

A TASK-BASED LEARNING APPROACH TO FOSTER ORAL COMMUNICATION
SKILLS

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Abstract

This study corresponds to an action research project conducted with a group of sixth grade students at Colegio Técnico Domingo Faustino Sarmiento IED. The purpose was to investigate the impact of task-based learning (TBL) on students' oral communication skills and intrinsic motivation. During a five-week intervention period in the second half of 2022, a pedagogical proposal within the TBL framework was implemented to address deficiencies in students' speaking and listening abilities and to improve their motivation. Data from this period showed that TBL instruction was relevant for developing students' oral communication skills and that students' motivation significantly improved as a result of the implementation of this methodology. The study contributes to the understanding of how TBL can be used to enhance language learning in school settings.

Keywords: oral communication skills, listening, speaking, motivation, TBL.

Resumen

Este estudio corresponde a un proyecto de investigación-acción realizado con un grupo de estudiantes de sexto grado del Colegio Técnico Domingo Faustino Sarmiento IED. El objetivo fue investigar el impacto del aprendizaje basado en tareas (TBL) en las habilidades de comunicación oral y motivación intrínseca de los estudiantes. Durante un período de intervención de cinco semanas en la segunda mitad de 2022, se implementó una propuesta pedagógica dentro del marco de TBL para abordar las deficiencias en las habilidades de habla y escucha de los estudiantes y mejorar su motivación. Los datos de este período mostraron que la aplicación del TBL fue relevante para el desarrollo de las habilidades de comunicación oral de los estudiantes y que su motivación mejoró significativamente como resultado de la implementación de esta metodología. El estudio contribuye a la comprensión de cómo se puede utilizar el TBL para mejorar el aprendizaje de idiomas en entornos escolares.

Palabras clave: habilidades de comunicación oral, escucha, habla, motivación, TBL.

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Chapter I: Contextualization and research problem

This section focuses on the context of the research project through the identification of the local and institutional contexts, the characterization of the population, and the statement of the problem. Also, the general and specific objectives that serve as guidelines of the study are presented at the end of the chapter.

1.1 Local and institutional context

This study was conducted at Colegio Técnico Domingo Faustino Sarmiento I.E.D, which is a public school located in Transversal 60 No. 95-51, in Rionegro neighborhood, Bogotá, Colombia. It was founded in 1972 as an experimental school. In 1974 the Ministry of Education approved the academic high school and later, in 1987, the school started a technical high school with a commercial specialization. Since 2007, the school has given the high school degree with specialization in commerce and a SENA certification in *Contabilización de Operaciones Comerciales y Financieras*.

The school is located just at the edge of the Rionegro and Andes neighborhoods. Even though the Rionegro neighborhood is characterized for being a very commercial area full of stores and restaurants, the surroundings of the institution are mostly residential with just a few stores, characteristics more relatable to the Andes neighborhood. Besides, there are no major streets nearby, so in general terms the school is in a quiet area where the external context does not interfere with the academic activities. Furthermore, the school provides two shifts: morning (from 6:20 to 12:20) and afternoon (from 12:30 to 6:30).

According to the *Proyecto Educativo Institucional* (PEI), the pedagogical model that guides the work at the school is the historical-cultural or socio-constructivist model. This model views learning as the result of a process of social interaction in which the student

gains the main role of the learning process, and the teacher assumes the main role of the teaching process (Colegio Técnico Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, 2020).

In addition, the school has constructed its principles around the concepts of Democracy, Integral human development, Productivity and entrepreneurial attitude, Co-responsibility, Ethics of care, Participation, and Respect for diversity. In this sense, the institution's main goal is to educate people that promote their love for knowledge and with a productive and entrepreneurial attitude. Apart from these characteristics the school's aim is for graduates to follow the institutional values of Respect, Solidarity, Responsibility, Justice, and Equality (Colegio Técnico Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, 2020).

