Sir. [*Statement of the problem*] [Oyena nobangela wengxaki]
- Mnu. Maqanda : Ndifuna ukuqonda ukuba awungomntu oqhele ukuthetha phakathi kwabantu na? (3)
I would like to know if you are not used to speak in public. [*Providing reason for enquiring*] [Ukunikezela ngesona sizathu sokuqonda]
- Nokwanda: Hayi , mfundisi ! (4)
No, Sir! [*Expression of denial*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuphika]
- Mnu. Maqanda: Ndiyayiqaphela nam loo nto. (5)
I can realize that also.[*Expression agreement*][Ukubonakalisa isivumelwano]
- Nokwanda: Utsho kuba kutheni, Mfundisi? (6)
Why are you saying that, Sir? [*Couter-enquiry about reason for question*] [Ukuqonda ngesona sizathu sokubuza]
- Mnu.Maqanda: Kaloku sisi izinga lakho apha ezifundweni zakho alifani. (7)
Your performance is not the same in your studies.[*Providing reason for enquire*] [Ukunikezela ngesona sizathu sokubuza]
- Nokwanda: Njani mfundisi? (8)
How, Sir? [*Expression of reason enquiring*] [Ukubonakalisa ukufuna ukuqonda]
- Mnu. Maqanda: Kaloku apha esikolweni asivavanyi cala linye. (9)
Here at school we don't exam you in one dimension. [*Providing more reason for enquiring*] [Ukunikezela ngesona sizathu sokufuna ukuqonda]
- Nokwanda: Khawude uphume egusheni, Mfundisi. (10)
Say it clearly, Sir. [*Enquire about providing the reason*][*Ukuqonda ngokunikezela ngezizathu zokubuza*]

Mnu. Maqanda: Wena awenzi kakuhle kumsebenzi othethwayo kodwa kowunikiweyo wenza kakuhle, ingxaki iphi? (11)

You are doing well in your assignments but your oral performance is not good, what is the problem? [*Providing more reasons for enquiring*] [Ukunikezela ngezizathu eziphangaleleyo zokufuna ukuqonda]

Nokwanda: Zange ndiziqhelise umsebenzi othethwayo kwakudala ingxaki yam yileyo. (12)

I am not used to oral work that is my problem. [*Providing further specific detail of consequence of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngeenkukacha mayela nonobangela wengxaki]

Mnu Maqanda: Kufuneka uziqhelise ukuba zihambelane ngapha koko uza kubethakala. (13)

You must try to balance those otherwise you will have a problem. [*Expression of being concerned about the statement of the problem*] [Ukubonakalisa ukukhathala mayela nesona sizathu sikanobangela]

Nokwanda: Ndiyabulela ngecebiso lakho Mfundisi, ndiza kuzama ukwenza njalo (14)

Thanks for your advice Sir; I will try to do that. [*Expression of appreciation and reward of courage*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo nokuzimisela]

Mnu. Maqanda: Hamba kakuhle ke, sisi. (15)

Go well, my child. [*Expression of encouragement*] [Ukubonakalisa ukukhuthaza]

Nokwanda: Kulungile Mfundisi. (16)

Ok, Sir! [*Expression of thanks*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

The content of communication task 7 is representative of a predominantly information gap task. Some features of a problem-solution and a decision-making task are also evident in this task. The interactant relationship entails that both participants hold information and act as suppliers and requesters of information, although the lecturer-participant is the main requester of information. He requests information from the

student about the reasons for the imbalance between the marks of her written assessments and that of her oral (spoken) assessments. The student-participant supplies information about her unfamiliarity with spoken assessments. The lecturer provides information in stating that both written and spoken work are assessed. The lecturer furthermore supplies the student with the information that she should become familiar with doing spoken/oral assessments in order to do well at the university. The student-interactant in turn, supplies information that she will try to familiarise herself with oral assessments. The interactant requirement that obtains in this communication task display the features of an interactant relationship in which both interactants hold, request and supply information in terms of a two-way interactant requirement. The task has a convergent goal orientation in that both interactants attempt to establish mutual understanding of the problem and work toward a solution to the problem through mutual decision-making. The goal outcome option is singular. The task exemplifies the features of task types that have a conducive impact on the opportunities it provides for L2 learners for comprehension of input, feedback on production and interlanguage modification. The central language functions below are salient in the input and the language structures and vocabulary that realise these language functions need to be invoked in pedagogic activities for the practice of focus on form aspects.

