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**TASK-BASED LEARNING METHOD (TBL) IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF
ENGLISH-SPEAKING SKILLS**

**Research project prior to obtaining the title of Master in English Pedagogy
as a Foreign Language**

Line of research:

Innovative pedagogies, teaching methods

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this achievement to my mother, my wife, and my children. They have been the main reason to overcome this challenge, it would not be possible without their love, patience, and effort. Thanks for being part of and seeing my dreams come true, which are also their dreams.

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RESUMEN

Cada día el idioma inglés se convierte en una herramienta importante para aumentar las oportunidades humanas en el desarrollo social, profesional y personal. Este estudio está enfocado en determinar la efectividad del Método de Aprendizaje Basado en Tareas en el desarrollo de la habilidad de hablar inglés en los estudiantes de segundo nivel de Bachillerato en la Unidad Educativa “Cicalpa”. Para llevar a cabo este estudio, se implementó un diseño cuasiexperimental, con lo cual se establece una relación de causa y efecto entre la variable independiente: aprendizaje basado en tareas, y la variable dependiente, habilidades para hablar en estudiantes del idioma inglés. Para obtener la información sobre el progreso de los estudiantes y procesarla para obtener los de resultados, se estableció las siguientes etapas: pretest, etapa de intervención, y post test. Además, se utilizó una prueba de muestra verificada de la página en línea de Cambridge que comprendía una modelo de la prueba Key English Test (KET), así como las rúbricas y parámetros para evaluar las habilidades de hablar inglés. Los hallazgos revelan que los aspectos cualitativos y cuantitativos de las habilidades del habla en los estudiantes del idioma inglés mejoraron al comparar los resultados previos y posteriores a la prueba. El método de aprendizaje basado en tareas está estrechamente relacionado con el desarrollo y el apoyo de las habilidades de habla inglesa de los estudiantes, ya que sus habilidades y sub-habilidades han mejorado significativamente.

Palabras clave: actividades comunicativas, ciclo de la tarea, tareas

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, one of the main concerns of English teachers is to help students learn to communicate in the English language, which is the language for global communication. Every day the English language becomes an important tool to increase human opportunities in social, professional, and personal development. This study is focused on determining the effectiveness of the Task-Based Learning Method in developing English speaking skills in second-level high school students at the "Cicalpa" Educational Unit. To carry out this study, a quasi- experimental design was implemented, establishing a cause-and-effect relationship between the independent variable: task-based learning, and the dependent variable, speaking skills in English language students. The following stages were found to obtain the information on the student's progress and process it to get the results: pretest, intervention stage, and posttest. In addition, a verified sample test from the Cambridge online page comprising a model of the Key English Test (KET) and the rubrics and parameters for assessing English speaking skills were used. The findings reveal that qualitative and quantitative aspects of speaking skills in English language learners improved when comparing pre and post-test results. The task-based learning method is closely related to developing and supporting students' English speaking skills, as their abilities and sub- skills have significantly improved

Keywords: communicative activities, tasks, task cycle.

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INTRODUCTION

The theoretical background of the topic

Globalization inquires us to be updated and develop several skills to become competent in terms of productivity. One of those skills is the domain of English language as a tool for business, education, traveling, and technological issues, thus for Nishanthi (2018), English is the greatest common language spoken universally. That is why in many countries, people are taught and encouraged to learn it as a second or foreign language.

Therefore, learning English has become one of the challenges for governments around the world. Paredes et al. (2018), Ecuador has given important steps to improve the levels of domain of English. However, the government efforts have fallen. According to EF EPI 2020 – EF English Proficiency Index – Ecuador, n.d. (2020), Ecuador has reached the last position with a qualification of a very low level. It means that our students are not able to use English for communication in real life, after being taught English for twelve or more years.

The research problem

In every single English Language classroom, one of the main goals is to develop the communicative competence of students. Córdoba Zúñiga (2016) affirms that new trends in language teaching and learning try to promote communicative competence instead of mastering grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, or listening in isolation. This could seem something difficult just with intentional instruction from the teacher, more difficult when intentional instruction has limits for using language, instead, Ellis, Rod; Skehan, Peter; Li, Shaofenf; Shintani, Natsuko; Lambert (2020), emphasizes that Task-Based Learning emphasizes the importance of engaging learners' natural abilities for acquiring language incidentally. Besides, "it can promote students to actively participate in language exchange activities, inspire imagination and creative thinking, and help students to play a role in the subject" (Xiaoyun, 2019, p 47).

The statement of the problem

Does Task-Based Learning help students to develop English speaking skills?

The hypothesis, idea to defend or scientific question

Task Based Learning DOES help to develop students Speaking skills.

General objective

- To determine the effectiveness of the Task-Based Learning to develop the speaking skills.

Specific Objectives

1. To set up the scientific and theoretical bases which are references of the use of Task-Based Learning.
2. To determine the students' speaking skills level by using an international exam.
3. To identify the appropriate techniques that contribute to the development of the speaking skills using Task Based Learning.
4. To create a booklet of activities that fosters students speaking skills using Task-Based Learning.

Methodology

The current study is a mixed-method research design that employs both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in a single investigation. It required the application of a quasi-experimental design in order to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between the dependent variable: Speaking Skills Development in English Language Learners through the independent variable: Task-Based Learning.

Due to the quasi-experimental nature of the research, the students that were part of the study were assigned to one group called the experimental group, based on non-random criteria.

The evidence collected corresponded to a combination of mixed-methods (quantitative and qualitative research), according to the topic and objectives set for the research. Quantitative data was collected through the application of a pretest to the experimental group at the beginning of the study, and a post-test after the implementation of the different types of tasks. The implemented tasks were, listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem-solving, sharing experiences, and creative tasks. These tasks were planned and implemented through the lesson plans in the implementation stage of this study. Contrastingly, qualitative data was gathered through an observation sheet for collecting students' progress in TBL and activities implemented in the experimental group during the eight-week execution phase. The observation sheet contained five statements about Task-Based Learning and activities that help to develop English speaking skills.

Justification

These days the English language has become one of the most spoken languages around the world. It is the fact by which in many countries it has been implemented into the curriculums as a mandatory subject to be learned by students. Since then, language teaching has not been as easy as it seems. In the process, it has found some inconveniences. The problems are related to the main conditions that can let learning happen. As a solution, to increase the effectiveness of learning English, Task-Based Learning emerges as an alternative that meets exposure, use, and motivation, which are the essential conditions for learning English language.

Thousands of Ecuadorian students are currently completing their last academic years in high schools. They have been studying English as a second language for five, six, or even more years but they are unable to communicate in English. Many of them failed to acquire English, and they believe it will cause problems in their plans to attend university and receive a degree.

This study is relevant because at Unidad Educativa "Cicalpa" there is not a similar study, even more, there is not any study regardless of English language teaching that suggests some innovative practice that helps students to learn better English as a second language.

This study benefited students in the second level of Baccalaureate at Unidad Educativa "Cicalpa" since it helped learners in developing speaking skills and using English to achieve communicative purposes.

Based on these arguments, the current effort is primarily focused on implementing Task-Based Learning Method to develop speaking skills in English language learners.

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Research Background

The following studies serve as the foundation for this research since they are comparable to the factors provided in this study.

Naranjo (2015), in her study, whose title is “The use of Task-Based Learning in the speaking development and oral production of the English language in students of Segundo de Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Mayor Ambato, Ambato city, Tungurahua province claims that the main finding was that the use of the Task-Based Learning was limited, and teachers did not know how to apply tasks appropriately to enhance their students’ speaking skill inside the language classroom.

Vasconez (2015) in her project, titled “Task - Based Language Learning: Using Debates to Enhance Speaking Abilities of Intermediate High School Students in the EFL Classroom” declares the main finding was that the students’ speaking skills were enhanced to an adequate extent by using Debates.

Uzhca (2015), in his project, titled “Blended Learning: Video - Conferencing To Support The Development Of The Speaking Skill Through Task - Based Learning Activities” claims that the main finding was that video-conferencing sessions with TBL activities had a positive effect on the study participants’ speaking skill.

Daga (2016) in the project labeled “The Task- Based Learning method in the improvement of students English speaking skill in 3er año de Bachillerato class “A” at Unidad Educativa Tomas B. Oleas, parish of Cajabamba, province of Chimborazo, during the academic year 2014 – 2015” affirms the main result was that the Task-Based Learning Method improved the students English speaking skill in the 20% from the first time the author used it in the class.

1.2. Theoretical Support

Independent variable: Task-Based Learning

Nowadays, humanity lives in one of the greatest revolutions in history. This revolution affects some fields like communication, transportation, business, and obviously, education. Globalization is the name that experts gave to this new era in which humans live. Because of globalization, the necessity of learning a new language has grown. In this way, the English language has become the language of business. Lin & Chien (2010) maintains that “teaching English as a common communication tool has become much more important than two decades ago” (p.1). The English language has increased its importance day after day thanks to globalization.

Since the English language is one of the most spoken languages around the world, many countries have included the English language in their national curriculum and set it as mandatory for some levels of education. This is the case of Ecuador which had to cross a long path to establishing as a mandatory subject that finally, Udín & Davis (2002), argues that “EFL would be officially implemented as a compulsory subject in all Ecuadorian public primary schools in September 2016 in the Sierra and Amazon regions and in 2017 in the coastal region”. Finally, the Ecuadorian government is interested in implementing the English language in all levels of education, as a subject that contributes to the exit profile of students.

The implementation of English as mandatory in the curriculum is supposed to be a challenge for all teachers involved in language teaching. Certainly, teachers did their best effort by applying what they believed works better to learn a new language. They have had many assumptions about what approach, method and technique facilitates best the learning of English as a second language and can improve the results that, EF EPI 2020 - EF English Proficiency Index, s. f., (2020) has published in which Ecuador occupies the last position in the ranking of countries and regions by English skills. These results are evidence of old-fashioned practice and the use of inappropriate methods and techniques for teaching English in Ecuador. Besides,

the lack of motivation for students since they cannot communicate in English when they finish high school.

Anyone cannot deny the importance and the advantages that learning English as a second language has. The practice of teaching the English language appropriately and the environment where students can have the opportunity to use and learn the English language incidentally rather than intentionally impact positively and raise student's motivation. These conditions are offered by Task-Based Learning as a method for overcoming the difficulties that teaching English as a second language has.

Overview

The word task has increased its popularity among the researchers of Second Language Acquisition, and it has gained popularity as a response to traditionalist methods used in teaching a second language. As with all communicative methods, Task-Based Learning is focused on prioritizing real communication rather than grammar exercises or drills.

One of the principles of Task-Based Learning is, Language is a meaning system. In this way, students learn a new system to exchange and understand the meaning. The school intends for students to learn this new system, they need tasks that motivate them to achieve purposes with language using any resource they have at hand, linguistic or nonlinguistic. This is what Task-Based Learning provides.

Then, the theory of Magnan, Krashen, & Terrell, (1984) states that exposure to the target language in use is important. In order students can acquire a new language system they need to be exposed to that language system. In that way, students can learn the different kinds of language that they could find in real life. When students are exposed to the use of language, they learn different choices and resources to create meaning and communicate using the new system they are learning. Fortunately, Task-Based Learning helps students with a lot of exposure before students can develop the task.

Even though many people have learned a new language without having grammar lessons, there is some evidence that grammar develops confidence in learners now using that new language and knowing the social meaning of those words used for expressing their ideas. Task-Based Learning follows a process that caters to communication and grammar points, as well. This process is called the cycle of the Task.

Finally, Task-Based Learning seems to meet the necessary conditions for teaching a new language. The focus of this method helps students to develop their language ability incidentally like when students are acquiring their mother tongue.

Conditions for language learning

There are several conditions that many authors have claimed as necessary, some of these conditions are different but some are similar. Willis (1996), establishes the conditions under which effective language learning takes place. There are four conditions for language learning, three of them are considered essential and one is needed. The necessary conditions include exposure, use, and motivation, while instruction is desirable. These three conditions considered essential must be met in the classroom in the way that learning can take place. Even though one is considered not essential, it is important to include it as much as possible in the classroom because instruction guides students in the correct use of language.

Exposure is one of the main conditions for language learning, it has to do with exposing students to the target language in use. Thus, students can take advantage of that exposure to learn new phrases or chunks that let them discover, create, negotiate meaning, and communicate in a particular context. This exposure could be listening or reading exercises and it must be according to the level of students.

The extent and difficulty of the exposure used as input for the students are directly related to the knowledge they have. In other words, it is more important the quality of exposure than the quantity. Some topics are more familiar than others. These topics promote students' confidence and make them feel comfortable when they

listen or read. Besides, it gives students a chance to learn from, and incorporate new phrases or words in their repertoire, and, much better if they use their repertoire to participate in the conversation.

Students should be exposed to the large variety of language they can face outside of the classroom since they need to understand and use the language used in real life, so students need to be exposed to different experiences of language, for example, language at work, language for business, language for enjoyment, language for learning other subjects, this exposure results rich and help students become fluent in a formal and informal context.

The use of language is the second condition for language learning. Output is the next step, once students have received input, learners need opportunities to use the language they listened to or read for real purposes. Output can benefit from input, especially if students know they must use the target language by themselves for achieving purposes after input. They pay attention to input, process, and analyze the information they receive so the output can be understood by others.

Besides, when students are using the target language for real purposes, they develop some necessary discourse skills that let them communicate their ideas and control the information they receive when communication happens. Willis, (1996) proposed the following discourse skills: “opening, and closing a conversation, interacting and turn-taking, organizing discourse in advance, and reaching agreement and shifting the topic” (p.13).

Finally, when students are encouraged to use the target language there are more possibilities, they end up acquiring it. The tasks help students acquire the target language if they are meaningful and if it challenges students to communicate.

The third essential condition for language learning has to do with motivation. It is hard to think how things would be done without motivation. Most of the successful things created in our world have in common a strong degree of motivation. It is defined pedagogically by Dörnyei (1998) who states, “Motivation provides the

primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved in L2 acquisition presuppose motivation to some extent" (p. 117). It is evident in this comment that motivation is one of the key elements for the successful learning of a second language. It is the desire to look for opportunities or fix conditions that let the use of the second language for communication.

If students feel they can do things with language, then, they are going to be interested in taking advantage of every opportunity they have. The teacher should keep students' motivation high as much as possible, so his role has to do with planning lessons where the purpose of the lesson can be achievable, and students can interact naturally.

Exposure, use of language, and motivation are the conditions that let English language learners succeed in learning a second language. Teachers must try to provide and create an atmosphere where the conditions can meet and benefit students of the second language. One or two of them without the others will not be acceptable and do not provide the same efficiency as conditions for learning a second language.

Finally, the desirable condition for language learning a second language is instruction. Even though instruction is not considered an essential factor for learning a second language, it plays an important role in learning it. Students need to understand how language works, and to be conscious of some patterns that can happen naturally when they speak or write. Instruction can guide students by providing them guidance on the correct use of words and phrases. Besides, every language has specific features that cause problems. These specific features need to be learned under instruction to avoid possible misuse of words or phrases, or the use of them in an inappropriate context. That is what instruction provides to the English learning process.

Task-Based Learning

By the necessity of learning English as a second language, many methods, approaches, techniques, activities have been created to enhance the learning of English as a second language. Then, Task-Based Language emerges as a method to fulfill the main conditions where learning happens.

There are many assumptions about the definition of Task-Based Learning. Before continuing, it is important to define, in the sense of the educational field, what is a target task? and what is a pedagogical task? A target task is known as every activity in which students use the English language outside of the classroom, rather a pedagogical task refers to the activities in which students use the English language inside of the classroom. From now, when I use the word task, I am referring to the second one, pedagogical task.

The word “task” can have some connotations, but when it is used for educational purposes. Willis, (1996) states that “Tasks are always activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome” (p.23). Evidentially, this author refers to pedagogical tasks and the activities that are supposed to be used inside of the classroom. Besides, the author believes that not only activities must use the target language, but rather almost every fact inside the classroom can also be considered an opportunity to use the English language.