1.2 Characterization of the population

This study was focused on sixth grade students from group 601. To characterize the group, a survey was applied (Appendix A). The group had a total of 36 students who were between the ages of 10 and 14. The majority was from Bogotá while the rest were from other parts of the country, and three of them were from Venezuela. Many of them lived in the Rionegro neighborhood and usually walked to school. The rest of them used the school's transportation.

Regarding the group's affective characteristics, more than 30 students mentioned that they liked spending time with their classmates. Many of them wrote that it was fun talking and playing with the rest of the group. In addition, some students mentioned that they enjoyed working together: "en ellos confío cuando hay actividades en grupo", "nos ayudamos entre nosotros", "son buenos compañeros y siempre nos apoyamos y ayudamos" (Appendix A). This fact was also evidenced during the observation phase, as some students took the time to help their classmates with things they did not understand. On the other hand, there were three students that mentioned that they did not like

spending time with classmates for reasons such as “porque soy un poco antisocial y prefiero estar sola”, “porque son muy molestos y ruidosos” and “son molestos, tengo amigos en otros salones y acá hacen demasiada bulla” (Appendix A).

In terms of socio-cultural characteristics, the students manifested doing different activities during their free time. Among the most mentioned activities were playing (videogames, with the cellphone, with pets), drawing or painting, and practicing sports (football and basketball). In addition, other activities that students did involve various forms of entertainment such as watching tv, reading, watching YouTube videos, listening to music, dancing, and hanging out with friends. Three students mentioned doing homework during their free time.

About the school subject students liked the most, the most mentioned one was Social Sciences (11) and the second one was Math (9). Most of the students agreed on the fact that both teachers had a nice attitude, and the classes were interesting. Besides, other common subjects mentioned were Natural Sciences (6), Spanish (5), Physical Education (5), Arts (5), and Technology (3). It is important to mention that students could mention more than one subject they liked.

On the other hand, the school subjects that students mentioned not liking were English (15) and Entrepreneurship (12). Some of the reasons given for not liking English were: “porque me estreso mucho ya que no entiendo” and “porque no entiendo, se me dificulta hablar inglés” (Appendix A), while some reasons for not liking Entrepreneurship were: “porque me parece aburrida” and “porque casi no hacemos nada” (Appendix A). In addition, two other subjects that were mentioned by students were Natural Sciences (3) and Arts (2). Moreover, four students mentioned not disliking any subject.

Regarding the English subject, students were asked about things they would change in the class. Some of the answers were: “más tranquilidad en el aula”, “que explicara mejor la profesora, que no pusiera tantos trabajos”, “que sea más divertida”, “que la mayoría cambie su actitud con la profe” and “deberían ser un poco más didácticas, en vez de solo escribir en el cuaderno y hacer la cartilla” (Appendix A). On the other hand, many students manifested they would not change anything in the class. Furthermore, students mentioned that the language was important because of job opportunities, traveling, communication, and academic reasons.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Considering the field notes from the observation phase it was possible to identify some important aspects of the English class in terms of methodology and structure. First, it followed a traditional methodology in which the class was strictly related to the progress on students' book and workbook. This fact was also mentioned during the survey: “es difícil porque uno se confunde con la cartilla y cuaderno”, “en inglés solo escribes en un libro, no sabemos inglés”, “si cambiaria algo, no estar tanto en la cartilla”, “deberían ser un poco más didácticas, en vez de solo escribir en el cuaderno y hacer la cartilla” (Appendix A). Second, lessons tended to follow the same structure every time. All the classes that were observed had the same kind of activity, which was working on the books. There were just a few classes in which the teacher changed the paradigm by explaining a topic or by working on the books' activities with the whole class, but still following a traditional grammar-focused methodology.

Moreover, it was also possible to identify a problem regarding students' motivation. This was evident during the students' survey, as English was the subject that they disliked the most. As Fen and Kiat (2015) explain, “the learners who are not motivated are more likely to fail in achieving their goals than those learners who are motivated” (p. 98). For this

reason, it was important for the group to increase their intrinsic motivations towards English learning in order to achieve some level of improvement in their language performance.