Language Functions

1. *Ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki (1)*
Enquire about the cause problem
 Kwenzeka ntoni...
 What is ...
2. *Oyena nobangela wengxaki (2)*
The main cause of the problem
 Ngumsebenzi mninzi...
 There is lot of work...
3. *Ukubonakalisa ukuphika (4)*
Expression of denial
 Hayi...
 No...

4. *Ukubonakalisa isivumelwano (5)*
Expression of agreement
 Ndiyayiqaphela...
 I realize...
5. *Ukuqonda ngesona sizathu sokubuza (6)*
Enquiring about the main reason for asking
 Utsho kuba...
 Why are you...
6. *Ukunikezela ngesona sizathu sokufuna ukuqonda (9)*
 Providing the main reason of wanting to know.

 Kaloku apha...
Because here...
7. *Ukuqonda ngokunikezela ngezizathu zokubuza (10)*
 Enquiring about providing the reason for asking.

 Khawude...
 Speak...
8. *Ukunikezela ngenkcukankca mayela nonobangela wengxaki (12)*
Providing details about the cause of the problem.
 Zange ndiziqhelise...
 I am not used...
9. *Ukubonakalisa umbulelo nokuzimisela (14)*
Expression of appreciation and confidence
 Ndiza kuzama...
 I will try...
10. *Ukubonakalisa ukukhuthaza (15)*
Expression of encouragement.
 Hamba kakuhle!
 Go well

3.3.8 TASK 8

Injingalwazi kwezolwimi lwesiXhosa ibize umfundi onguMandla okhala ngokuba umsebenzi wakhe ebewunikiwe ukuba awufake awubonwa yiNjingalwazi kodwa uthi yena ebewufakile kwaye uqinisekile.

The Professor in the Department of Xhosa has called a student who in Mandla who claims that he has submitted his assignment but the Professor has no knowledge about that.

- Profesa:* Uthi kutheni ngam? (1)
 What are saying about me? [*Expression of confrontation*]
 [Ukubonakalisa ukungakhohiseki]
- Mandla:* Ndithi mfundisi ndakunika umsebenzi wam. (2)
 I am saying that Sir I did give you my work. [*Statement of the problem*]
 [Ukuchazwa kwengxaki]
- Profesa:* Kanti ithini imiqathango yokufakwa komsebenzi? (3)
 What are the regulations for summiting assignments? [*Enquire about the statement of the problem*] [Ukuqonda mayela ngonobangela wengxaki]
- Mandla:* Ubhala igama lakho phantsi kunobhala nomhla. (4)
 You write your name down and the date by the secretary. [*Providing further specific detail of consequence of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngezona nkucankca mayela nokuchazwa kwengxaki]
- Profesa:* Ngoku kwathini wena uze uthi uyinike mna? (5)
 Why are you saying that you gave it to me? [*Enquire about the lack of information*] [Ukuqonda mayela nokusilela]
- Mandla:* Ndakunika Prof yhani. (6)
 I really gave it to you Prof. [*Expression of accusation*] [Ukubonakalisa isityholo]
- Profesa:* Xa ungazange uwenze umsebenzi wakho sukusithela ngam, ngapha koko ndakukufaka enkathazweni, uyandiva? (7)
 If you didn't do your work, please don't accuse me otherwise I will put

you in trouble. Do you here me? [*Expression of anger and opinion about the problem*] [Ukubonakalisa ukukhathazeka kunye nokunikezela ngoluvo kunobangela wengxaki]