Then, other definitions have much in common, in the sense that a task is a goal-oriented activity where people do things throughout the use of target language. According to Long & Richards, (2006). “A task is an activity in which a person engages in order to attain an objective, and in which necessitates the use of language” (p.15). After this definition, a task is a process where people interact with one each other in real situations and can achieve the outcome they have in mind. Finally, a definition that covers the two previous and well detailed is provided by Nunan (2004), in which he mentions:

- Task is a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form.

Then, the author defines pedagogical task considering the definitions mentioned before. A task in Task-Based Learning Method is an activity inside the classroom where students use the target language in the context of the real world. Besides, the main purpose is to communicate or exchange information with other language users using whatever linguistic resources they have at hand. The pedagogical task gives students a chance to increase their confidence since we know that communication does not mean just the use of well-structured sentences; rather it can use gestures, fixed patterns, body movements, expressions, and others.

Finally, pedagogical tasks can be considered as an opportunity to increase students' confidence and develop their basic skills. By implementing tasks inside the classroom students can feel free to use whatever language they want, instead of isolated patterns that do not let them express themselves in their own words. When students find tasks that motivate and empower them, that is the appropriate environment where students start to learn a new language incidentally.

Task Types

Due to the complexity of the task, different authors have different concepts about the typology. Prabhu et al., n.d. (1988) propose different kind of tasks. They are information gap activity, reasoning gap activity, and opinion-gap activity.

Information gap activity is concerned with exchanging information from one person to another. An example of this kind of activity is developed by a pair of students. Every student possesses a piece of the complete information, both must exchange his / her information so they can complete the task.

Reasoning gap activity has to do with producing new information based on what students received as input; this new information is produced after a process of reasoning, inferencing, and deduction. The information that students received relates to the new information because of the students' reasoning process. For example, students can receive a list of jobs. Then, students classify that list of jobs according to their criteria, or under the conditions that the teacher has set.

Opinion Gap Activity is the third type, this activity is concerned with the students' criteria. This kind of activity gives students a chance to express themselves or express their opinion on a given topic or situation. For example, students are asked to finish a story or give his/her opinion about an issue.

Closed and open tasks

According to Willis, (1996) this is the classification of tasks, and they are concerned with the purpose of the activities that students develop in the classroom. The first, closed tasks are those that are well structured, they have concrete steps or instructions to follow since they have specific goals, for example, the teacher gives students a pair of pictures. He asks students to find the differences, the teacher establishes the conditions, the time, the objective, and generally there is just one answer for this activity.

On the other hand, open tasks are related to less structured activities, these tasks give students the freedom to accomplish the activity that the teacher proposes. They do not have established goals since students can develop the activities without specific instructions, for example, the teachers can ask students to share memories from the last vacation.

Varieties of Tasks

Varieties refer to the kind of activities oriented to develop English speaking and listening skills under the Task-Based Learning Method. Every task has an outcome, and they can be used with different topics and for different purposes. The teacher

can set up the difficulty, extension, and purpose according to the lesson and the students' ability.

In her book, Willis, (1996) proposes six varieties of tasks. These are, “listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem-solving, sharing personal experiences, and creative tasks” (p.26).

- **Listing**

It refers to creating a list of items that students build based on a process that they have followed. This kind of task can produce a lot of talking since students want to explain their points of view.

This task starts with brainstorming. Then, it is followed by fact-finding where students find things by supporting each other or different materials.

1. **Ordering and Sorting.** Ordering and sorting have to do with sequencing facts or inventions in chronological order. These events must be ranked according to the criteria previously defined. Then, the events can be categorized into different groups, and finally, they can be classified into different categories.
2. **Comparing.** Comparing is concerned with comparing information from similar materials, but different sources. Generally, it is focused on finding similarities and differences.
3. **Problem-Solving.** Problem-solving is based on looking for a solution to a specific problem. This task can seem a little difficult for beginners because it requires the use of reasoning skills. However, this can be adapted according to the purpose of the class.
4. **Sharing Experiences.** Sharing personal experiences is a kind of open task where students are free to talk. Students can share their experiences and give their points of view about facts.

- 5. Creative Tasks.** Creative tasks are related to the combination of the previous task explained. They are well structured and demand students' reasoning skills.

Teachers Roles

The role that teachers must play in Task-Based Learning is different from the role that teachers play with traditional methods. Teachers and students play different roles. But what does role mean in Task-Based Learning? Nunan, (2004) states that "Role refers to the part that learners and teachers are expected to play in carrying out learning tasks as well as the social and interpersonal relationships between the participants" (p. 64). Even though Task-Based Learning is a student-centered method, the role of the teacher is essential in the students' language development. The role of the teacher is pretty important in every step of the lesson because the teacher designs tasks that allow students to communicate for communicative purposes.

In Task-Based Learning, according to Van der Branden (2006), there are two main roles that a teacher must develop in a lesson. The teachers must act as a motivator and, an organizer of activities that let students learn a second language.

The teacher as a motivator is concerned with inviting students to spend their time and effort in developing or performing task activities. Besides, the teacher as a motivator must create enjoyment in learning a new language, which means, keeping students motivated during the different stages of the lesson.

Then, the second role of the teacher can be regarded as organizing the task activities that students have to perform. Task-Based Learning lessons have different steps, in every step, there are different activities. The teacher must plan these activities for every step of the lesson efficiently. In addition, this role is concerned with providing students with the necessary materials, instructions, rules, and guides for accomplishing the task.

Learners Roles

The roles that learners must assume in Task-Based Learning are like the roles of Communicative Language Teaching. So, Richards & Rodgers (2014), propose the primary roles that students must perform in Task-Based Language, group participant, monitor, and risk-taker.

Most of the tasks must be developed in pairs and groups. Students must demonstrate high compromise to work with their pairs or groups, participate actively in the development of the task by giving support to each other, correcting themselves, and pursuing the use of language as much as possible.

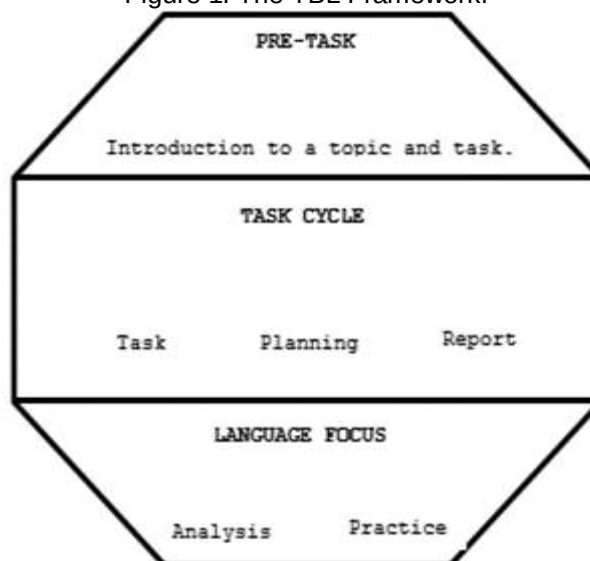
Task-Based Learning tasks are not used just as activities to benefit themselves instead, they are used as means to use language and learn it, or to replicate real-world tasks inside the classroom. Then, students must be aware of how language works, and monitor the activities that the teacher designed, so students can understand how to use language for communication.

When students are learning a new language, one of the most crucial roles they must play is the risk-taker. They should use language whenever possible or construct their linguistic resource to facilitate communication.

The Components of Task-Based Learning

The fundamental procedures of a Task-Based Learning lesson are highlighted in this section. Task-Based Learning lessons are not concerned with doing a task, then another, and still another, and so on. If that is the case in a lesson, students will get bored easily and they learn anything of a second language. Instead, three components are part of a larger framework. Thus, the task is just a part of this process. Willis, (1996) proposes the following methodology to develop a lesson. As we can see in figure 1, Task-Based Learning is a large procedure.

Figure 1. The TBL Framework.



This figure was adapted from A Framework for Task-Based Learning (p. 52) by J. Willis, 1996, Palatino, Addison Wesley Longman Limited, Copyright 1996 by Addison Wesley Longman Limited.

In figure 1, we can appreciate the three stages of Task-Based Learning and the connection they have. This is the cycle that a lesson must follow, but sometimes this procedure may become flexible due to the students' level or needs.

Pre-Task

The teacher presents and describes the topic, utilizes exercises to assist students to recall important terms and phrases, ensures that students comprehend the instructions to complete the assignment, or can play a recording of other students completing a task similarly in this phase. They take notes of crucial phrases and terms. Generally, the teacher gives them a few minutes to work out on students' strengths and weaknesses for being ready for the task cycle.

Task Cycle

Three elements define this task cycle. They are Task, Planning, and Report.

Task. This stage provides the opportunity to recreate the previously mentioned conditions. Exposure, use of language, and motivation provide a suitable atmosphere in which students can use any language they can handle.

Students work in pairs or small groups; the activity might be concerned with reading or listening to the material, while the teacher is monitoring and stimulating students to develop the activity.

Planning is the central part of the task cycle, this stage deals with helping students to plan their reports and providing clear examples that they can use for improving their learning. During this stage, as teachers, it is necessary to set some rules when students are planning their report, for instance, who is going to report the task, what time students have for doing the task, the purpose of the report, what time students should spend at the report stage, the materials they can use for preparing the report, and the roles they are going to play in every group. When these rules are clear, students are going to know and focus better on what they must do in the planning stage.

Report. On this stage, students report to their partners on how they completed their task, what they discovered or concluded based on the work they did. The teacher acts as a motivator, providing students' feedback, highlighting positive aspects of the students' report, and encouraging students to use all linguistic resources they learned in the previous stages to be understood by the rest of the class.

Language Focus

A language-centered stage enhances learning opportunities. The input provides several learning possibilities. When students concentrate on language, they can work independently and can mine an input text for anything that grabs their interest. The ability to master language forms gives students advantages now they are learning or using that new language. Focus on form gives students communicative competence and lets them communicate effectively.

A competent person according to Littlewood (1981), meets the following skills:

- Students must achieve the highest possible level of language proficiency. It means, they must have proficiency in manipulating the language system so

that they can utilize it spontaneously and flexibly to deliver or communicate their message.

- Students must differentiate between the prompts they have learned as part of their language competence and the communication functions they fulfill. In other words, everything learned as pieces of a linguistic system must also be comprehended and used as part of a communication system.
- Students must acquire language abilities and techniques in order to transmit meaning as effectively as possible in real-world circumstances. He must learn to utilize peoples' reaction to measure his level of success and, if required, use new words to correct the failure.

The social importance of linguistic forms must be understood by students. Many students may interpret this as the capacity to use commonly accepted forms while avoiding offensive words rather than the ability to adapt their speech to various social circumstances.

Finally, in Task-Based Learning, analysis and practice are important steps. These final steps give students confidence by clarifying their doubts about the forms, usage, connotations, context, and others. Besides, at this stage, students can practice new forms after the teacher's explanation and clarification.

Dependent variable: Speaking Skills Development

These days, an increasing number of people are spending time to learning English as a second language. Furthermore, many countries incorporate English into their school curricula, and children are learning English at a younger and younger age. English is known as a global language, then, there is a need to use it by people around the world. People cannot attain their ambitions, objectives, and goals unless they communicate effectively with other people from different regions, states, countries even, and continents.

There are many benefits that the English language has for its speakers, these boundaries have established the English language as the main tool for

communication these days. Communication mostly requires speech, here emerges the importance of speaking skills. Ainslie (2008), states: "Without speech, a language is reduced to a mere script. The use of language is an activity which takes place within the confines of our community" (p. 3). As humans, we use language every moment in different situations. To understand and be understood by others, we must master speaking skills, and that is why they are very important when we use English as a second language to communicate.

Definition of Speaking in English Language Teaching

Speaking seems to be the most important skill in English Second Language. For Srinivas Rao (2019)," the ability to speak is the most critical skill to develop when studying a foreign or second language. Speaking is regarded as the most crucial of the four main language abilities in learning a foreign or second language" (p.8).

English speaking is the skill that lets us communicate with others. In doing so, it is considered a productive skill. The development of this skill involves the development of other sub-skills that have to do with elements of pronunciation. Bailey & Nunan (2019), state that "Speaking consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning" (p. 2). They refer to speaking as the process of producing sounds that have a message that others can understand.

I define speaking as the ability of humans to produce sounds and interact using them, by interacting I mean, producing, receiving, and understanding the messages of those sounds, this process is interactive and unpredictable so speaking involves developing students' communicative competence.

Elements of speaking skill

Speaking is not a skill that stands by itself, it requires other components that contribute to students' communicative competence. The following are the elements of speaking skills, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

- **Fluency**

It refers to how comfortable and confident you are when speaking English. Generally, it is rated if you can talk for some time without hesitation or struggling, then, if you could, you have high fluency. However, Bahrani (2012), suggests that speed is not a factor that determines you are fluent, even proficient speakers need to make pauses at speaking to be understood. What matters is to place the pauses at the correct time, so the message is clear.

Nation & Newton (2009), affirms that fluency is characterized by three elements, the absence of unfilled pauses or sounds like um, ah, er, an easy and understandable task in communication, and a high degree of performance. These are the main components to develop fluency in a second language learner.

- **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary has to do with the knowledge of the words, the knowledge of the appropriate words used to transmit or receive messages. Thornbury (2005), distinguishes two types of vocabulary, productive vocabulary, and receptive vocabulary. The first is related to the words that students use to communicate ideas. The second one is about the words they recognize while reading or listening. Thus, Vocabulary is necessary for successful second language usage since we will be unable to employ any structure or function, we already learned for communicative purposes if we do not have a large vocabulary. So, students must learn the power of words.

- **Grammar**

Students need to understand the function that words can perform in the English language, so they can arrange sentences orally or written. As learners of a second language, grammar becomes the skeleton that supports the meaning that students want to transmit. Vannak (2013), affirms that “Grammar is very important because it is the system that guides us to using correct sentence structures so as to make

our meanings through words understandable” (p. 1). Grammar gives students the confidence to use language written or orally without hesitation.

- **Pronunciation**

Pronunciation refers to the ability to produce English sounds correctly. Besides, the production of segmental and suprasegmental features. Goh & Burns (2012), affirms that “These are important enabling skills for speech production because the ability to produce words and phrases clearly can directly influence the articulation process of speaking” (p. 60). Pronunciation is important in the sense of developing communicative competence.

The features that characterize pronunciation are word stress, sentence stress, and linking. The first refers to the emphasis placed on certain syllables in a word. Sentence stress has to do with putting focus on specific words in a phrase. Linking is related to connecting specific words. Finally, intonation has to do with the rising and falling tone of the voice when we speak.

Teaching English speaking task

Speaking tasks refer to the activities where students have the chance to practice their speaking, improve it, and gain fluency.

Speaking tasks are not all the same, some of them require great effort and some less effort to achieve. The following three task types are presented by Burns (2012), “These are communicative gap tasks, discussion tasks, monologic tasks” (p. 202). Most of the time, these tasks require students to work in pairs or groups so they can establish conversations and achieve their purposes. The difficulty of these can vary according to the purpose of the task.

The communicative gap tasks and discussion tasks are concerned with interpersonal interaction. Interpersonal interaction refers to the pursuit of cooperation from others to complete a task or to test the opinion of others.

Consequently, students develop and practice many communicative skills and strategies in hope they can accomplish their purpose.

On the other hand, monologic tasks are concerned with students' discourse production, which means, preparing a report, talking to an audience, and preparing him/herself for sharing information with the listeners.

Communication gap tasks

Everyday people find gaps when interacting with others, that is the reason for communication. Everybody is different and the criteria about facts and things are diverse, to understand those opinions are important to close the gaps. In the classroom, teachers should use activities that involve communication gaps, information gaps, and context gaps.

Information gap activities are tasks where students have different parts of information and one another must share that information so they can fill the missing spaces to complete the task. Arung (2015), affirms that "Information gap activity is the way of encouraging speaking ability" (p. 5). It is the opportunity for students to try to convey meaning and use whatever linguistic resource they have at hand since students must exchange information. Moreover, Goh & Burns (2012), add "we can use them to get learners to practice many important speech function skills, such as: describing, comparing, contrasting, listing, summarizing, explaining, and clarifying meaning" (p. 203).

In an information gap activity, students must follow this process:

1. students must understand the given information,
2. the teacher explains to students the kind of information they need to collect,
3. students communicate the processed information to their pairs,
4. students make questions to clarify something,
5. students complete or fill in the gap.