In addition, there are some important aspects to consider regarding students' performance during the English class. Being cognizant of the Basic Standards on Competence in Foreign Languages, there were some inconsistencies between what students should have been able to do and what they could do according to their academic level. It is established that sixth grade students should be able to spell familiar words and maintain simple conversations with their partners during class activities (MEN, 2006). However, it was evident that students struggled with spelling activities, as they were not completely familiar with the alphabet. Besides, they were not able to have simple conversations with their peers. This is strongly connected to the fact that the English classes did not provide enough opportunities for communication in the target language, as the focus was put mainly on the books and grammar alone.

Continuing with the above, there were problems regarding students' oral expressions. Considering what could be identified during the observation phase, English was being taught in a decontextualized way. The focus was put mainly on the books and not on the communicative aspect of the language. According to the teacher during the interview (Appendix B), this was an issue that came up since primary school, as she considered that students got to high school with weak foundations, which makes the process more difficult.

Thus, this research project aimed to work on the issue regarding students' oral communicative skills. To accomplish this, it was also important to work on an improvement of students' motivation as well. It was expected that following a task-based learning approach would be the way of working on students' oral expressions, as it would present

English learning in a more engaging methodology that increases intrinsic motivation, as well as provide a focus on the communicative aspect of the language.

1.4 Rationale

Foreign language bilingualism has been a big concern for the Colombian educational context for a long time. Several policies and plans have been developed to improve bilingualism in Spanish and English in the territory, but there has been a general lack of continuity that has obstructed the objectives of these processes (Gómez, 2016). Even if there is supposed to be a high effort to improve the national English proficiency level, reality shows something completely different. In fact, according to the EF English Proficiency Index (2021) Colombia got the 81st position out of 112 countries, and the 17th out of the other 20 Latin American countries that were studied. This fact places Colombia as one of the countries with the lowest English proficiency levels in the world. Statistics show that all the efforts for achieving bilingualism in the country have not worked the way they should have.

One major reason this problem is presented may be related to the way English has been being taught. It is common to find classrooms in which English is taught in a traditional and decontextualized way. It has been established that the importance of contextualized teaching lies in the fact that it aims to “capture a student’s attention by illustrating the relevance of the learning experience” (Baker, Hope & Karandjeff, 2009, p. 8). Instead of just presenting the language as isolated pieces of information that students must memorize, language should be taught in a way that lets them understand the reasons why they need to learn the language and how they can use their new knowledge in real-world situations.

In view of the above, this research looked forward to fostering oral communication skills through a task-based language teaching approach. This approach corresponds to one of the perspectives within Communicative Language Teaching (Brown, 2015). In the last ten years there have not been many Colombian studies that address the impact of this approach in oral communication skills. Besides, there have not been studies regarding the application of this methodology within populations similar to the one of this study, as the focus of similar research projects has been mostly on primary school (e.g., Laverde, 2016; Meneses, 2016; Ospina, 2016; Aguirre, 2020). Moreover, as the characteristics of secondary school highly differ from those of primary school, it is relevant to establish the pertinence of this approach in these grades within the Colombian context. The idiosyncrasy of this population (especially the sixth grade in which learners are in the transition from childhood to adolescence) is worth considering for the teaching-learning process. For these reasons, this study's relevance lies in the fact that it aims to contribute with certain gaps of knowledge regarding the application of the TBL methodology in high school, especially in sixth grade.

1.5 Research question

To what extent does TBL methodology foster the oral communication skills of a group of sixth graders at Colegio Técnico Domingo Faustino Sarmiento IED?

1.6 General objective

To describe the influence of TBL on the oral communication skills in English of a group of sixth graders at Colegio Técnico Domingo Faustino Sarmiento IED.

1.7 Specific objectives

- To determine which techniques are better to foster the group's oral communication skills.
- To describe students' communicative skills throughout the pedagogical implementation.
- To indicate the influence of a TBL approach on students' intrinsic motivation.