Mandla: Ewe ,Profesa. (8)
Yes, Prof! [*Expression of agreement*] [Ukubonakalisa isivumelwano]

Profesa: Khawuye kucinga kakuhle ukuba umsebenzi wakho wawuthini. (9)
Go back and think clearly what you have done with your work. [*Expression of anger*] [Ukubonakalisa umsindo]

Mandla: Ndiza kuwucinga, Profesa. (10)
I will think about it Prof! [*Expression of promise*] [Ukubonakalisa isithembiso]

Profesa: Kwixesha elizayo ubuye nento evuthiweyo. (11)
Next time you must come with a valid reason. [*Expression of warning about the problem*] [Ukubonakalisa isilumkiso mayela nonobangela]

Mandla: Ndakuzama njalo, Profesa. (12)
I will try my best, Prof! [*Expression of confidence in making a success*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuzithemba ekwenzeni impumelelo]

Profesa: Iyandimangalisa le nto yakho yokundinika into ze ndingayikhumbuli. (13)
It supprises me this thing of yours of giving something yet I don't remember it. [*Expression of feedback about the statement of problem*][Ukubonakalisa ukungoneliseki mayela nonobangela wengxaki]

Mandla: Andazi nam ke Prof ukuba kwenzeke njani na. (14)
I also don't know how this has happened Prof . [*Expression of denial*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuphika]

Profesa: Ndicela uthethe inyaniso, wandinika yhani lo msebenzi? (15)
Can you please tell me the truth, did you really give me this work? [*Expression of begging about the statement of the problem*] [Ukubonakalisa ukucenga mayela nesona sizathu sengxaki]

- Mandla: Zange ndiwufake Prof kuba ndandisokola ukuwugqiba. (16)
I didn't submit it because I was struggling to finish it. [*Providing further specific detail of consequence of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngezona nkukacha mayela nonobangela wengxaki]
- Profesa: Ngoku uthi wawunika mna, uxokelani? (17)
Now you said you gave it to me, why do you have to lie? [*Enquire about the lack of information based on the statement of problem*] [Ukuqonda mayela nokusilela ngokubhekiselele koyena nobangela wengxaki]
- Mandla: Bendisoyika ukungafumani manqaku. (18)
I was afraid of not getting marks. [*Expression of guilty conscious*] [Ukubonakalisa isazela]
- Profesa: Ngoku wade wawugqiba ke? (19)
Did you finish the work, now? [*Enquire more information about the statement of the problem*] [Ukuqonda ngakumbi mayela noyena nobangela wengxaki]
- Mandla: Ewe, Prof nanku apha ezincwadini zam. (20)
Yes, here is it in my books. [*Expression of feeling guilty*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuba nesazela]
- Profesa: Zisa apha ndiwubone. (21)
Give it to me so I can see. [*Expression of anger*] [Ukubonakalisa umsindo]
- Mandla: Nanku, Prof. (22)
Here is it, Prof. [*Expression of humbleness*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuzithoba]
- Profesa: Kwixesha elizayo uze uzame ukuziphatha njengomntu omdala, uyandiva? (23)
Next time you should behave like an adult, do you hear me? [*Expression of warning*] [Ukubonakalisa isilumkiso]

- Mandla: Ewe, Prof ndiyaxolisa. (24)
Yes, Prof I am sorry [*Expression of regretting*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuzisola]
- Profesa: Hamba ke uye kufunda iincwadi zakho. (25)
Go now and study your books. [*Expression of anger*] [Ukubonakalisa umsindo]
- Mandla: Ndiyabulela, Prof. (26)
I thank you, Prof! [*Expression of appreciation*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