In the context gap activities, students are divided into pairs or groups. Generally, the information they receive is regarding pictures or a set of words. Based on the information that students receive, they must create the context. It means students look for ways to construct new content and communicate or share it with listeners. When students work with context gaps activities, they feel they can practice any item learned or experiment with new items or ideas to express meaning. The main benefit of this kind of task is the flexibility since students are not required to practice any specific item.

The students are focused on constructing a coherent piece of writing or precise description based on the pieces of information they receive at the beginning, for example, writing a story from pictures, describing a picture, writing the steps to make a recipe, and others.

Finally, context gap activities are more challenging than information gap activities since listeners and speakers must make a great effort to get the message. Speakers must try to transmit the message and listeners must deduce that message or understand the context that was created by the speakers.

Context gap activities follow this order:

1. Students are given a set of pictures
2. Students work in pairs/groups and organize the pictures according to the story they want to tell.
3. Generally, before students can share the story, teachers check their first draft and correct the mistakes.
4. Students share their story; the rest of the class listen to the speakers, trying to make sense of what is being said.
5. If there are doubts students can ask for clarification or retell the story.

Discussion task

This type of task is concerned with developing students' points of view so they can share their ideas about a fact with other students. Mostly, this task invites students to negotiate meaning while they are trying to agree on a solution.

One of the activities that characterized this kind of task is simulations, simulations according to Richards & Schmidt (2013), are “classroom activities which reproduce or simulate real situations, and which often involve dramatization and group discussion” (p. 530). Since it involves dramatization, students must perform a role in line with the topic, such as: a judge, a teacher, a shopkeeper, and others. Students must rely on their background knowledge to perform these roles.

Some simulations do not need to assign roles to students, they can participate as themselves by giving their points of view about a specific event or problem. In pairs or groups, they discuss their ideas and come up with solutions to those problems. The topic that is going to be discussed should draw students' attention, fill their interest, and must be familiar to them. It can be proposed by both sides, teachers, and students.

Among the benefits of discussions, there is the development of students' thinking skills since, situations are part of real life, and students feel motivated to participate in a solution for the real issue. The other benefit is the fact that the teacher can set the communicative outcome according to the students' needs, for example, the task can be, discuss and propose, the communicative outcome recommendations. The task, discuss and judge; the communicative outcome evaluation. The task, discuss and solve; the communicative outcome solution, and others.

Depending on the communicative outcome, discussions tasks generally follow this order:

1. The teacher provides students with the essential materials to arrive at a conclusion

2. The students brainstorm a list of contemporary problems that the world faces.
3. The students select a problem and discuss all the details related to the chosen topic.
4. Students propose their solutions. Then, they defend their position by arguing the pros and cons.

Monologic Tasks

These kinds of tasks are more challenging than the previous two. It is concerned with preparing a piece of writing for an audience. It is a monologue that can be prepared individually or in groups. Brown & Lee (2015), state that “students at intermediate to advanced levels are sometimes asked to give extended monologues in the form of oral reports, summaries, or perhaps short speeches. Here the register is more formal and deliberative. These monologues can be planned or impromptu” (p. 356). In monologic tasks, students are supposed to talk extensively without any interruption, questions come at the end of the students’ monologue.

For these activities, students must become experts in the topic they are going to present so students should prepare in advance as they get ready for their presentation. In this way, this is a process that helps students to develop their English-speaking skills. Thus, Goh & Burns (2012), remarks that “monologic tasks can fall along a continuum from planned, edited, and rehearsal speech to speech that is spontaneous, unedited, and creative” (p. 212). Monologic tasks lead students to develop fluency and vocabulary since they are interested in preparing and presenting an excellent discourse.

Even though monologic tasks seem difficult and not appropriate for beginners, they can be adapted for them, too. The teachers can readapt the complexity of the task, or plan different activities according to the purpose of the lesson and the level of the students. The main goal is to create opportunities for learners that let them practice their language.

The process to follow when working with this kind of task is:

1. The teacher lets students choose the topic.
2. The teacher gives students prompts, useful vocabulary, guides, and examples about the report he/she is going to develop.
3. The students prepare their first draft. After that, they explore more information so they can become experts in the topic.
4. The students check their reports again with the observations made by the teacher.
5. The students present their monologue.
6. The class can ask some questions about the monologue presented by their partner.

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research and research approach

The present study required the application of a quasi-experimental design, in order to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between the dependent variable: Speaking Skills Development in English Language Learners through the independent variable: Task-Based Learning.

Due to the quasi-experimental nature of the research, the students that were part of the study were assigned to one group called the experimental group, based on non-random criteria.

The evidence collected corresponded to a combination of mixed-methods (quantitative and qualitative research), according to the topic and objectives set for the research. Quantitative data was collected through the application of a pretest to the experimental group at the beginning of the study, and a post-test after the implementation of the different types of tasks.

The implemented tasks were, listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experiences, and creative tasks. These were identified as the suitable ones, presented later in the research proposal. These tasks were planned and implemented through the lesson plans in the implementation stage of this study. All these tasks are suggested by Willis, (1996) in her book *A Framework for Task-Based Learning*.

Contrastingly, qualitative data was gathered through an observation sheet for collecting students' progress in TBL and activities implemented in the experimental group during the eight-week execution phase. The observation sheet contained five statements about Task-Based Learning and activities that help to develop English speaking skills.

Population and sample

Unidad Educativa “Cicalpa” is a high school institution that belongs to the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education. It is located in Chimborazo province, parish of Cicalpa, community of Cicalpa Viejo. It offers three levels of education, Educación Inicial, Educación General Básica, and Bachillerato General Unificado. It is dedicated to the technological and scientific formation of students who live in close areas of Unidad Educativa “Cicalpa”.

Students at the second level of baccalaureate received 120 minutes of English classes per week. According to the Ministry of Education, at the end of the baccalaureate level, students must achieve a B2 level in English language. However, after applying the pretest, students are not at the level suggested by the Ministry of Education.

Unidad Educativa “Cicalpa” was an appropriate scenery to apply communicative activities that develop speaking skills under Task-Based Learning Method since students are the adequate ones to improve their English-speaking skills.

The population that participated in this study were the students that belong to Unidad Educativa “Cicalpa”, second level of baccalaureate, parallel “A” and “B”. They belong to the indigenous ethnic group and live in a rural area. The participants of this study speak Spanish and Quichua as well. There were 23 students.

Table 1. A2 KET level tested students

Population	Class A		Total
2° level of baccalaureate	Men	8	8
	Women	15	15
Total			23

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Duration

This study was conducted for six weeks, every week the students had English classes on virtual mode due to COVID 19. The first week the students were evaluated with pre-test in order to know the level they were at. Last week the

students were evaluated again with the post-test to check how much students have developed their English-speaking skills. Each period lasts 120 minutes in which the lesson plans based on Task-Based Learning Method to improve English speaking skills were applied.

Table 2. Schedule for the intervention phase

Activities	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
Pre-Test								
Lesson plan 1								
Lesson plan 2								
Lesson plan 3								
Lesson plan 4								
Lesson plan 5								
Lesson plan 6								
Post-Test								

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Operationalization of Variables

Table 3. Independent Variable

Task-Based Learning	Dimensions	Indicators	Items	Techniques	Instrument
A task in Task-Based Learning Method is an activity inside the classroom where students use the target language in the context of real world. Besides, the main purpose is to communicate or exchange information with other language users using whatever linguistic resources they have at hand. The pedagogical task gives students chance to increase their confidence since we know that communication does not mean just the use of well-structured sentences rather it can use gestures, fixed patterns, body movements, expressions, and others	Components	Roles, Objectives	Teachers' role Students' role Communication	Pre-Test Post-Test	A2 KET 2020 sample tests Speaking
	Task types	Open tasks Closed tasks	Listing Ordering and sorting Comparing Problem-solving Sharing experience Creative tasks		
	Stages	Pre task Task cycle Language focus	Task Planning Report		

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Table 4. Dependent Variable

Speaking skills	Dimensions	Indicators	Items	Techniques	Instrument
Speaking is defined as the ability of humans to produce sounds and interact using them, by interacting I mean, producing, receiving, and understanding the messages of those sounds, this process is interactive and unpredictable so speaking involves developing students' communicative competence.	Elements of speaking	Fluency Vocabulary Grammar Pronunciation	Grammatical forms Discourse maintenance Context Stress Intonation	Pre-Test Post-Test	A2 KET 2020 sample tests Speaking
	Speaking Tasks	Communication tasks Discussion tasks Monologic tasks	Information gap activities Conversation Discussion Monologues Reports		

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Data Collection

Techniques and instruments

To obtain the data, a verified pre-test and a post-test retrieved from the Cambridge online page that comprised a sample of the Key English Test (KET) test for speaking performance were used.

Quantitative aspects of spoken language

In order to apply the pre-test and post-test about the speaking performance, the students were evaluated in pairs. However, their performance was graded individually. The marks given to students were based on the scales and rubric parameters retrieved from the Cambridge website.

The speaking test took about 8 – 10 minutes per pair. The test was composed of two parts. In the first part, the interlocutor (teacher) asked questions to students then, they had to answer those questions by giving factual or personal information.

The questions were oriented to know the students. The second part contains discussion tasks with visual stimulus, in this part the students had to talk to each other with a focus on giving and getting some information, specifically they discuss likes and dislikes and give reasons.

The assessment scales

To grade the students' performance, Assessing Speaking Scales from Cambridge University were used. These scales are used for evaluating participants who are going to take the Key English Test (A2 KET).

Assessing speaking performance

For assessing students' speaking performance two scales were used. They were based on the test mentioned before. The first scale is a detailed scale that contains performance descriptors taken from the overall speaking scale. The assessor gave marks for the following criteria, Grammar and Vocabulary, Pronunciation, Interactive Communication. Figure 2 shows the parameters considered when assessing students' speaking performance.

Figure 2. Assessing Speaking Performance – Level A2.

A2	Grammar and Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
5	- Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. - Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about everyday situations.	Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels.	- Maintains simple exchanges. - Requires very little prompting and support.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>		
3	- Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. - Uses appropriate vocabulary to talk about everyday situations.	Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features.	- Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. - Requires prompting and support.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>		
1	- Shows only limited control of a few grammatical forms. - Uses a vocabulary of isolated words and phrases.	Has very limited control of phonological features and is often unintelligible.	- Has considerable difficulty maintaining simple exchanges. - Requires additional prompting and support.
0	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>		

This table was taken from UCLES, 2011, Assessing Speaking Performance – Level A2, (<https://www.cambridgeenglish.org>).

Here, we can see this table scale is divided into six bands where 0 is the lowest score and 5 is the highest score. Bands 1, 3, and 5 are provided with descriptors that indicate what the students are expected to perform at this level. If students are graded with descriptors for band 3 or above, they have been considered as their performance fit in A2 level.

Global achievement scale

For the second scale, the marks were awarded by the interlocutor who assesses the students' global achievement using the Global Achievements Scale. Figure 3 shows the Global Achievement Scale which is not too detailed as the previous one. The Global Achievement scale contains six bands. Band 0 represents the lowest score for the speaking performance, and band 5 represents the highest score for speaking performance.

Bands 1, 3, and 5 contained two descriptors each. These descriptors are general statements about the students' speaking performance.

Figure 3. Global Achievement Scale – Level A2.

A2	Global achievement
5	Handles communication in everyday situations, despite hesitation. Constructs longer utterances but is not able to use complex language except in well-rehearsed utterances.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>
3	Conveys basic meaning in very familiar everyday situations. Produces utterances which tend to be very short – words or phrases – with frequent hesitation and pauses.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>
1	Has difficulty conveying basic meaning even in very familiar everyday situations. Responses are limited to short phrases or isolated words with frequent hesitation and pauses.
0	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>

This table was taken from UCLES, 2019, A2 Key Handbook for teachers for exams from 2020, (<https://www.cambridgeenglish.org>).

Band 4 denotes that students' performance shares aspects of band 5 and band 3. The same consideration for band 2, this band shares aspects of band 1 and band 3. However, band 0 indicates that students' speaking performance does not accomplish the expected performance.

Overall Speaking Scale

The next scale represents the Overall Speaking Scales according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This chart summarizes the scales of speaking students' performance at all levels. The chosen level for this study was A2 level as in Figure 4. At this level, students or candidates must demonstrate that they can use the English language to communicate with others in simple situations.

Figure 4. Overall Speaking scales.

CEFR level	Grammatical Resource	Lexical Resource	Discourse Management	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
	Maintains control of a wide range of grammatical forms and uses them with flexibility.	Uses a wide range of appropriate vocabulary with flexibility to give and exchange views on unfamiliar and abstract topics.	- Produces extended stretches of language with flexibility and ease and very little hesitation. - Contributions are relevant, coherent, varied and detailed. - Makes full and effective use of a wide range of cohesive devices and discourse markers.	- Is intelligible. - Phonological features are used effectively to convey and enhance meaning.	- Interacts with ease by skilfully interweaving his/her contributions into the conversation. - Widens the scope of the interaction and develops it fully and effectively towards a negotiated outcome.
C2	Maintains control of a wide range of grammatical forms.	Uses a wide range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on unfamiliar and abstract topics.	- Produces extended stretches of language with ease and with very little hesitation. - Contributions are relevant, coherent and varied. - Uses a wide range of cohesive devices and discourse markers.	- Is intelligible. - Intonation is appropriate. - Sentence and word stress is accurately placed. - Individual sounds are articulated clearly.	- Interacts with ease, linking contributions to those of other speakers. - Widens the scope of the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome.
C1	Shows a good degree of control of a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms.	Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on familiar and unfamiliar topics.	- Produces extended stretches of language with very little hesitation. - Contributions are relevant and there is a clear organisation of ideas. - Uses a range of cohesive devices and discourse markers.	- Is intelligible. - Intonation is appropriate. - Sentence and word stress is accurately placed. - Individual sounds are articulated clearly.	- Initiates and responds appropriately, linking contributions to those of other speakers. - Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome.
	Grammar and Vocabulary				
B2	- Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. - Uses appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views, on a range of familiar topics.		- Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. - Contributions are relevant and there is very little repetition. - Uses a range of cohesive devices.	- Is intelligible. - Intonation is generally appropriate. - Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. - Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly.	- Initiates and responds appropriately. - Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
B1	- Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. - Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics.		- Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. - Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. - Uses basic cohesive devices.	Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels.	- Initiates and responds appropriately. - Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
A2	- Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. - Uses appropriate vocabulary to talk about everyday situations.			Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features.	- Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. - Requires prompting and support.
A1	- Shows only limited control of a few grammatical forms. - Uses a vocabulary of isolated words and phrases.			Has very limited control of phonological features and is often unintelligible.	- Has considerable difficulty maintaining simple exchanges. - Requires additional prompting and support.

This table was taken from UCLES, 2019, A2 Key Handbook for teachers for exams from 2020, (<https://www.cambridgeenglish.org>).

Qualitative aspects of spoken language use

This study considered evaluating qualitative aspects of spoken language. In doing so, the scale in figure 5 was used to measure students' qualitative performance during the intervention step. It is concerned with providing an assessment of qualitative aspects of spoken language which is related to assessing aspects of communicative language use competence rather than communicative activities.

Table 5. Qualitative aspects of spoken language use.

	RANGE	ACCURACY	FLUENCY	INTERACTION	COHERENCE
A2	Uses basic sentence patterns with memorized phrases, groups of a few words and formulae in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations.	Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes.	Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident.	Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord.	Can link groups of words with simple connectors like "and", "but" and "because".

This table was adapted from Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), 2022, Qualitative aspects of spoken language use, (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages>).

The following observation sheet (Appendix 1) was used as an instrument to collect information about the qualitative aspects of spoken language. This table was adapted based on Figure 5. The same descriptors were considered, and the frequency was adapted according to the needs of this study. This observation sheet was used during the pre-test and post-test stages. It was used to grade the whole class participation rather than individual students' participation.

Processing and analysis of information

This study is focused on determining the effectiveness of the Task-Based Learning Method to improve speaking skills. In doing so, this study is divided into three stages. Pre-test stage consisted of applying an A2 KET sample speaking test to assess students' speaking performance. Implementation stage, at this stage Task-

Based Learning activities were implemented in order to develop English speaking skills. Post-test stage was concerned with applying again an A2 KET sample speaking test to compare the results and verify if students have developed their speaking skills after applying the Task-Based Learning Method.