Chapter II: State of the art and theoretical framework

This chapter is about the research background and the conceptual framework that functions as the foundation for the current study. Taking into consideration the research problem, the concepts that constitute this framework correspond to oral communication skills and task-based learning.

2.1 State of the art

In order to understand how the task-based learning approach has been used in the Colombian context in recent years, a total of five studies were selected to develop this state of the art. Four of them correspond to undergraduate theses (three from Universidad Pedagógica Nacional and one from Universidad Santo Tomás). The other one corresponds to a master's thesis from Universidad Libre de Colombia. It is important to mention that one of the revised works was not about TBL. However, as it focused on communicative language teaching, there were many similarities between the research objectives and methodological approach of that study and the current one.

The first study was carried out in 2016 by the graduate student Luisa Fernanda Laverde Sánchez from Universidad Libre de Colombia. The population consisted of a group of 35 third-grade students from a public school in Bogotá. The research was carried out due to students' passive behavior during the English class. It consisted of an action research process that aimed at fostering students' speaking skills through a TBL approach. The results showed that there was a correlation between the enhancement of students' speaking performance and the TBL approach, which is highly connected with the current study in terms of the aim. The researcher concluded that ludic activities were very useful during the process, which is relevant for the current study.

The second study was done in 2016 by the undergraduate student César Andrés Meneses Perdomo from Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. The population consisted of a group of 15 students of ages between 7 and 9 years old from UPN's Centro de Lenguas. The researcher determined that students were not using English actively during the development of the classes, as they would only use the language during the activities, but peer interaction was mainly done in Spanish. The study was done through an action research paradigm that aimed at improving students' oral interaction in English through the TBL approach. The researcher identified an increase of awareness towards the use of English to solve tasks, and the fact that the TBL approach influenced peer-to-peer interaction, which is connected to the current research in terms of what is expected to be done in the classroom.

The third study was carried out in 2016 by the undergraduate student Steven Ospina Rodríguez from Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. The population consisted of a group of 36 second graders from Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño school. It was established that students had no prior knowledge of English. The researcher used the action research paradigm with the objective of developing students' initial English vocabulary. The study showed that the creation of materials based on students' necessities and contexts was relevant for involving them in the learning process, which is related to the current research's perspective of contextualized teaching. The researcher also praises the importance of task-based learning at making students practice their English in context.

The fourth study was done in 2020 by the undergraduate student Milena Bernal Aguirre from Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. The population was a group of 39 girls of fourth grade from Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño. The research was carried out due to the consideration that students were learning English in a decontextualized way, which

was connected to students' difficulties regarding vocabulary and not being able to express simple ideas in English. The researcher followed the action research paradigm to meet the main objective of developing students' initial communicative competence through the communicative language teaching approach. The results showed that the communicative language teaching proposal enhanced students' communicative competence. Even though this study is not about TBL, the methodology and objectives are alike the current project.

The fifth study was carried out in 2021 by the undergraduate student Keyla Milena Ordóñez Moncada from Universidad Santo Tomás. The population consisted of a group of ninth graders at Integrado Juan Atalaya School. The research was carried out due to the necessity of developing students' productive skills in English. The problem was addressed through an action research design in which the focus was to identify the contributions of the TBL approach in the development of production skills. The research findings were that the TBL approach helped students with their language awareness, which promoted the understanding of how English works and the gaining of confidence to express ideas to communicate in real contexts.

It is worth mentioning that it was not possible to find studies that share similar populations with that of the current research done in the Colombian context. Most of the research projects of the TBL approach done at Colombian schools were developed with primary school students. As it will be seen in further chapters, it was possible to identify the difference between the previously reviewed projects and the current one because of the differences in population.

2.2 Oral communication skills

Regarding students' language use, this research focuses on oral expression. From communicative language teaching perspectives, the skills of listening and speaking can be categorized as "oral communication skills" (Brown, 2015, p. 345). These skills are the ones that lead a student to meet the natural purpose of a language: communication. If the goal of the English class is to have students understand and use the language, then it is through developing their oral communication skills that this goal is to be reached.