The sample content of this communication task exemplifies a predominantly information gap task which entails a two-way information exchange between the interactants. The lecturer and student participant exchange information about the confusion surrounding the student's claim that he handed in his assignment to the lecturer, but the latter states that he has never received it. The interactants are both holders, requesters and suppliers of information, the lecturer being the main requester of information and the student participant the main supplier of information. The student untruthfully insists, at first, that he has submitted his assignment to the lecturer, and the latter denies that he has ever received it. Thus the task requirement entails a two-way information gap task. The task also exhibits a problem-solution feature in that the interactants in the two-way information gap task work toward solving the problem of the 'missing' assignment, which the student participant initially insists he gave to the lecturer. Thus the task initially has a divergent goal orientation in that the student participant's initial untruthful statement that he has submitted his assignment to the lecturer may result, from the student's perspective, in the lecturer asking him to resubmit his assignment. On the other hand the communication goal of the lecturer is aimed at probing the student about the way he did not follow the prescribed procedure for handing in the assignment for submitting his assignment to the secretary and writing the date on it, given the suspicion of the lecturer that the student is untruthful. Once the lecturer has established that the student was untruthful through the student's statement that he feared he would not get marks, the goal orientation is convergent in that both interactants work toward a common goal outcome option, which culminates in the lecturer's acceptance of the student's late assignment, reprimand of the lecturer, and an apology of the student. The two-way

interaction and problem-solution features of the task have a strong impact concerning opportunities for L2 learners for comprehension of input, feedback on production and interlanguage modification through comprehension checks, clarification requests and confirmation checks. The language functions identified below need to be incorporated in focus on form activities in pedagogic tasks for the purpose of facilitating interlanguage development through form-meaning connections.

Language Functions

1. *Ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki (1)*

Enquiring about the cause of the problem

Uthi kutheni...

What are you...

2. *Oyena nobangela wengxaki (2)*

The main cause of the problem

Ndithi ndakunika...

I said I gave...

3. *Ukuqonda mayela nokusilela (5)*

Enquire about the delay

Ngoku kwathini...

Now what happened

4. *Ukubonakalisa isityholo (6)*

Expression of accusation

Ndakunika yhani!

I did give it to you, really!

5. *Ukubonakalisa isivumelwano (8)*

Expression of agreement

Ewe!

Yes!

6. *Ukubonakalisa isithembiso (10)*

Expression of promise

Ndiza kuwucinga.

I will think about

7. *Ukubonakalisa ukuphika (14)*

Expression of denial

Andazi...

I don't know

8. *Ukubonakalisa isazela (18)*

Expression of guilt

Bendisoyika...

I was scared...

9. *Ukubonakalisa ukuzithoba (22)*

Expression of humility

Nanku apha.

Here it is

10. *Ukubonakalisa ukutyityimbisela umnwe (23)*

Expression of warning

Uyandiva?

Do you...

3.3.9 TASK 9

UBulelwa utshintshe izifundo zakhe ngaphandle kokudlana indlebe nomhlohli wakhe uNkosikazi Makhalima. Ngoku uNkosikazi Makhalima uyambuza ukuba kuqhubeke ntoni na kuba akasamboni eziklasini zakhe.

Bulelwa has changed her courses without consulting with her lecturer Mrs. Makhalima. Now Mrs Makhalima is asking her what happened because she no longer sees her in her classes.

*Nkskz. Makhalima: Awusatsho ntombi ukuba awusaqhubeki nezifundo zam. (1)
You have not mentioned that you are not continuing with my studies. [Enquiring about possible problem] [Ukuqonda mayela neyona ngxaki]*