The pre-test was applied during the first week of this study. The students took it in pairs, they were paired randomly. The test contained two parts, in the first part the teacher asked the participants questions about personal information while in the second part, they discussed likes and dislikes and gave reasons. The topics for this sample test were Eatings and Holidays, these were the topics that the KET sample test contained.

The implementation stage, this phase was the longest and lasted six weeks. During this period the author implemented six speaking lesson plans based on Task-Based Learning Method. Each class lasted 40 minutes, and in every class was implemented a speaking lesson plan. The topics for each speaking lesson plan were, personal information, house and environment, daily life, free time, travel, and places. Those contents were extracted from the second baccalaureate English modules of the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education.

Every lesson was characterized by the main features of the Task-Based Learning Method, which means, they follow the process, Pre-task, Task cycle, and Language Focus. The main goal of the lessons was focused on developing students' speaking skills rather than other skills like writing, and reading.

The final phase was Post-test. This step was oriented in applying once again the same sample test used in the pre-test with the purpose to measure the students' English speaking skills improvement after developing communicative activities based on Task-Based Learning Method. Besides, this stage was very important since it provided data to compare students' progress.

The information described in the previous paragraphs is summarized in Figure 6, which shows in a synthesized manner what stages this study had gone through and what implies each one of them.

Table 6. Phases of this study

Pre-Test	Intervention step	Post-Test
Application of A2 KET sample test to know the students speaking English level.	Implementing communicative activities based on Task-Based Learning Method to improve students speaking skills.	Application of A2 KET sample test to know the students' progress after implementing communicative activities based on Task-Based Learning Method

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Data collection procedures

The collected data obtained from the previous intervention, pre-test, and post intervention, pos-test were computed and examined with three inferential statistical tests: the t-student test for related (paired) samples, which reveals probable significant differences between the pre-test and post-test findings; 2) visual analysis, which is a box & whisker diagram that allows readers to see if there are students improvement between the pre-test and post-test; 3) using a hypothesis test, the student's t-test determines if there are statistical differences between the post-test and pre-test of each variable.

2.2. The research proposal

Informative Data

- **Proposal:** Booklet of activities that foster students speaking skills using Task-Based Learning Method.
- **Topic:** Task-Based Learning Method and the development of students' speaking skills at Unidad Educativa "Cicalpa".
- **Institution:** Unidad Educativa "Cicalpa"
- **Province:** Chimborazo
- **Parish:** Cicalpa
- **Address:** Cicalpa Viejo Community

- **Phone Number:** 2356008
- **Area:** English as a Foreign Language – Second of Baccalaureate

Proposal Background

This research study was designed in response to the challenges that students at the second level of the baccalaureate that belong to Unidad Educativa “Cicalpa” face when they try to communicate in English. The lack of opportunities to use the English language for real purposes has been one of the main reasons why students have not developed their speaking skills, since a language is acquired by its use, in this case, there is not any kind of condition that facilitates the acquisition of the English language and, consequently, any aspect of speaking skills.

The Task-Based Learning Method is an approach that tries to facilitate the learning of a second language. The communicative activities proposed are under the principles of this method.

A bibliographical study was previously conducted in an attempt to better understand how Task-Based Learning could improve students' English-speaking skills. Then, communicative activities were created that were centered on Task-Based Learning tasks that encourage communication.

Justification

The goal of this proposal was to assist students in improving their oral production. It was built on the Task-Based Learning Method since it is a beneficial approach that requires students to complete a task while also developing English skills, in this case speaking. It is primarily concerned with learners naturally using the language while performing a task. They are also involved in this process because they are the ones who work the hardest at each stage. The teacher takes on the role of facilitator while the students work in groups. This proposal benefits students at the second level of the baccalaureate that belongs to Unidad Educativa “Cicalpa”.

Objectives

General Objective

- To create a booklet of activities that fosters students speaking skills using Task-Based Learning.

Specific Objectives

- Investigate communicative activities under Task-Based Learning that enhances English speaking skills.
- Compile the most representative communicative activities that enhance English speaking skills.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the communicative activities under Task-Based Learning Method by applying a pre-test and post-test.

Theoretical Bases

The present booklet of activities is designed to implement communicative activities under the Task-Based Learning Method. The main objective of this work is through the proposed communicative activities to develop students' English-speaking skills. The communicative activities are concerned with providing students with the basic conditions: exposure, use, motivation, and instruction that let learning take place so students can benefit from that. In a Task-Based Learning lesson, the teacher does not determine what aspects of language will be studied since the main purpose of the lesson is to achieve an outcome using language.

A typical lesson follows this procedure: pre-task, task cycle, and language focus. In the pre-task step, the teacher introduces the topic. He provides students with useful phrases and words to better understand the topic and the instructions. The Task-Cycle step is subdivided into three steps: Task, Planning, and Report. In the task step, students do the task. Planning refers to preparing students' reports. The report has to do with presenting the students' report or findings.

The last step is subdivided into two steps, too. Analysis refers to examining and discussing aspects of language or any specific language feature. The last step is practice, the teacher assigns new activities so students can practice and improve their language. In this process, the main conditions for learning a language are present in the whole process which in the end becomes the appropriate scenery for students to develop their speaking skills.

Proposal development

Six Types of Tasks

Here is a brief description of the different kinds of tasks: They start from simple to complex. Simple tasks could include one type, while more complicated tasks could include two, or even three types. All the tasks involve speaking and listening mainly, but they can be adapted for reading and writing, too. In the same way, these tasks work perfectly for formal or informal language.

Listing

It refers to creating a list of items that students build based on a process that they have followed. This kind of task can produce a lot of talking since students want to explain their points of view.

This task starts with brainstorming. Then, it is followed by fact-finding where students find things by supporting each other or different materials.

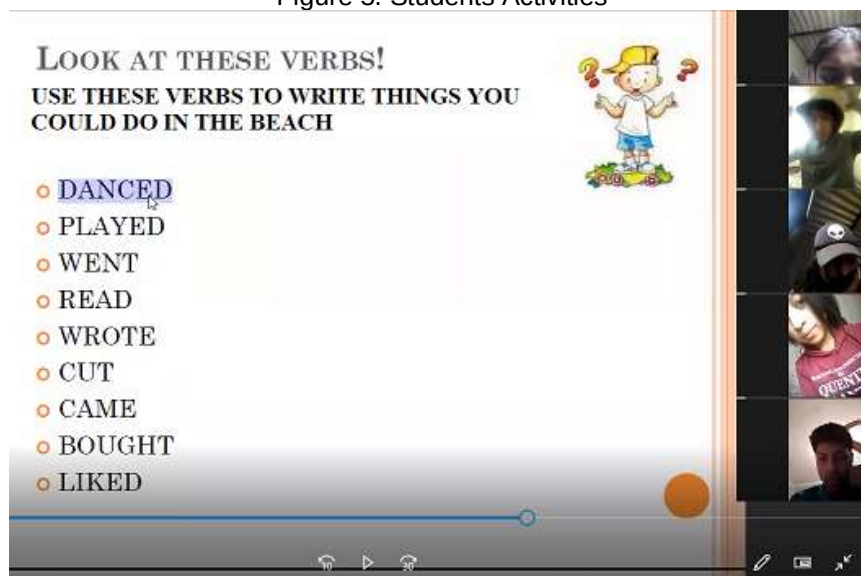
Listing tasks are concerned with the following aspects:

Table 7. Listing task procedure

Outcome	Complete the list of features/aspects that characterizes or defines a person, object, animal, or place
Procedure	1. The teacher ensures that students understood the instructions, vocabulary, and activities they are going to develop. 2. Students brainstorm the qualities that make a person, object, animal or place different. 3. Students classify the most important things/qualities they listed. (They can erase or add some.) 4. Students report and justify the things they listed. 5. The teacher emphasizes communicative mistakes committed by the students and provides them with useful clues to enhance communication. 6. The students put into practice new features and build confidence by doing a new listing activity.
Follow up tasks	Once students have completed the listing activity. The teacher can write on the board all words that students listed. The students play the memory challenge game. The teacher asks students to close their eyes. From the list of words written on the board, the teacher can erase one or two words or phrases, generally the new ones and useful ones. Finally, the students open their eyes and find out the missing words or phrases.

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Figure 5. Students Activities



Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Ordering and Sorting

Ordering and sorting have to do with sequencing facts or inventions in chronological order. These events must be ranked according to the criteria previously defined. Then, the events can be categorized into different groups, and finally, they can be classified into different categories.

Ordering and Sorting tasks are concerned with the following aspects:

Table 8. Ordering and Sorting task procedure

Outcome	Classify the information according to the criteria given by the teacher.
Procedure	This procedure follows three tasks: sequencing, categorizing, and classifying. 1. The teacher ensures that students understood the instructions, vocabulary, and activities they are going to develop. Classifying 1. The teacher provides students with a set of questions and answers. Questions and answers should be separated and written on different pieces of paper. The students classify the pieces of paper into two groups, questions, and answers. 2. The students check and verify if the questions and answers are well classified. 3. The students present their classification work to the classroom and listen to suggestions from the teacher and partners. Sequencing 1. The teacher asks students to sequence the questions they can use in an interview. Besides, the teacher provides an interview audio model so they can use it in the sequence exercise. 2. The students ensure that the answers entail the questions. 3. Students present to the class their work. Categorizing 1. The teacher defines the categories that students are going to use. For example, formal language and informal language. 2. The students categorize the questions and answers they have into the given categories. 3. The students report to the class their categorizing work. Teachers and partners suggest other possible answers. 4. The teacher and students analyze the difficulties and mistakes committed that difficult communication. The teacher highlights and gives students strategies to overcome them. 5. The teacher proposes to perform a roleplay activity where students can practice items worked.
Follow up tasks	Perform roleplays about different topics. Sequencing words, phrases, or sentences, for example, order sentences chronologically, order phrases with sequence connectors, Rank words, phrases, and sentences according to specific criteria. For example, if you have a lot of money, what would you spend first? Classify words, phrases, and sentences into given categories. For example, classify the kind of food you eat into four categories.

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Figure 6. Students Activities



Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Comparing

Comparing is concerned with comparing information from similar materials, but different sources. Generally, it is focused on finding similarities and differences.

Comparing tasks are concerned with the following aspects:

Table 9. Comparing task procedure

Outcome	Identify the main similarities and differences in a scene, a story, news, audio, or video.
Procedure	This activity involves three tasks: matching, finding similarities, and finding differences. 1. The teacher ensures that students understood the instructions, vocabulary, and activities they are going to develop. Matching 1. The teacher is going to provide students with pictures of two different cities. Students are going to listen to a description of one of the pictures. 2. Students have to match the description they heard with one of the pictures provided before. 3. Students show to the teacher and partners the picture they matched with the description they listened to and support their decision. Finding Similarities 1. The teacher asks students to find similarities between the picture they matched and the city where they live. The students compare and find similarities and highlight positive aspects of both cities. 2. Students identify the similarities and list the things they think are similar. 3. Students report to the class and listen to some questions and suggestions. Finding differences 1. The teacher asks students to choose a well-known city in the country they live in and find the differences with the picture

	matched at the beginning. Students choose the city they prefer and compare it with the city described previously. - Students compare these two cities and list the differences. - Students report their findings and listen to partners and teacher suggestions. - The teacher and students discuss the obstacles and errors made during the tough communication. The teacher emphasizes the problems and provides students with solutions. - The teacher provides students with two pictures of friends and a description of one picture so students can read and match with the correct one. Then, students find the similarities and differences between the provided pictures. Finally, students report orally the tasks they did.
Follow up tasks	The teacher can provide students with audio with commands and instructions for drawing some things. In the end, the teacher shows students the picture described, and students compare it with their own. Students can compare news reported in two different diaries of the city and find the similarities and differences.

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Figure 7. Students Activities



Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Problem-Solving

Problem-solving is based on looking for a solution to a specific problem. This task can seem a little difficult for beginners because it requires the use of reasoning skills. However, this can be adapted according to the purpose of the class.

Problem-solving tasks are concerned with the following aspects:

Table 10. Problem-Solving task procedure

Outcome	Propose a solution to a specific problem then evaluate the proposals
Procedure	This activity regardless to solve puzzles, real-life problems, predictions, and completing stories, or case studies. The time students spend doing this activity depends on the complexity of the problem. Topic: What advice would you give to adolescents who use social networks. 1. The teacher ensures that students understood the instructions, vocabulary, and activities they are going to develop. 2. The students propose tips and suggestions for the correct use of social networks. The teachers and students order and classify the students' answers. 3. The students describe their experiences with using social networks in a way everybody can be into the topic. 4. The students and teacher compare the stories to establish the advantages and disadvantages of each one of them. 5. The students and teacher evaluate the best option to give a solution to this problem. Everybody must agree with the proposed solution. 6. The students prepare their reports taking into account the mistakes highlighted in the previous process. 7. The students present their solutions to an audience.
Follow up tasks	The teacher can introduce a similar solution proposed by other students. The students do a comparison activity. Next, they find similarities and differences. Finally, they must justify and argue their decisions.

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Figure 8. Students Activities



Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Sharing Personal Experiences

Sharing personal experiences is a kind of open task where students are free to talk.

Students can share their experiences and give their points of view about facts.

Sharing experiences tasks are concerned with the following aspects:

Table 11. Sharing Personal Experiences task procedure

Outcome	Encourage students to use English language as much as they can.
Procedure	The procedure in doing this activity involves activities like narrating their own experiences, explaining their feelings in punctual cases, exploring the students' aptitudes toward certain facts, talk about their reactions or opinions about topics that are tendency. Topic: Telling students anecdotes 1. The teacher ensures that students understood the instructions, vocabulary, and activities they are going to develop. The teacher shares with his / her students the anecdote about a journey he/she had. 2. The teacher asks students to prepare the most memorable anecdote they had to share with their friends. Besides, he/she has to check that students dispose of the essential communicative resources to share their experiences. 3. The students prepare and polish their reports by asking the teacher for support and ideas to improve them. The teacher acts as a facilitator providing them clues that improve the students' speech. 4. The students talk about the experience they had on any journey. The rest of the class listen to the participants, and at the end of the class, all together decide on what was the funniest, most memorable, dramatic story. 5. The teacher work on the mistakes committed by the students and provide them suggestions to improve them. 6. The students compare and report on what features are the stories presented similar to their own.
Follow up tasks	The students can bring to the class two different stories and tell their partners. The class have to guess which one was true, and which one was invented.

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Figure 9. Students Activities



Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Creative Tasks

Creative tasks are related to the combination of the previous task explained. They are well structured and demand students' reasoning skills.

Creative tasks are concerned with the following aspects:

Table 12. Creative task procedure

Outcome	Obtain a final product. To produce a final product, after following a process, that can be exhibited or exposed to an ample audience.
Procedure	This kind of task typically includes more phases than traditional classroom work and can include the activities described above. They can be developed inside or outside of the classroom. Topic: Create a leaflet about the tourist places in our city. 1. The teacher ensures that students understood the instructions, vocabulary, and activities they are going to develop. Besides, the teacher can show them an example or version of the final product. Students must be familiarized with the topic and copy ideas that let them make it easier. 2. The students develop a listing activity about the touristic places of the city. The teacher ensures that the listed places are the correct ones. 3. The students develop a cauterizing task where they order the most important or attractive places. The teacher helps them by defining the categories and the classification. One, the students have classified they describe these places and highlight their characteristics 4. The students present their drafts to the teacher and their partners. The audience makes him / her suggestions to improve his / her draft. 5. The students improve their draft by including the suggestions and ideas that polish their work. Once again, this draft is presented to the teacher in order to obtain he/her approval. 6. The final product is exhibited or presented to an ample audience. Generally, this final product could be an exhibit to foreign people or visitors.
Follow up tasks	The students can write the process they followed in doing the leaflet and share it with their partners so they can be informed about the process when they want to create a leaflet.

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Figure 10. Students Activities



Source: Daga, G. (2022)

CHAPTER III: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative pre-test vs post-test

The following data were obtained from the analysis of the recordings, the values assigned to measure the speaking ability were based on the criteria of the rubric from the KET examination in order to provide an accurate way of assessing students. Key English Test KET examined three subskills, those were Grammar and Vocabulary, Pronunciation, and Interactive Communication.