Listening and speaking, as parts of oral communication, represent the receptive and productive active uses of language, and these two uses revolve around creating and understanding meaning (Cameron, 2005). Understanding meaning through listening and creating meaning through speaking is the way in which communication is achieved. In this sense, as Cameron (2005) mentions, the language classroom for beginner students should work on meaning first, for "if children do not understand the spoken language, they cannot learn it" (p. 36). In this vein, building meaning should be the focus at beginner-level English classes.

It is also worth mentioning the importance of interaction in the development of these oral communication skills. Long (2007), as cited in Brown (2015), mentions that interactive communication "is not merely a component of language learning, but rather the very basis for L2 development" (p. 79). In this sense, it is through interaction that language learning is possible.

2.2.1 Listening skill

The first of the two oral communication skills to be covered corresponds to the listening skill. Cameron (2005) mentions that this is the skill in which the language is used actively to access other people's meanings. As it will be established later, meaning is at

the core of TBL, which is why this perspective of listening skill is important. Furthermore, it is established that during the initial stages of language teaching the listening skill is more used than speaking (Brown, 2015). This means that the importance of listening skills lies in the fact that it is by these means that students start developing their speaking skills.

It is also worth mentioning that the listening skill, just like any other skill, is not developed independently. Brown (2015) mentions that "listening frequently implies speaking, and in academic contexts possibly note-taking" (p. 315). The fostering of the listening skill necessarily needs to be linked with the fostering of speaking, which is why the current research is focused on oral communication skills as a whole. However, it is still possible to determine certain assets within the listening skill alone. Brown (2015) proposes a series of micro and macro-skills that are part of the listening skill. Out of all those skills, these are the ones of most interest for the current study:

Micro-skills:

- The retention of chunks of language in the short-term memory.
- The discrimination of distinctive sounds of English.
- The processing of speech containing pauses, errors, and other performance variables.
- The recognition that meanings may be expressed in different ways.

Macro-skills:

- The inference of situations, participants, or goals using real-world knowledge.
- The use of facial expressions, body language, and other nonverbal clues to decipher meanings.
- The development of listening strategies to understand meanings.

In this sense, even if the listening skill should be put into practice along with the other language skills, it is still important to consider the variety of aspects that involve its development.

2.2.2 Speaking skill

The other oral communication skill corresponds to speaking. This skill is defined by Cameron (2005) as “the active use of language to express meanings so that other people can make sense of them” (p. 40). Meaning should be at the core of speaking, just as listening. Having meaning at the center of the oral communication skills is important because it is the fundament of communication itself. We get again to the importance of developing more than one skill simultaneously, as speaking and listening work together in real language situations. A speaker needs a listener, and it is through the exchange of meanings that communication is achieved. Nevertheless, speaking also has certain specific characteristics that are worth considering for achieving those exchanges in a successful way.

In order to make communication effective, speakers need to possess a variety of abilities, so that their meanings might be understood. Brown (2015) clusters some of these abilities in two “important speaker goals”: accuracy and fluency (p. 346). In this sense, according to Derakhshan, Khalili and Beheshti (2016) accuracy corresponds to vocabulary use, grammar, and pronunciation, while fluency is about the natural flow of speech. However, reaching these two goals requires different cognitive processes and abilities. Developing accuracy in the spoken language might involve memory or repetition, while fluency requires practice and interaction, so that learners improve their spontaneity when speaking.

Furthermore, there are also some micro and macro-skills that are part of the whole speaking process. These are some of Brown's (2015) proposed skills that are relevant for the context of this research:

Micro-skills:

- The production of chunks of language of different lengths.
- The use of strategic devices to enhance clarity (pauses, fillers, self-corrections, and backtracking).
- The production of speech in natural constituents (phrases, pause groups, breath groups, and sentences)

Macro-skills:

- The achieving of communicative functions according to situations, participants, and goals.
- The use of facial features, kinesics, body language, and other nonverbal cues along with verbal language to convey meaning.
- The use of speaking strategies, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, providing contexts, appealing for help, and assessing the interlocutor's understanding.