- Bulelwa: Ingxaki yeyokuba kuthe kanti ezi zifundo zakho azihambelani nesakhono sam. (2)
The problem is that these courses don't link with my studies.
[*Statement of the problem*] [Oyena nobangela wengxaki]
- Nkskz. Makhalima: Loo nto kwakutheni ungandixeleli ekuqaleni? (3)
Why you didn't tell me that at the first ? [*Couter-enquiry about reason for question*] [Ukufuna ukuqonda mayela nesizathu sombuzo]
- Bulelwa: Impazamo yenzeka ngelaa xesha ndandikhethiswa izifundo zam. (4)
The mistake happened when I was selecting my modules.
[*Probing specific area of effect of problem*] [Ukuqonda mayela neyona ngxaki]
- Nkskz. Makhalima: Masithembe ke ukuba uya kuqhuba kakuhle kwizifundo zakho. (5)
Lets hope that you will do well in your studies.[*Expression of understanding*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuvisisana]
- Bulelwa: Ndizimisele ukwenza njalo, Mem. (6)
I am prepared to do that, Mam! [*Expression of confidence in making a success*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuzithemba ekuphuhliseni ikamva]
- Nkskz. Makhalima: Undincedile ngenkcazela ndiza kuyidlulisa nam le mpazamo xa sinentlanganiso yesiqheba. (7)
Thanks for the explanation, I will raise this when we have executive meetings. [*Expression of appreciation by taking into consideration the problem*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo ngokuthathela ingqalelo oyena nobangela]
- Bulelwa: Inganceda kakhulu loo nto nakwabanye abantwana abanale ngxaki. (8)
This can be of great help even to other students who have the same problem. [*Providing opinion for solving the problem*] [Ukunikezela ngoluvo ekusombululeni eyona ngxaki]

- Nkskz. Makhalima: Masithembe ukuba kwixesha elizayo ayisokuze yenzeke ke le mpazamo. (9)
Let's hope that next time this won't happen. [*Expression of hope based to solution of the problem*] [Ukubonakalisa ukuzithemba ngokumayela nesisombululo sengxaki]
- Bulelwa: Kunga kunganjalo, Mem. (10)
I hope it will be like that, Mam. [*Expression of expecting good result about the problem*] [Ukubonakalisa ukulindela okuhle mayela nonobangela wengxaki]
- Nkskz. Makhalima: Masibonane kwixesha elizayo. (11)
Let's see each other next time. [*Expression of appreciation*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]
- Bulelwa: Usale kakuhle Mem. (12)
Good bye Mam. [*Expression of thanks*] [Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

The sample content of communication task 9 is representative of a predominantly information gap task with some features of an opinion-giving task as well. The two interactants exchange information about the lecturer's enquiry for her absence from her courses. The task relationship entails that both interactants are holders, requesters and suppliers of information, although the lecturer is the main requester in probing the student about her reasons for no longer attending her courses. The student supplies to the lecturer the information which she holds, namely that the lecturer's courses do not relate well with her overall study field and that the mistake about the student's subject selection was made when she registered. The communication task therefore exhibits a two-way task requirement in terms of this information gap. To a lesser extent some features of problem-solving and decision-making are also evident in the task in that the lecturer's problem of the student's absence from class is solved by the student's reply. In addition, the lecturer supplies the information in response to the students' statement that she came to the decision that this information needs to be discussed at a staff meeting because it is helpful to avoid similar problems with other students in future. The goal orientation of the task is convergent in that both interactants work towards creating an understanding to the lecturer's request for information about the student's absence from class. Thus, one

goal outcome option is evidenced. The information gap and problem-solution features of the task enable it to have an impact on opportunities for learners for comprehension of input, feedback on production and confirmation checks. In order to encourage optimal L2 development through focus on form the vocabulary and sentence structures that realize the language functions below need to be made salient in the input in promoting comprehension through pedagogic activities.

Language Functions

1. *Ukufuna ukuqonda mayela nonobangela wengxaki (1)*
Enquiring about the main cause of the problem.

Awusatsho...
You don't tell
2. *Oyena nobangela wengxaki (2)*
The main cause of the problem
Kuthe kanti...
Seems as if...
3. *Ukubonakalisa ukuvisisana (5)*
Expression of agreement
Masithembe...
Let us ...
4. *Ukubonakalisa ukuzithemba ekuphuhliseni ikamva (6)*
Expression of confidence in achieving a career
Ndizimisele...
I am willing...
5. *Ukubonakalisa umbulelo ngokuthathela ingqalelo oyena nobangela (7)*
Expression of appreciation for taking into consideration the cause of the problem.
Undincedile...
You help...
6. *Ukunikezela ngoluvo ekusombululeni eyona ngxaki (8)*
Giving opinion on solving the main problem

Inganceda kakhulu...