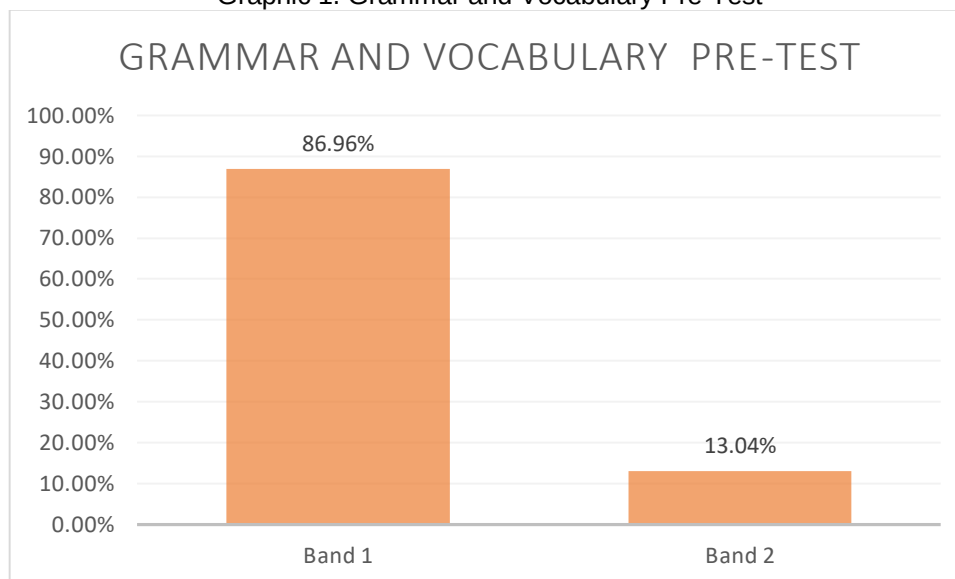
Table 13. Quantitative pre and post-test results

Participants	Quantitative speaking skills development					
	Pre-test			Post-test		
	Grammar and vocabulary	Pronunciation	Interactive communicatio	Grammar and vocabulary	Pronunciation	Interactive communicatio
A. C. M. G.	1	1	1	2	4	4
A. V. S. M.	1	1	1	2	2	2
C. O. N. I.	1	1	1	2	3	2
C. P. S. R.	2	3	2	3	3	3
C. C. B. E.	1	1	1	3	3	2
C. L. G. E.	2	1	1	3	3	3
C. Y. L. O.	1	1	1	2	2	2
L. C. A. D.	1	1	1	1	2	2
L. Y. M. M.	1	1	1	3	3	3
L. Y. M. I.	1	1	1	2	2	2
L. P. J. A.	1	2	1	3	3	3
M. C. M. E.	1	1	2	3	3	4
P. C. S. L.	1	1	1	3	3	4
P. Y. F. J.	1	1	1	2	2	2
O. P. W. C.	1	1	1	1	3	2
P. G. J. E.	1	1	1	1	3	2
P. P. K. A.	1	1	1	1	2	2
P. Z. J. F.	1	1	1	3	3	4
R. C. E. D.	1	1	1	3	2	2
Y. G. D. P.	1	1	1	3	3	4
Y. C. E. E.	1	1	1	3	3	3
Y. T. L. J.	2	1	1	3	3	4
Y. P. C. J.	1	1	1	3	3	4
TOTAL	26	26	25	55	63	65

Note: The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, represent Band 1, Band 2, Band 3, and Band 4. Source: Daga, G. (2022)

Grammar and Vocabulary Pre-test

Graphic 1. Grammar and Vocabulary Pre-Test

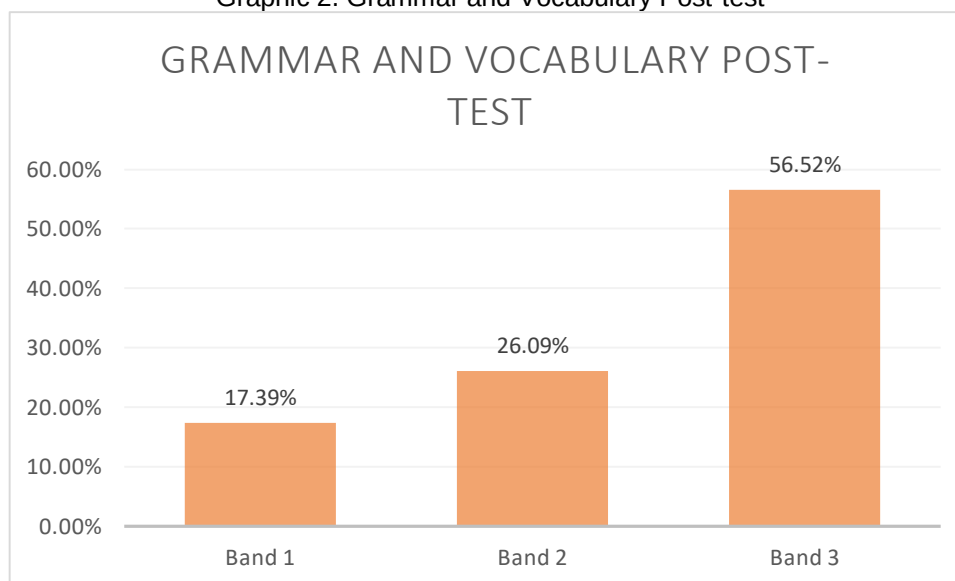


Source: Pre and Post – Test scores.

Graphic 1 shows that in the Pre-Test, in Grammar and Vocabulary category, 86.96% of students reached Band 1, which means “Shows only limited control of a few grammatical forms. Uses a vocabulary of isolated words and phrases” and the rest of the students 13.04%, reached Band 2 that means “Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3”.

Grammar Vocabulary Post-test

Graphic 2. Grammar and Vocabulary Post-test

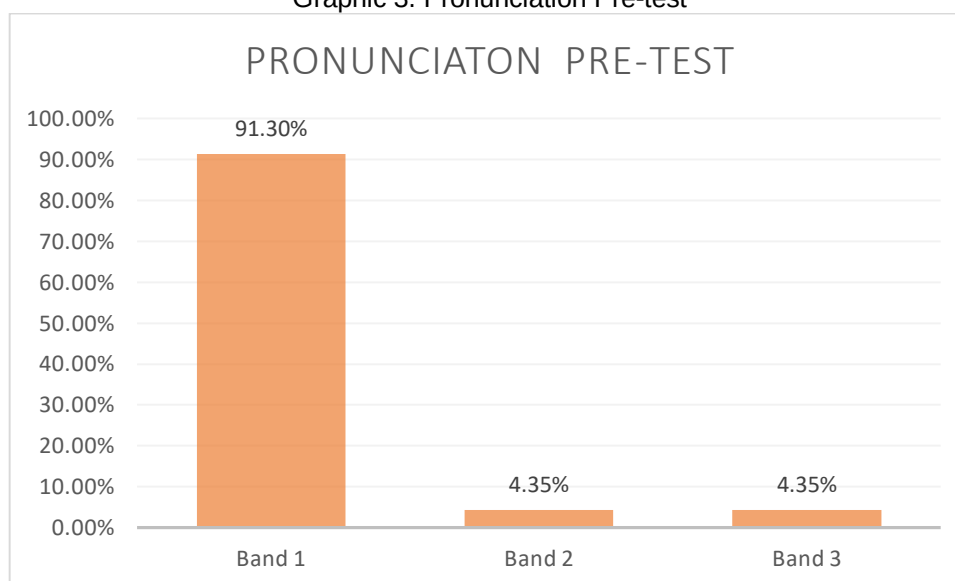


Source: Pre and Post – Test scores.

Graphic 2 shows that in the Post-Test, Grammar and Vocabulary category, 17.39% of students reached Band 1 which represents “Shows only limited control of a few grammatical forms. Uses a vocabulary of isolated words and phrases”. While 26.09% of students reached Band 2, which stands for “Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3”. Finally, 56.52% of students reached Band 3 which means “Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. Uses appropriate vocabulary to talk about everyday situations”.

Pronunciation Pre-test

Graphic 3. Pronunciation Pre-test

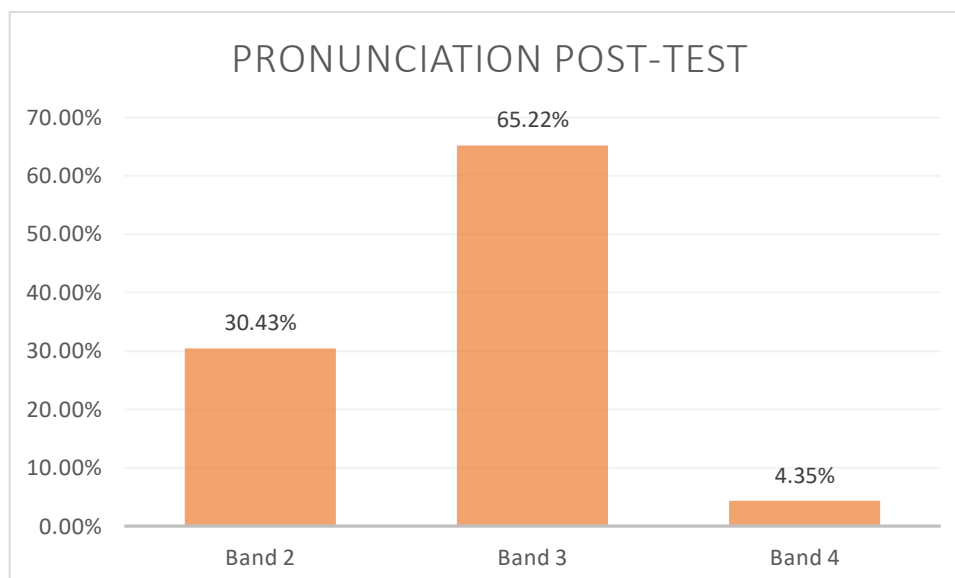


Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Pre-test, Pronunciation category, 91.30% of students got Band 1, which stands for “Has very limited control of phonological features and is often unintelligible”. While 4.35% of students reached Band 2 which represents “Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3”. And 4.35% reached Band 3 which means “Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features”.

Pronunciation Post-test

Graphic 4. Pronunciation Post-test

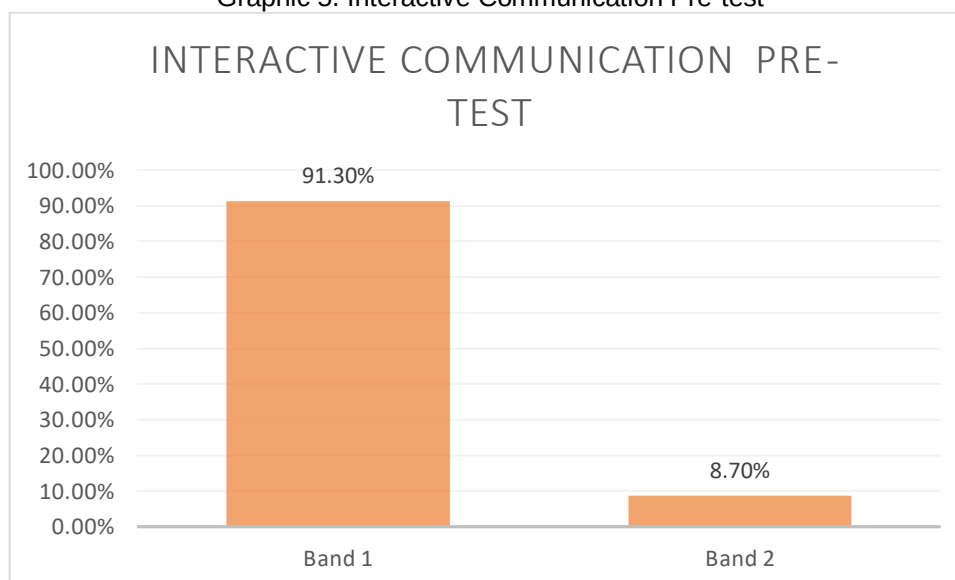


Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Post-test, pronunciation category, 30.43% of students reached Band 2 which represents "Performance shares features of Band 1 and 3". The 65.22% of students reached Band 3 which means "Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features". 4.35% of students reached Band 4 which stands for "Performance shares features of Band 3 and 5".

Interactive Communication Pre-test

Graphic 5. Interactive Communication Pre-test



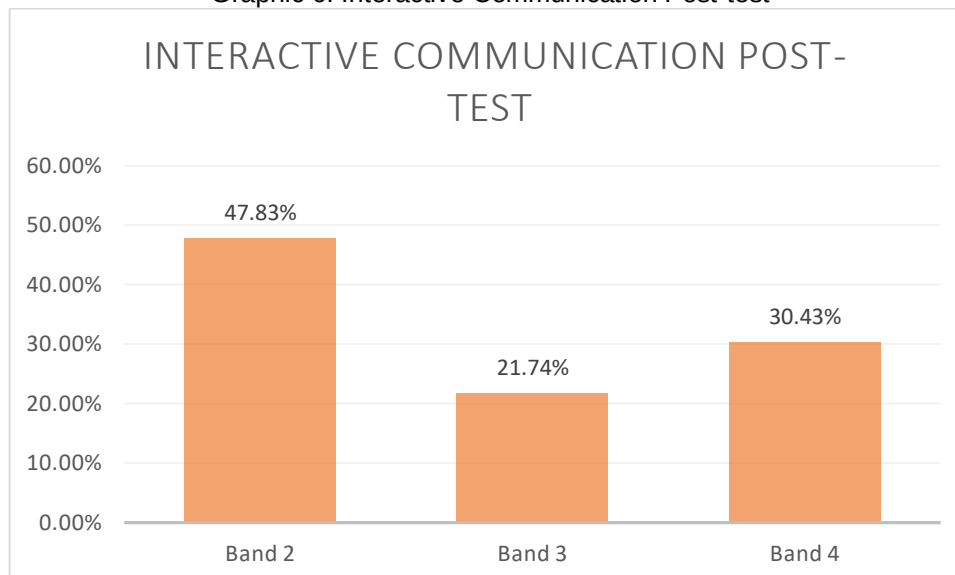
Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Pre-test, Interactive Communication category, 91.30% of students reached Band 1 which stands for "Has considerable difficulty maintaining simple exchanges."

Requires additional prompting and support”. While the rest of the students, 8.70%, reached Band 2 which represents “Performance shares features of Band 1 and 3”.

Interactive Communication Post-test

Graphic 6. Interactive Communication Post-test



Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Post-test, Interactive Communication category, 47.83% of students reached Band 2 which stands for “Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3”. The 21.74% of students reached Band 3 which represents “Maintain simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. Requires prompting and support”. The 30.43%, reached Band 4 which means “Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5”.

Quantitative Global Analysis

In Grammar and Vocabulary descriptor, in the pre-test, 86.96% of students achieved Band 1 “Shows only limited control of a few grammatical forms. Uses a vocabulary of isolated words and phrases”. They improved considerably as is evidenced in the post-test. In this way, 56.52% of students approached Band 3 “Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms and uses appropriate vocabulary and uses appropriate vocabulary to talk about everyday situations”.

Regarding Pronunciation aspect. In the pre-test, 91,30% of students achieved Band 1 “Has very limited control of phonological features and is often unintelligible”. In the post-test, the students showed an important advance. 65.22% of students approached Band 3 “Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features”.

Finally, in the Interactive Communication category, in the pre-test, 65.22% of students reached Band 1 “Has considerably difficulty maintaining simple exchanges. Requires additional prompting and support”. In post-test, 47.83% of students reached Band 2 “Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3”. And, it is followed by 30,43% of students that reached “Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. Requires prompting and support” evidencing a slight improvement in this category.

3.1. Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative pre-test vs post-test

The data presented in the next section was obtained from the Observation Sheet designed for this study. It was used in the Pre-test, as well as in the Post-test for measuring qualitative aspects, Range, Accuracy, Fluency, Interaction, and Coherence. Every aspect had four options, Never, Sometimes, Usually, and Always.