2.3 Task-based learning and meaningful learning

According to Brown (2015) task-based learning (TBL) is defined as one of the most relevant applications of the Communicative Language Teaching approach, which consists of focusing language teaching on the use of tasks. In other words, a class that follows a TBL approach consists of a series of tasks that aim to fulfill a specific objective related to the language. Furthermore, TBL also sets the focus of the tasks on the understanding of meaning, which relates to Cameron's (2005) perspective of initial language learning.

Making students reach meaning through the completion of various tasks is at the core of TBL.

In addition, it is possible to establish two kinds of tasks in this methodology. A TBL approach sets target tasks, which are related to the objectives that are expected to be fulfilled beyond the classroom, and pedagogical tasks, which are related to the various activities in the classroom that aim to make students reach the target task (Brown, 2015). According to this, the process of lesson planning implies the teacher to set both a goal and a series of techniques that lead to its completion. Therefore, a TBL lesson plan must be strategic and follow a logical order.

Also, it is important to mention the view of language for the TBL approach. As part of the Communicative Language Teaching framework, TBL considers that language must be widely used to learn it. Hence, interaction is fundamental for the development of the class. Besides, through the pedagogical tasks “there is a communicative problem to solve [and] there is a relationship to comparable real-world activities” (Brown, 2015, p. 47). That is, the TBL classroom sets an environment in which language is taught and learned in a natural and reality-landed way.

Moreover, this perspective of language teaching has a strong connection with the theory of meaningful learning and retention. According to Ausubel (2000), “learning is enhanced when the conditions of practice closely resemble the conditions under which the skill or knowledge in question will eventually be used” (p. 195). According to the theory, TBL would also aim towards meaningful learning in this respect, as the approach focuses on real-life use of language. The same author also connects this idea to the fact that meaningful learning tends to avoid monotony, which “enjoys the benefits of higher levels of interest and motivation” (p. 195). This suggests that achieving good levels of engagement

in possible through the proposition of different activities that provide variety to the learning process.

2.3.1 *The role of motivation*

As it was mentioned in the statement of the problem, students' lack of motivation was something noticeable during the observation phase. Motivation has been described as a key factor in the process of foreign language learning, as it is strongly related to the success of the process (Fen & Kiat, 2015). This means that lower levels of motivation lead to difficulties during the learning process. In this sense, motivation is of great relevance, and it is part of the teacher's role to get closer to meaningful learning by considering students' interests and connecting them with the learning process.

Taking into consideration that motivation is a wide concept, this research focuses on intrinsic motivation. This kind of motivation is defined as the one that "can be found within the individual and is related to the individual's identity and sense of well-being" (Fen & Kiat, 2015, p. 98). The same authors also establish that intrinsic motivation may be perceived when students start viewing the learning process as a goal, which means that they seek new knowledge because the process itself implies a certain degree of satisfaction. However, even when this type of motivation comes from within the learner, it is not just a matter of the learner alone. The context influences the way in which students understand the learning process, being the most immediate context in this case, the English classroom. For this reason, the class methodology plays an important role in the building of intrinsic motivation, as it is the way in which the teacher sets the learning environment.

In addition, apart from the role of the class methodology, the role of the teacher is also relevant for students' intrinsic motivation. The English teacher should know and

understand his or her students while also taking “the role in reinforcing motivation in learners” (Fen & Kiat, 2015, p. 99). The teacher has an active role in determining the way in which students feel in the class. In this sense, the teacher is not only responsible for the teaching process but also for keeping students’ interests in mind, therefore, fostering their intrinsic motivation.

Chapter III: Research methodology

This chapter presents the methodological characteristics of the research project. In this sense, concepts such as research paradigm, type of study, and data collection instruments and procedures will be defined and explained.