It can be of great help...

7. *Ukubonakalisa ukuzithemba ngokumayela nesisombululo sengxaki (9)*

Expression of confidence based on the course of the problem

Masithembe...

Let us hope...

8. *Ukubonakalisa ukulindela okuhle mayela nonobangela wengxaki (10)*

Expressing good expectation regarding the cause of the problem

Kunga kunganjalo!

May be it be like that!

9. *Ukubonakalisa umbulelo (11)*

Expression of appreciation

Masibonane kwilixa...

Let us see each other ...

3.3.10 TASK 10

UNonqaba akabonakalisi mdla kwaphela ekufundeni ulwimi lwakhe isiXhosa, ngoku uGqirha Khanzi uyamcebisa ukuba aqhubeke ke naso kuba sibalulekile. Nonqaba doesn't show any interest in learning her first language which is Xhosa, now Doctor Khazi is advising her to continue with it because this subject is important .

Gqirha Khanzi: Ndiva kusithiwa awusafuni ukuqhubeka nesiXhosa, ingaba injalo na loo nto? (1)

I heard that you are no longer interested in Xhosa. Is it like that?
[Enquiring about possible problem] [Ukuqonda mayela neyona ngxaki]

Nonqaba: Ewe, Mfundisi injalo? (2)

Yes! Sir it is like that. [Expression of agreement] [Ukubonakalisa isivumelwano]

- Gqirha Khanzi: Ingaba ubethakala phi na wethu? (3)
Where are you struggling? [*Providing reason for asking*]
[Ukunikezela ngesona sizathu sokubuza]
- Nonqaba: IsiXhosa esi siyandinzimela, Mfundisi. (4)
Xhosa is difficult for me, Sir. [*Statement of the problem*]
[Ukuchaza ingxaki]
- Gqirha Khanzi: Njani kaloku ungumXhosa nje? (5)
How, because you are a Xhosa speaking person? [*Probing specific area of effect of problem*] [Ukuqonda mayela nowona nobangela wengxaki]
- Nonqaba: Siyasebenzisa kakhulu, Gqirha. (6)
It's got a lot of work, Doctor! [*Providing further specific detail of consequence of problem*] [Ukunikezela ngezona nkcukacha mayela nonobangela wengxaki]
- Gqirha Khanzi: Ndikucebise ke mna kule mihla isiXhosa esi siyafundwa nangabamhlophe kwaye amathuba omsebenzi kuso njengolwini aza kuba maninzi . (7)
Let me give you a advice, Xhosa is in demand these days even white people learn it and there will be many opportunities for it.
[*Providing some opinion about the statement of the problem*]
[Ukunikezela ngoluvo mayela nonobangela weyona ngxaki]
- Nonqaba: Bendingayazi loo nto ndiyazitshintsha izigqibo zam ndiyaqhubeka nesiXhosa sam. (8)
I didn't know that I am now changing my mind, I will continue with it. [*Expression of shock and changing of decision*]
[Ukubonakalisa umothuko nokutshintsha isigqibo]
- Gqirha Khanzi: Zamnandi ke ezo ndaba, Nkosazana. (9)
That's great news, Princess! [*Expression of appreciation*]
[Ukubonakalisa umbulelo]

The content of communication task 10 exhibits the features of a predominantly information gap task although some features of an opinion-giving task and a

decision-making task also are evident in the content. The two interactants, the lecturer and the student, are involved in a two-way information gap task concerning the lecturer's request for information as to why the student is not taking Xhosa as a subject any longer. The interactant relationship entails that both interactants are holders, suppliers and requesters of information, although the lecturer is mainly involved in requesting and supplying information. The task also exemplifies a decision-making feature in that the lecturer persuades the student to take Xhosa as a subject again.