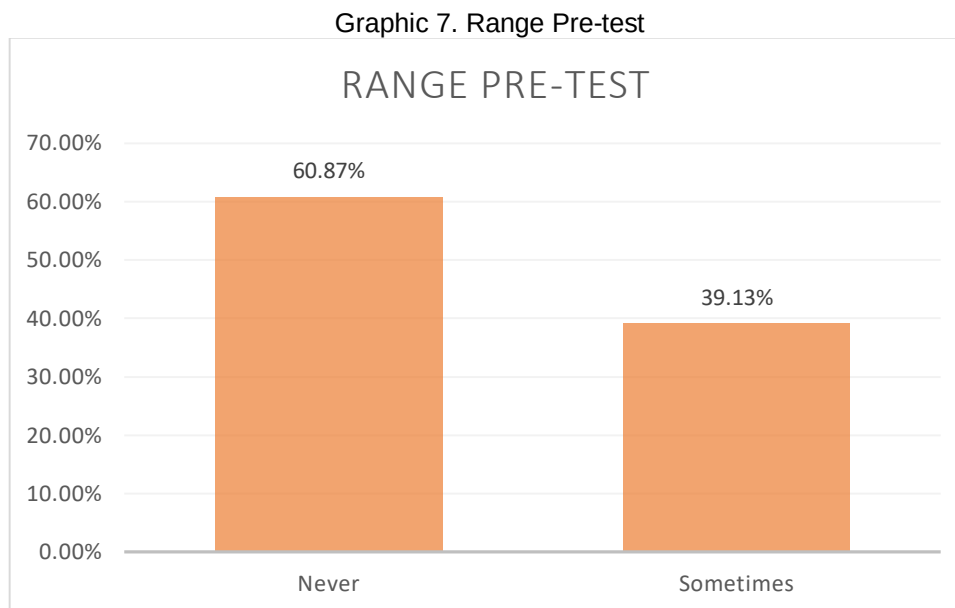
Table 14.

Qualitative pre and post test results

Participants	Qualitative speaking skills development									
	Pre-test					Post-test				
	Range	Accuracy	Fluency	Interaction	Coherence	Range	Accuracy	Fluency	Interaction	Coherence
A. C. M. G.	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	4	4
A. V. S. M.	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
C. O. N. I.	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
C. P. S. R.	2	2	2	2	1	3	4	3	4	3
C. C. B. E.	1	1	1	2	1	3	3	3	3	4
C. L. G. E.	2	2	2	2	1	3	4	3	3	4
C. Y. L. O.	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
L. C. A. D.	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
L. Y. M. M.	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	3	3	3
L. Y. M. I.	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3
L. P. J. A.	1	1	1	1	1	4	3	4	3	3
M. C. M. E.	2	2	2	3	2	4	4	3	3	3
P. C. S. L.	1	1	1	1	1	4	3	4	3	3
P. Y. F. J.	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
O. P. W. C.	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3
P. G. J. E.	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
P. P. K. A.	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3
P. Z. J. F.	2	2	2	3	2	4	4	3	3	3
R. C. E. D.	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3
Y. G. D. P.	2	2	2	3	2	4	4	4	3	3
Y. C. E. E.	1	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	3	3
Y. T. L. J.	2	2	2	3	2	4	4	4	3	3
Y. P. C. J.	2	2	2	3	2	4	4	4	3	3

Note: The numbers represent the frequency students reach an aspect, thus Always=4, Usually=3, Sometimes=2, and Never=1. Source: Daga, G. (2022)

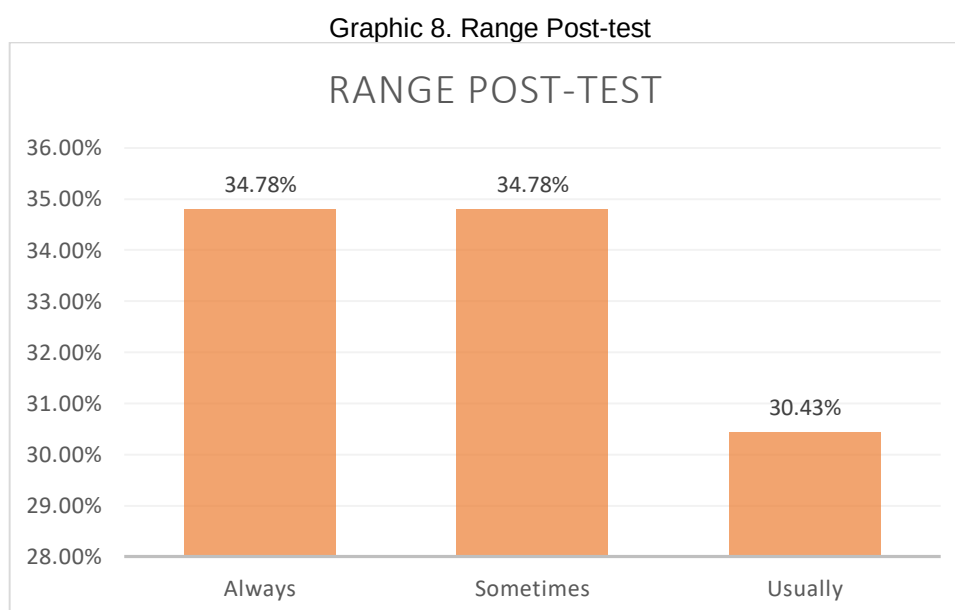
Range Pre-test



Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Pre-test, Range category, which stands for “Uses basic sentence patterns with memorized phrases, groups of a few words and formulate in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations”. 60.87% of students obtained “Never”. While, 39.13% of students obtained “Sometimes” level of development.

Range Post-test

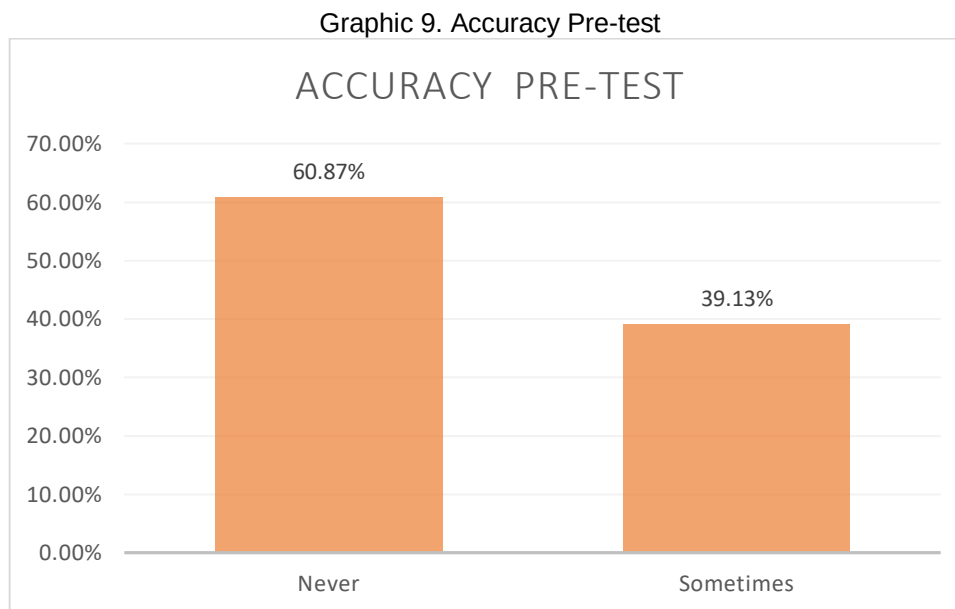


Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Post-test, Range category, which means “Uses basic sentence patterns with memorized phrases, groups of a few words and formulate in order to communicate

limited information in simple everyday situations". 34.78% of students obtained "Always". 34.78% of students obtained "Sometimes". And, 30.43% of students obtained "Usually" level of development.

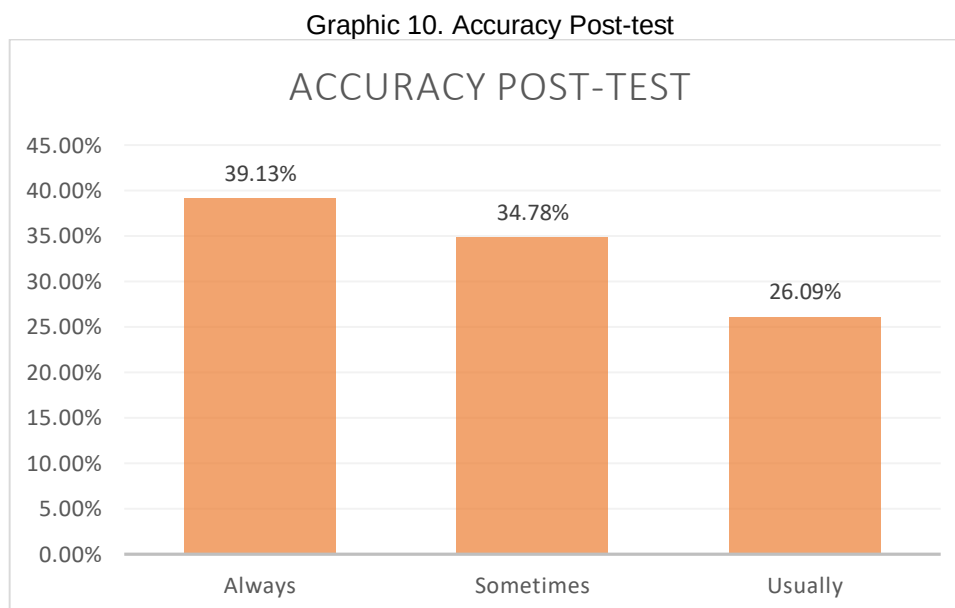
Accuracy Pre-test



Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Pre-test, Accuracy category, which represents "Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes". 60.87% of students obtained "Never". 39.13% of students obtained "Sometimes" level of development.

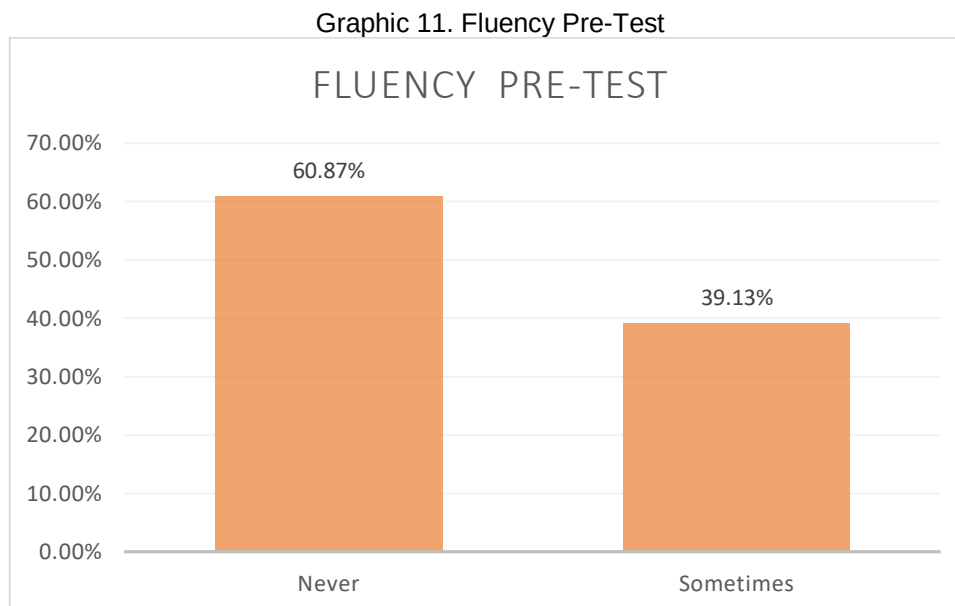
Accuracy Post-test



Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Post-test, Accuracy category, which stands for “Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes”. 39.13% of students obtained “Always”. 34.78% of students obtained “Sometimes”. And, 26.09% of students obtained “Usually” level of development.

Fluency Pre-Test

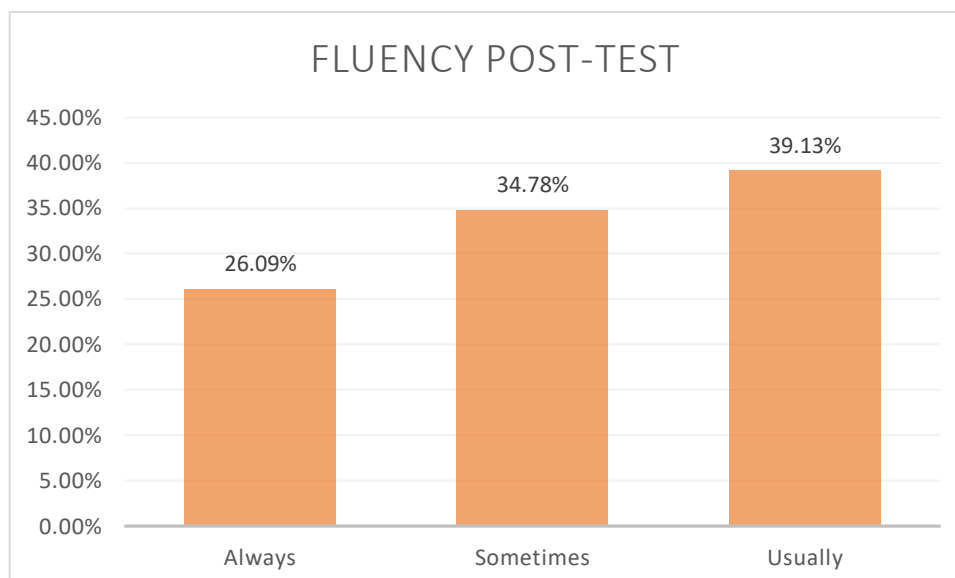


Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Pre-test, Fluency category, which stands for “Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident”. 60.87% of students obtained “Never”. And, 39.13% of students obtained “Sometimes” level of development.

Fluency Post-test

Graphic 12. Fluency Post-test

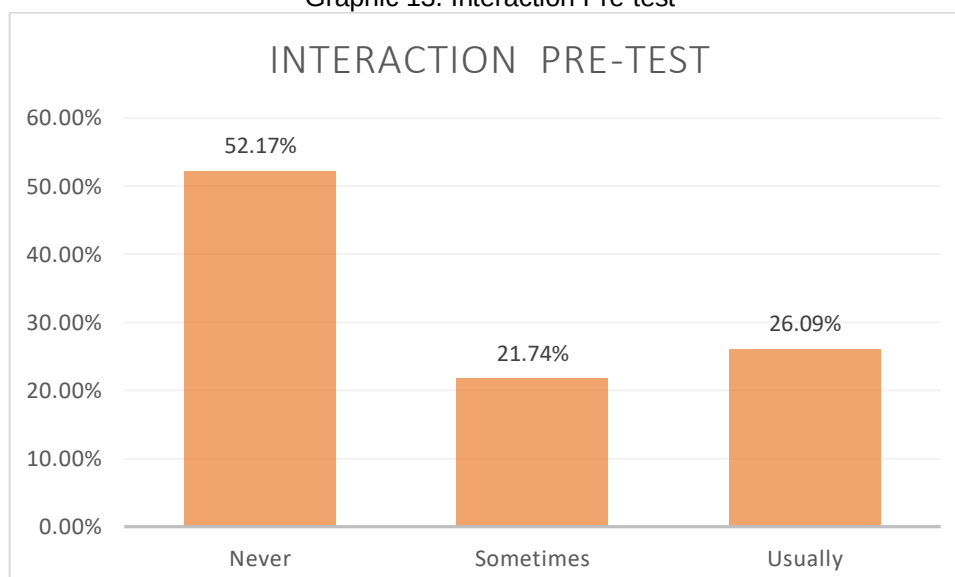


Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Post-test, Fluency category, which represents “Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident”. 26.09% of students obtained “Always” . While, 34.78% of students obtained “Sometimes”. And, 39.13% of students obtained “Usually” level of development.