3.1 Paradigm

This project follows the qualitative research paradigm. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), qualitative research is the one that “deliberately focuses on individuals and the responses of significant players in a particular scenario” (p. 462). The scenario in this case corresponds to the English class while the significant players are the students. Moreover, qualitative research in education is directed to the comprehension of educational phenomena and the transformation of socio-educational practices (Dorio, Massot & Sabariego, 2009a). In this sense, this paradigm fits with the current research aims in terms of what is expected to be achieved within the classroom.

In addition, the nature of the qualitative paradigm allows the analysis to occur during the data collection process (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). This is important because it gives the researcher the opportunity to make important changes during the research process if necessary. Similarly, Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2010) also mention that this paradigm often works circularly, and that sequence may vary according to the particularities of each study. This fact makes a lot of sense in an educational setting, as teachers adapt their practices according to learners’ needs and contexts. It is for these reasons that the qualitative paradigm was chosen to meet the established objectives.

3.2 Type of study

This project's approach sticks to the action research design. Action research is described as the kind of research that "can be used in almost any setting where a problem involving people, tasks and procedures cries out for solution, or where some change of feature results in a more desirable outcome" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 297). This definition fits with the current project because it aims at an improvement inside the English classroom. Other authors like Latorre (2009) share this notion of action research, affirming that its goal is associated with an improvement or a transformation of social and educational practices, and by doing that, further knowledge on the problem is generated. In this sense, this type of research is a way of making positive transformations within the classroom to better comprehend an issue.

Moreover, Phillips and Carr (2010) establish that within the action research framework "teaching and research are viewed as involving a continuous cycle or spiral of planning, implementing, reflecting and/or evaluating" (p. 41). During the current study, a problem was identified within a specific population, hence, a series of lesson plans were designed to respond to said problem, and there was a process of reflection and evaluation involved as well. Similarly, as part of the process of action research, Latorre (2009) identifies three main aspects: inquiry (comprehension and interpretation of social practices), action (change of those practices) and purpose (improvement of the issue). That is, through action research problems are identified, and then a proposal emerges to address the problem.

In this sense, action research has two phases: The first one corresponds to the diagnostic stage, in which the problems are identified and the hypothesis developed, and the second one is the action part, in which a process of planning leads to a proposal aimed to the solution of the problem (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). However, the same

authors establish that it is not just a matter of identifying problems and solving them, but a way of “improving and understanding the world by changing it and learning how to improve it from the effects of the changes made” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 298). Once again, the cyclic dynamic of action research, and the fact that it is part of the qualitative paradigm, implies an inductive way of understanding, which means that the understanding of specific situations might lead to the general understanding of an area of knowledge. The current research, for instance, aims to widen the general understanding of English teaching practices by studying a particular group of students.

3.3 Data collection procedures and instruments

Considering that this study works within the framework of qualitative research, the instruments and procedures for data collection selected are aligned with this kind of information. Dorio, Massot & Sabariego (2009b) mention that during qualitative research the process of data collection emerges and changes during the study, and it adapts and gets more precision through the contact with informants. In this sense, the present study considered the following instruments and techniques for data collection, some which were established since the beginning of the research and others that emerged during the process.

3.3.1 Observation

The first technique to be discussed is observation. There are many ways in which this technique has been described both in a general sense of qualitative research and as a crucial part of educational research. Phillips and Carr (2006) mention that observation is all about watching critically and deliberately as a participant in the classroom. Doing this is important because it allows the researcher not just to identify but also to understand the current state of the class context. In a setting of action research, observation is one of the

primary methods of identifying the problems to be addressed. Furthermore, Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2010) point out that an important part of observation is the description of activities, people and their meanings in different communities, contexts, and environments. Translating this into classroom observation implies the description of interactions, relationships of power, and other social factors that are present in the school context.

In addition, one of the most important aspects of observation is that it allows the gathering of data from situations while they occur naturally (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). By doing this, researchers can contrast the reality they observe with data from other instruments they may use, as “what people do, may differ from what they say they do” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 396). In this vein, using observation is relevant to contrast other sources of information, and serves in the construction of a more objective view of the observed context.