The interaction requirement entails a two-way communication task in which both interactants act as suppliers of information. The lecturer states her opinion about the value of taking Xhosa as subject after which the student makes the decision to again continue with Xhosa. The task therefore has a convergent goal orientation, namely creating a mutual agreement about the student's decision for not taking Xhosa as a subject. The goal outcome option of the student changing her mind is achieved after the initial divergent outcome option of the task in terms of which each interactant holds her own opinion, namely that the student holds the opinion that Xhosa is not so important for her future career and the lecturer holds the opinion that the student makes a mistake. The predominant information gap features exhibited by the task result in it having an impact in providing opportunities for L2 learners for comprehension of input, getting feedback on production, and, as a consequence, enable interlanguage modification. The following language functions represent key communicative segments of the task and they need to be made salient in the input together with the vocabulary and grammatical structures that realize them, for the purpose of enhancing L2 development.

Language Functions

1. *Ukuqonda mayela noyena nobangela wengxaki (1)*
Enquiring about the main cause of the problem

Ndiva kusithiwa...
There is a rumour...
2. *Ukubonakalisa isivumelwano (2)*
Expression of agreement

Ewe!

Yes!

3. *Ukunikezela ngesona sizathu sokubuza (3)*
Providing the main reason for asking
 Ingaba...
 Is there...
4. *Oyena nobangela wengxaki (4)*
The main cause of the problem
 Siyandinzimela!
 Its difficult for me...
5. *Ukuqonda mayela nowona nobangela wengxaki (5)*
Enquiring about the main cause of the problem
 Njani?
 How?
6. *Ukunikezela ngezona nkcukacha mayela nonobangela wengxaki (6)*
Providing the main details about the cause of the problem.
 Siyasebenzisa...
 It has too much work...
7. *Ukunikezela ngoluvo mayela nonobangela weyona ngxaki (7)*
Giving the opinion about the cause of the problem
 Ndikucebise...?
 Can I advice...?
8. *Ukubonakalisa umothuko nokutshintsha izigqibo (8)*
Expression of shock and change of decision
 Bendingayazi loo nto...
 I didn't know that...
9. *Ukubonakalisa umbulelo (9)*
Expression of appreciation
 Zamnandi ke ezo ndaba.
 That is good news

3.4 SUMMARY

This chapter presented an investigation of the contents of lecturer-student communication tasks relating to general problems that individual students experience in their university studies for which they need to consult with a lecturer. This investigation was conducted within the framework of the task typology posited by Pica (1993) which distinguishes the five task types of (1) information gap, (2) jigsaw, (3) opinion exchange, (4) decision-making, and (5) problem-solving. It has been demonstrated from the analysis of the Xhosa sample content that these tasks are predominantly of the type information gap, the task type that is deemed to be most beneficial for second language learning for the reason that it optimally promotes comprehension of input, feedback on production, and interlanguage development due to opportunities that this task type provides for frequent comprehension checks, clarification requests and confirmation checks between L2 speakers and their interlocutors, whether a teacher or other L2 speakers. The Xhosa communication tasks were analysed in terms of the properties of interactant relationship (i.e. holder, requester, supplier of information), interactant requirement (i.e. one-way or two-way information exchange), divergent or convergent goal orientation, and goal outcome option. The various Xhosa tasks also exemplified to a lesser extent the features of opinion exchange, decision-making and problem-solving.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

This mini-thesis focused on the question of the typology of features characteristic of communication tasks in Xhosa which reflect lecturer-student communication relating to the problems of individual students in tertiary institutions. The theoretical framework assumed for the study is the task-based theory of second language learning and teaching (TBLL&T) which posits a direct inter-relationship between the three dimensions of second/additional language learning, i.e. (1) psycholinguistic and cognitive processes of second language learning, (2) task and syllabus design, as well as course design, and (3) classroom methodology, including interaction between teachers and learners, and among learners themselves in negotiating meaning. It was pointed out in especially chapters 1 and 2 how important it is, as is made evident in the Task-based research studies reviewed, to locate or situate research on task-design within the wider context of the other dimensions of the psycholinguistic and cognitive processes of second language learning on the one hand, and classroom interaction on the other, in order to relate, and determine the impact, of task design in relation to the other dimensions. Thus, although the focus in this study was on the design features of lecturer-student communication tasks in Xhosa, this analysis was situated in the wider context of L2 psycholinguistic and cognitive processes and classroom interaction, discussed in Chapter Two. The analyses presented in Chapter Three of the Xhosa lecturer-student communication tasks on individual student problems within the task typology of Pica (1993) was situated within these other dimensions, specifically within the psycholinguistic dimension of opportunities for second language learning of Xhosa.