Interaction Pre-test

Graphic 13. Interaction Pre-test



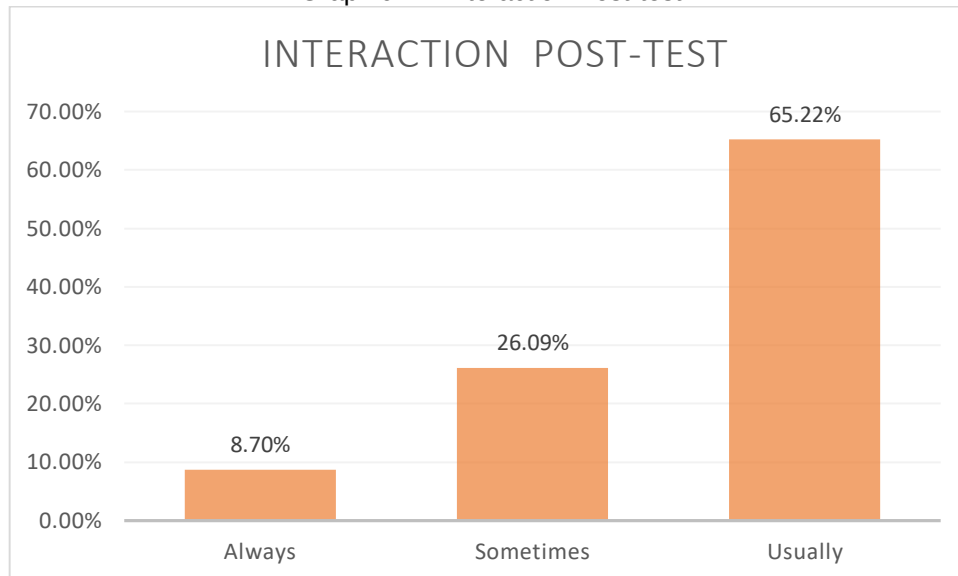
Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Pre-test, Interaction category, which means “Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord”.

52.17% of students obtained “Never”. While, 26.09% of students obtained “Usually”. And, 21.74% of students obtained “Sometimes” level of development.

Interaction Post-test

Graphic 14. Interaction Post-test

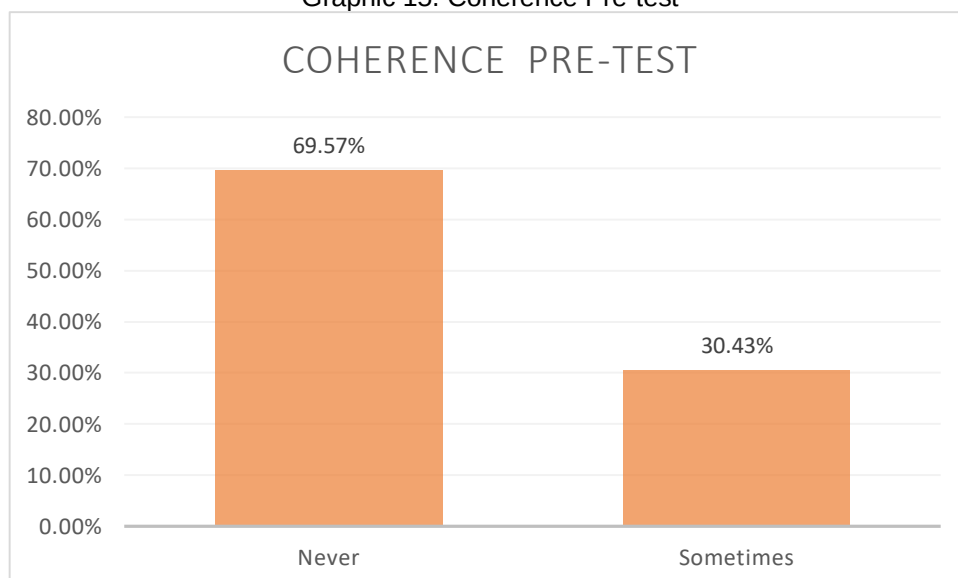


Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Post-test, Interaction category, which means “Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord” 65.22% of students obtained “Usually”. While, 26.09% of students obtained “Sometimes”. And, 8.70% obtained “Always” level of development.

Coherence Pre-test

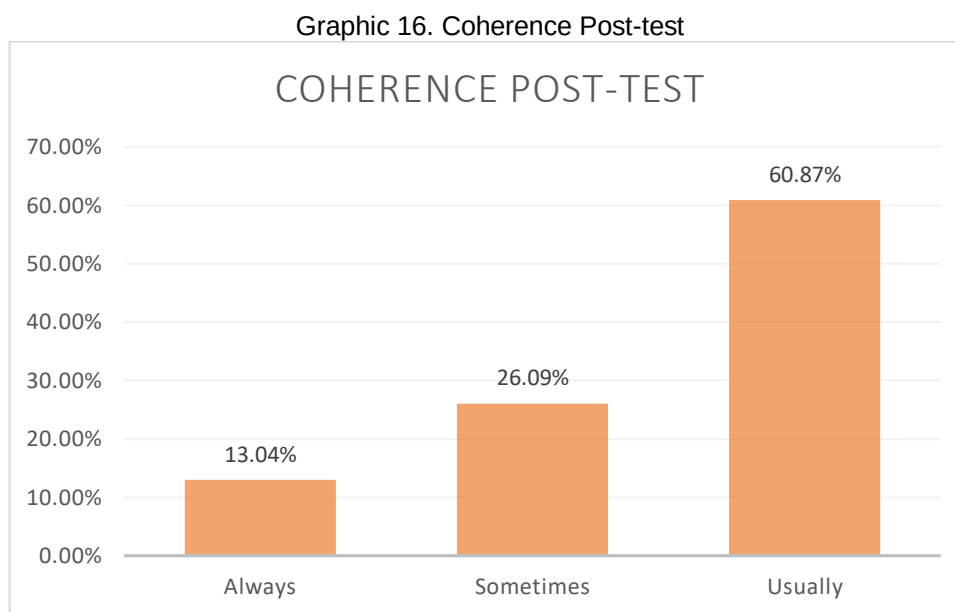
Graphic 15. Coherence Pre-test



Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Pre-test, Coherence category, which means “Can link groups of words with simple connectors like “and”, “but” and “because””. 69.57% of students obtained “Never”. While, 30.43% of students obtained “Sometimes” level of development.

Coherence Post-test



Source: Pre and Post-Test.

In the Post-test, Coherence category, which means “Can link groups of words with simple connectors like “and”, “but” and “because””. 60.87% of students obtained “Usually”. Whereas 26.09% of students obtained “Sometimes”. And, 13.04% of students obtained “Always” level of development.

Qualitative Global Analysis

Regarding the Range category, in the pre-test, 60.87% of students reached “Never” for “Uses basic sentences patterns with memorized phrases, groups of a few words and formulate in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations”. While in the post-test, 37.48% of students reached “Sometimes” and the same quantity of students for the “Always” level of development.

The results for the Accuracy category in the pretest were, 60.78% of students reached “Never” for “Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes”. But, the post-test results showed better scores, thus 39.13% of students reached “Always”. 34.78% of students reached “Sometimes”. And, 26.09 reached “Usually” level of development.

The category concerned with Fluency. In the pre-test, 60,87% of students reached “Never” for “Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances, even though

pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident". The post-test evidenced important improvement. 39.13% of students reached "Usually". 34.78% of students reached "Sometimes". And, 26.09% of students reached "Always" level of development.

Regarding the Interaction category, the results in pre-test were, 52,17% of students reached "Never" for "Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord". In post-test, those values increased. Thus, 65.22% of students reached "Usually". 26.09% reached "Sometimes". And, 8.70% of students reached "Always" level of development.

Finally, the results of the Coherence category showed an important increase. 69.57% of students reached "Never" for "Can link groups of words with simple connectors, like "and", "but" and "because"". But in the post-test, 60.87% of students reached "Usually" level of development.

3.2. Inferential statistical analysis

With the intention of determining if the implementation of Task-Based Learning Method has an effect on students' English-speaking skills, a statistical analysis was necessary to evaluate the results of the experimental group. These data were obtained at the beginning, and at the end of the intervention stage. The first evaluation results belong to the pre-test, these were useful since they helped to determine a starting point. While the results of the second evaluation belong to the post-test. They display data to determine the significance of this study.

Three inferential statistical tests were used to analyze the data, t-student test for related (paired) samples, which identifies possible significant differences between the results obtained in the pretest and the results obtained in the posttest; 2) graphic analysis, which is a box & whisker diagram in which readers can observe if there are differences between the pretest and the post-test; 3) Student's t-test, through a hypothesis test, it is determined any statistical differences between the post-test and pre-test of each of the variables.

Hypothesis testing

Null hypothesis: There is no statistical difference between the pretest and the posttest results (p-value is greater than 0.05 error margin).

Alternate hypothesis: There is a statistical difference between the pre-test and the post-test results (p-value is less than 0.05 error margin).

Grammar and Vocabulary T-student test

Table 15.

Grammar and Vocabulary t-student test analysis

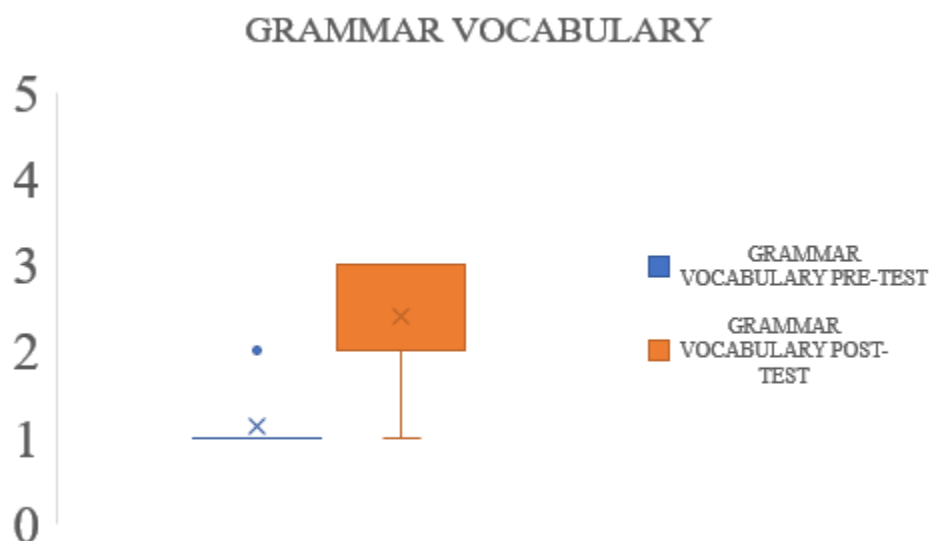
Participants	Grammar and Vocabulary	
	Pre-test	Post-test
1	1	2
2	1	2
3	1	2
4	2	3
5	1	3
6	2	3
7	1	2
8	1	1
9	1	3
10	1	2
11	1	3
12	1	3
13	1	3
14	1	2
15	1	1
16	1	1
17	1	1
18	1	3
19	1	3
20	1	3
21	1	3
22	2	3
23	1	3
TOTAL	26	55

Note: This table shows students' scores in the pre and post-test concerned with Grammar and Vocabulary, speaking sub-skills. Source: Daga, G. (2022)

The average difference between the pre-test scores and the post-test scores is 1,3. Consequently, there is a positive difference between the pre-test and post-test.

Grammar and Vocabulary Graphic Analysis

Graphic 17. Grammar and Vocabulary Graphic Analysis



Note: The numbers 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, represent Band 1, Band 2, Band 3, Band 4, Band 5.

Source: Daga, G. (2022).

Graphically, the reader can observe the higher scores are in the post-test. The scores vary between Band 2 and Band 3. While in the pre-test most of the scores are in Band 1.

Grammar and Vocabulary Student's T-test

Table 16.

Grammar and Vocabulary Student's T-test

GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY		
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
Average	1	2
Variance	0.1	0.6
Observations	23	23
Pearson correlation coefficient	31%	
Hypothetical difference of means	0	
Degrees of freedom	22	
t-statistic	-8.04	
p-value	0.00	

Note: This data was obtained from the pre and post-test results. Source: Daga, G. (2022)

The hypothesis test of the Grammar and Vocabulary sub-skill, resulted in a p-value of 0.00 which is less than a statistical significance level of 0.05, Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, it is possible

to conclude that there are significant differences between the pretest results and the posttest results.

Pronunciation T-student Test

Table 17.

Pronunciation T-students Test

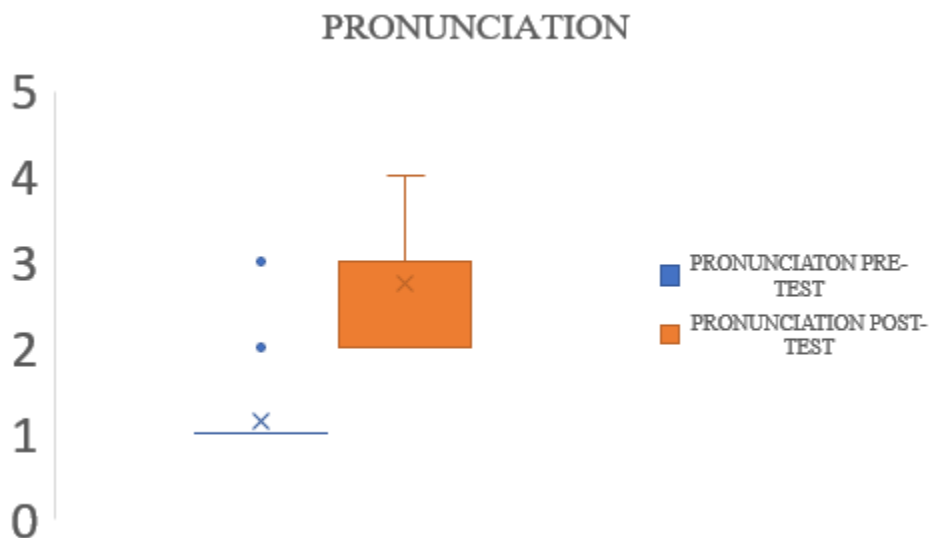
Participants	Grammar and Vocabulary	
	Pre-test	Post-test
1	1	4
2	1	2
3	1	3
4	3	3
5	1	3
6	1	3
7	1	2
8	1	2
9	1	3
10	1	2
11	2	3
12	1	3
13	1	3
14	1	2
15	1	3
16	1	3
17	1	2
18	1	3
19	1	2
20	1	3
21	1	3
22	1	3
23	1	3
TOTAL	26	63

Note: This table shows students' scores in the pre and post-test concerned with Pronunciation, speaking sub-skills. Source: Daga, G. (2022)

The average difference between post-test and pre-test scores is 1,6. As a result, there is a significant difference between the post-test and the pre-test.

Pronunciation Graphic Analysis

Graphic 18. Pronunciation Graphic Analysis



Note: The numbers 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, represent Band 1, Band 2, Band 3, Band 4, Band 5.

Source: Daga, G. (2022).

Graphically, greater results are seen in the post-test, primarily between Band 2 and Band 3. While in the pre-test, the most common is Band 1.

Pronunciation Student's T-test

Table 18.

Pronunciation Student's T-test

GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY		
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
Average	1	2
Variance	0.21	0.29
Observations	23	23
Pearson correlation coefficient	14%	
Hypothetical difference of means	0	
Degrees of freedom	22	
t-statistic	-11.8	
P(T<=t) one tail	0.0	
Critical value of t (one tail)	1.72	

Note: This data was obtained from the pre and post-test results. Source: Daga, G. (2022)

The hypothesis test of Pronunciation resulted in a p-value of 0.00 which is less than a statistical significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted since there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results.