Chapter Two discussed the key areas of second language (L2) learning that have received considerable attention in task-based research. In this regard the distinction between focused and unfocused tasks was prominent. Recall that an unfocused task is a task for which L2 learners can use any sentence structures. Focused tasks, on the other hand, include the use of specific sentence structures by learners through the salient use of such structures in the input by the teacher. Chapter Two also discussed the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge, and implicit and explicit teaching of grammatical forms in order to contextualize the nature of learning and teaching within which the task typology proposed by Pica (1993) is invoked for

the analyses of the Xhosa communication tasks in Chapter Three. The sentence structures that realize the range of language functions identified in Chapter Three for the communication tasks pose various questions that can be pursued in future research concerning second language acquisition and development of Xhosa.

Chapter Three analysed the Xhosa communication tasks with respect to the task typology postulated by Pica (1993) in terms of which five types of tasks are distinguished, namely (1) information gap, (2) opinion exchange, (3) jigsaw, (4) problem-solving and (5) decision-making tasks. The information gap task was especially prominent in all the tasks, a property which can be attributed to the fact that the lecturer-student communication tasks are usually transactional in nature, often negotiating some arrangement. In addition, the opinion-giving tasks, problem-solving and decision-making tasks occurred as well, but not as prominently as the information-gap tasks. This characteristic transactional nature of lecturer-student communication tasks in the context of individual consultations constitutes a very positive basis for Xhosa second language learning in a specific purpose Xhosa second language course for both lecturers and students in a university context. Such a specific purpose course can, of course, be supplemented by a wider social-interactive content for Xhosa. This study has aimed to make a contribution to the expertise required from second language researchers and practitioners involved in task and syllabus design for Xhosa adult second language learning. Expertise in task and syllabus design has received considerable attention in research.

Samuda (2005) explores the recent research on task design in relation to task as process and task performance. She argues that the emphasis in research has been prominent in that the nature of tasks that facilitate the process of second language learning and the properties of performance which are indicative of accelerated language learning. Samuda discusses the growing research interest in task design in relation to the facilitation of enhanced language learning. Her 's study particularly explores the differences in capabilities regarding task design between novice (or non-specialist) and specialist teachers with respect to the task design posited by Pica (1993). The task type design features postulated by Pica et al are invoked in Chapter Three of this study to analyze communication tasks in Xhosa that are characteristic of student-lecturer conversation in the university context. The task types proposed by Pica et al are argued to promote second language learning to a greater or lesser degree in terms of their inherent properties to facilitate interaction between task

participants and to accelerate interlanguage development of second language learners. The significance of this study relates to especially two aspects within the field of specific purpose syllabus design for Xhosa. First, it provides a principled basis from the perspective of Task theory on the crucial importance of understanding the design features of tasks for the purposes of task-based syllabus design. Second, it provides the basis for determining the issues as regard the second language acquisition and development of Xhosa by learners in the classroom when implementing such a task-based syllabus. This analysis of communication tasks for the purpose of task and syllabus design can also be useful for future research and practice of syllabus design for either general purpose or specific purpose courses for Xhosa and other African languages. Research on task design therefore constitutes a crucial facet in accomplishing a principled understanding of how task features contribute to enhancing and optimizing second language development. This kind of research can therefore potentially make a significant contribution to expertise on task design for Xhosa, in order to develop syllabus, courses and materials for the optimal learning and teaching of Xhosa, both for younger learners at school and for adult second language learners of Xhosa in vocations who are in need of specific purpose Xhosa.

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