Interactive Communication T-student Test

Table 19.
Interactive Communication T-students Test

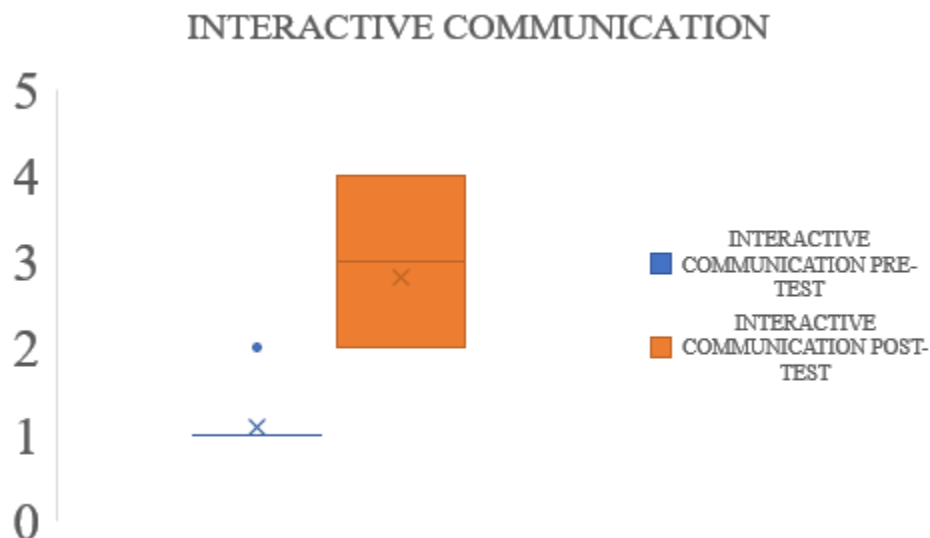
Participants	Grammar and Vocabulary	
	Pre-test	Post-test
1	1	4
2	1	2
3	1	2
4	2	3
5	1	2
6	1	3
7	1	2
8	1	2
9	1	3
10	1	2
11	1	3
12	2	4
13	1	4
14	1	2
15	1	2
16	1	2
17	1	2
18	1	4
19	1	2
20	1	4
21	1	3
22	1	4
23	1	4
TOTAL	25	65

Note: This table shows students' scores in the pre and post-test concerned with Interactive Communication, speaking sub-skills. Source: Daga, G. (2022)

The average difference in scores between pre-test and post-test is 1.7. As a result, the difference between the pre-test and post-test findings is positive.

Interactive Communication Graphic Analysis

Graphic 19. Interactive Communication Graphic Analysis



Note: The numbers 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, represent Band 1, Band 2, Band 3, Band 4, Band 5.

Source: Daga, G. (2022).

The reader can observe from the graph that the post-test results are higher than the pre-test results. These results fluctuate between Bands 2 and 4. The most common pre-test results are between Band 1 and Band 2.

Interactive Communication Student's T-test

Table 20.

Interactive Communication Student's T-test

GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY		
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
Average	1	3
Variance	0.24%	0.8
Observations	23	23
Pearson correlation coefficient	24%	
Hypothetical difference of means	0	
Degrees of freedom	22	
t-statistic	-9.65	
P(T<=t) one tail	0.00	
Critical value of t (one tail)	1.72	

Note: This data was obtained from the pre and post-test results. Source: Daga, G. (2022)

The hypothesis test of Pronunciation resulted in a p-value of 0.00 which is less than a statistical significance level of 0.05. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected,

and the alternative hypothesis is accepted since the findings of the pre-test and post-test differ significantly.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of Task-Based Learning to develop speaking skills. The application of the intervention reached the objectives set at the beginning of the project and the following conclusions are drawn:

- Task-Based Learning Method framework can be used as a valid teaching tool for EFL teachers to generate dynamic and relevant speaking activities in order to motivate and urge students to utilize the target language in real-life circumstances.
- The speaking skills and sub-skills, Grammar and Vocabulary, and Pronunciation evidence better development under the activities of Task-Based Learning Method. The results confirm an important improvement in students' English-speaking skills and sub-skills from the pre-test to the post-test.
- The selection of the appropriate techniques based on Task-Based Learning Method according to the level of students helps them to interact better and get involved in the activities proposed along the task cycle.
- Communicative activities based on Task-Based Learning Method fosters students English speaking skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made after the implementation of Task-Based Learning method to improve English speaking skills:

- To implement Task-Based Learning Method activities in English classes to develop students' English-speaking skills.
- To apply Task-Based Learning Method activities in small-size English classrooms in order to obtain better results.
- To include open tasks in Task-Based Learning Method English lessons since it helps students to increase their English vocabulary and consequently students use it to communicate.
- To encourage English teachers at Unidad Educativa "Cicalpa" to use communicative activities based on Task-Based Learning Method proposed in this study in favor of improving students' English-speaking skills.
- A similar study should be conducted in a small size classroom and increase the amount of time for the intervention step. In addition, Task-Based Learning Method should be used with writing skills to assess its effectiveness.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: OBSERVATION SHEET

OBSERVATION SHEET					
Grade and Section Time: Teacher:					
Appreciation: Always = 4 Usually = 3 Sometimes = 2 Never = 1	REACHED LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT				OBSERVATIONS
	1	2	3	4	
1. RANGE Uses basic sentence patterns with memorized phrases, groups of a few words and formulae in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations.					
2. ACCURACY Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes.					
3. FLUENCY Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident.					
4. INTERACTION Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord.					
5. COHERENCE Can link groups of words with simple connectors like "and", "but" and "because".					

Source: Daga, G. (2022)

ANNEX 2: CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL



UNIDAD EDUCATIVA
"CICALPA"





Sicalpa Viejo, 8 de enero de 2021

Máster
Blanca Marcela Merino Benalcázar

RECTORA (E) DE LA UNIDAD EDUCATIVA CICALPA

Presente,

De mi consideración:

Permitame expresarle un cordial y atento saludo, a la vez desearle éxitos en las funciones encomendadas, en beneficio de los niños y jóvenes.

Yo, Geovanny Fabián Daga Remache, con cedula de identidad N° 060444752-4, docente de la asignatura de Inglés en la Unidad Educativa "Cicalpa". Solicito muy comedidamente a usted, **se me autorice la aplicación del proyecto de investigación TASK-BASED LEARNING METHOD (TBL) IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING SKILLS** con los estudiantes del segundo año de bachillerato, paralelos "A" y "B" que actualmente asisten a clases virtuales. Este proyecto de investigación tendrá la duración de seis semanas a partir del 25 de enero de 2021 en horario normal.

Por la favorable atención que se de a la presente, anticipo mi sincero agradecimiento.

Atentamente,



Geovanny Daga R
060444752-4



Recibido
8/01/2021
[Signature]
Recho
Autorizado

Dir: Comunidad Cicalpa Viejo
Teléfono: 032356008
Correo: registrocicalpa@hotmail.com

ANNEX 3: A2 KEY 2020 SAMPLE TESTS SPEAKING – CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS 2021

PRETEST / POSTTEST (A2 LEVEL – CEFR)

Test 1
Part 1 (3-4 minutes)
Phase 1
Interlocutor

To both candidates Good morning / afternoon / evening.
 Can I have your mark sheets, please?

Hand over the mark sheets to the Assessor.

I'm, and this is

To Candidate A What's your name?

To Candidate B And what's your name?

Back-up prompts

	B, do you work or are you a student?	Do you work? Do you study? Are you a student?
<i>For UK, ask</i>	Where do you come from?	Are you from (Spain, etc.)?
<i>For Non-UK, ask</i>	Where do you live?	Do you live in ... (name of district / town etc.)?
	Thank you.	
	A, do you work or are you a student?	Do you work? Do you study? Are you a student?
<i>For UK, ask</i>	Where do you come from?	Are you from (Spain, etc.)?
<i>For Non-UK, ask</i>	Where do you live?	Do you live in ... (name of district / town etc.)?
	Thank you.	

Phase 2
Interlocutor

Now, let's talk about friends.

A, how often do you see your friends?

What do you like doing with your friends?

B, where do your friends live?

When do you see your friends?

Extended Response

Now A, please tell me something about one of your friends.

Interlocutor

Now, let's talk about home.

B, who do you live with?

How many bedrooms are there in your house / flat?

A, where do you watch TV at home?

What's your favourite room in the house?

Extended Response

Now, B, please tell me something about the things you like doing at home, at the weekends.

Back-up prompts

Do you see your friends every day?

Do you like going to the cinema?

Do your friends live near you?

Do you see your friends at weekends?

Back-up questions

Do you like your friend?

Where did you meet your friend?

Did you see your friends last weekend?

Back-up prompts

Do you live with your family?

Are there three bedrooms in your house / flat?

Do you watch TV in the kitchen?

Is your bedroom your favourite room?

Back-up questions

Do you like cooking at the weekends?

Do you play computer games at the weekends?

What did you do at home, last weekend?

Test 1

Part 2 (5-6 minutes)

Phase 1
Interlocutor
 ⌚ 3-4 minutes

Now, in this part of the test you are going to talk together.

*Place **Part 2** booklet, open at **Task 2a**, in front of candidates.*

Here are some pictures that show **different places to eat**.

Do you like these different places to eat? Say why or why not. I'll say that again.

Do you like these different places to eat? Say why or why not.

All right? Now, talk together.

Candidates

⌚ *Allow a minimum of 1 minute (maximum of 2 minutes) before moving on to the following questions.*

Interlocutor /
Candidates
Use as appropriate.
Ask each candidate
at least one
question.

Do you think...
 ...eating on the beach is fun?
 ...eating in restaurants is expensive?
 ...eating at home is boring?
 ...eating at college/work is cheap?
 ...eating in the park is nice?

Optional prompt
Why?/Why not?
What do you think?

Interlocutor

So, A, which of these places to eat do you like best?
 And you, B, which of these places do you like best?

Thank you. (Can I have the booklet, please?) *Retrieve **Part 2** booklet.*

Phase 2

Interlocutor
 ⌚ *Allow up to 2*
minutes

Now, do you prefer eating with friends or family, B? (Why?)

And what about you, A? (Do you prefer eating with friends or family?) (Why?)

Do you prefer eating at home or in a restaurant, A? (Why?)

And you, B (Do you prefer eating at home or in a restaurant?) (Why?)

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

Do you like these different places to eat?



Test 2

Part 1 (3-4 minutes)

Phase 1

Interlocutor

To both candidates	Good morning / afternoon / evening. Can I have your mark sheets, please? <i>Hand over the mark sheets to the Assessor.</i> I'm, and this is
To Candidate A	What's your name?
To Candidate B	And what's your name?

Back-up prompts

	B, do you work or are you a student?	Do you work? Do you study? Are you a student?
For UK, ask	Where do you come from?	Are you from (Spain, etc.)?
For Non-UK, ask	Where do you live? Thank you.	Do you live in ... (name of district / town etc.)?
	A, do you work or are you a student?	Do you work? Do you study? Are you a student?
For UK, ask	Where do you come from?	Are you from (Spain, etc.)?
For Non-UK, ask	Where do you live? Thank you.	Do you live in ... (name of district / town etc.)?

Phase 2

Interlocutor

Now, let's talk about music.

A, how often do you listen to music?

What music do you like best?

B, what is your favourite instrument?

Where do you like listening to music?

Extended Response

Now A, please tell me something about your favourite singer or group?

Interlocutor

Now, let's talk about shopping.

B, where do you like to go shopping?

What do you like to buy with your money?

A, who do you like to go shopping with?

What can you buy near your house?

Extended Response

Now, B, please tell me something about presents you buy for your friends.

Back-up prompts

Do you listen to music every day?

Do you like rock music?

Do you like the piano?

Do you like going to concerts?

Back-up questions

Where is your favourite singer from?

Why do you like them?

Do your friends like them too?

Back-up prompts

Do you like to go to shopping centres?

Do you like to buy clothes with your money?

Do you like to go shopping with your friends?

Can you buy food near your house?

Back-up questions

Where do you buy presents?

Do you like giving presents?

Have you bought a present recently?

Part 2 (5-6 minutes)
Phase 1
Interlocutor

Ⓢ 3-4 minutes

Now, in this part of the test you are going to talk together.

Place Part 2 booklet, open at Task 2b, in front of candidates.

 Here are some pictures that show **different holidays**.

Do you like these different holidays? Say why or why not. I'll say that again.

Do you like these different holidays? Say why or why not.

All right? Now, talk together.

Candidates

 Ⓢ Allow a minimum of 1 minute (maximum 2 minutes) before moving on to the following questions.

Interlocutor /
Candidates
Use as appropriate.
Ask each candidate
at least one
question.

 Do you think....
 ...beach holidays are fun?
 ...city holidays are interesting?
 ...camping holidays are exciting?
 ...walking holidays are expensive?
 ...holidays in the mountain are boring?

Optional prompt
Why?/Why not?

What do you think?

Interlocutor

 So, A, which of these holidays do you like best?
 And you, B, which of these holidays do you like best?

 Thank you. (Can I have the booklet, please?) *Retrieve Part 2 booklet.*
Phase 2
Interlocutor

 Ⓢ Allow up to 2
 minutes

Now, do you prefer to go on holidays with your friends or with your family, B? (Why?)

And what about you, A? (Do you prefer to go on holidays with your friends or with your family?) (Why?)

Which country would you like to visit in the future, A? (Why?)

And you, B? (Which country would you like to visit in the future?) (Why?)

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

Do you like these different holidays?



**ANNEX 4: ASSESSING SPEAKING PERFORMANCE -RUBRIC – CAMBRIDGE
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Cambridge English

Assessing Speaking Performance – Level A2

A2	Grammar and Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
5	- Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. - Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about everyday situations.	Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels.	- Maintains simple exchanges. - Requires very little prompting and support.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>		
3	- Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. - Uses appropriate vocabulary to talk about everyday situations.	Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features.	- Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. - Requires prompting and support.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>		
1	- Shows only limited control of a few grammatical forms. - Uses a vocabulary of isolated words and phrases.	Has very limited control of phonological features and is often unintelligible.	- Has considerable difficulty maintaining simple exchanges. - Requires additional prompting and support.
0	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>		

Cambridge English

Assessing Speaking Performance – Level A2

Cambridge English: Key (LEVEL A2) SPEAKING GRAMMAR & VOCABULARY	
Name of student	
Does the speaker use simple grammatical forms with sufficient control?	
Good	Not so good
Does the speaker use simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control?	
Good	Not so good
Does the speaker use appropriate vocabulary to talk about everyday situations?	
Good	Not so good
Comments	

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 Language Assessment
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Cambridge English

Assessing Speaking Performance – Level A2

Cambridge English: Key (LEVEL A2) SPEAKING PRONUNCIATION	
Name of student	
Are the utterances mostly clear? Can the speaker be mostly understood? Good	Not so good
Does the speaker show limited control of intonation? Good	Not so good
Does the speaker show limited control of word and sentence stress? Good	Not so good
Are individual sounds mostly clear? Good	Not so good
Comments	

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Cambridge English

Assessing Speaking Performance – Level A2

Cambridge English: Key (LEVEL A2) SPEAKING INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION	
Name of student	
Can the speaker maintain simple exchanges with the interlocutor (Part 1)?	
Good	Not so good
Does the speaker react appropriately to what the interlocutor or other candidate says?	
Good	Not so good
Does the speaker need any prompting or support?	
Good	Not so good
Comments	

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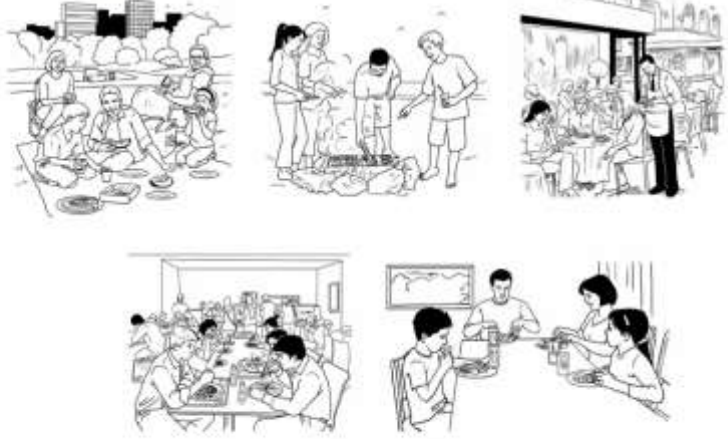
ANNEX 5: STUDENTS PARTICIPATION IN THE PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST STEPS

A2 Key 2020 sample tests Speaking.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Reader DC (32-bit)

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Inicio Herramientas A2 Key 2020 sampl...

Do you like these different places to eat?



0 / 12 100%

Video call participants: 3 visible, 2 hidden.

A2 Key 2020 sample tests Speaking.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Reader DC (32-bit)

Archivo Edición Ver Favoritos Ventana Ayuda

Inicio Herramientas A2 Key 2020 sampl...

Do you like these different holidays?



0 / 12 75%

0:10:27 0:10:25

Video call participants: 4 visible, 1 hidden.