One last thing to note about this technique in educational contexts is about the participation of the researcher. Teacher-researchers are an active part of the dynamics and relationships within the classroom; hence, they deal with participatory observation, which means that they observe while they participate in the activities of the group that is being investigated (Dorio, Massot & Sabariego, 2009b). Having this in mind, two different moments of observation were developed during the present study. The first one was done without participating with the group, in order to identify the problem; the second one corresponds to that of the implementation phase, in which the researcher participated with the group and described the development of the implementation while it occurred.

3.3.2 Field notes

To keep track of the observations, field notes were used as a means of registering the descriptions of the observed reality. Dorio, Massot and Sabariego (2009b) point out that field notes are the most common way of registering observations during a participatory observation. Due to their versatility, field notes constitute an easy and yet effective way of formalizing the observation process. For instance, it is mentioned that one of their characteristics is that they can be written at the same time of the observation and away from it (Dorio, Massot and Sabariego, 2009b). This means that the researcher may complement previous annotations with further insight into the observations. This is connected to Hernández, Fernández and Baptista's (2010) categorization of annotation: a) direct observation annotations, b) interpretative annotations, c) thematic annotations, d) personal annotations, and e) participants' reactivity annotations. Once again, the different options provided by this method make it a necessary complement for the observations. An example of a field note may be found in the annexes (Appendix E).

3.3.3 Questionnaire

One of the instruments used for data collection was the questionnaire. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007) mention that questionnaires "are used to collect data primarily about student's perceptions, feelings, or attitudes about skills, concepts, or other classroom issues" (p. 181). In addition, Phillips and Carr (2006) explain that this instrument is useful when there is not enough time to ask every student individually. In this sense, to address some of the specific objectives, the questionnaire was a practical instrument to gather this kind of data.

Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2006) mention that depending on the kind of data sought "a word-based qualitative approach might be more suitable" (Cohen, Manion &

Morrison, 2007, p. 321). This was the case for the current research, as it was necessary to inquire about students' perceptions, opinions, and feelings. For this reason, as Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2010) indicate, the way of getting the most complete data possible is by applying open-questions questionnaires.

Having all these characteristics in mind, two questionnaires were designed to gather information at the beginning and at the end of the process. The first questionnaire (Appendix A) was carried out during the observation phase, and it served two purposes: to characterize the group, and to inquire about students' perceptions of the English class. The second questionnaire (Appendix C) was done at the end of the implementation phase, and it was to inquire about students' perceptions on the pedagogical proposal. This was used as a way of contrasting students' motivations before and after the implementation.

3.3.4 *Semi-structured interview*

Another procedure for data collection was the semi-structured interview. The interview is defined as being complementary to other qualitative techniques like participant observation (Dorio, Massot & Sabariego, 2009b, p.336). Having multiple sources of qualitative data is helpful for having a more objective view of the information in general. Moreover, semi-structured interviews follow a general guide of topics or questions that are related to the relevant information that is needed, but the interviewer is free to introduce additional questions to get more precise information (Dorio, Massot & Sabariego, 2009b); Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2010). This is of great importance, as triangulation with other sources is more effective when information is more detailed.

This instrument was used during this study to inquire about the English teacher's perception of the class and the research group (Appendix B). The questions were formulated considering some of the things that could be identified during the observation

phase. In this sense, through the interview it was possible to gather more insight into certain matters surrounding the research problem and the group of students.

3.3.5 Teacher logs

An important instrument for data collection was the teacher log. Teacher logs are defined as a way of collecting data from classroom practices and reflecting on the teaching practices (Glennie, Charles & Rice, 2017). In this study, teacher logs were used to organize the data from the observations in categories of interest to the research process. In this sense, each lesson was accompanied by a log where the teacher-researcher provided insights about the pedagogical practices, and data related to oral communication skills and student motivation (see appendix D).

3.3.6 Artifacts

The last method for data collection involves the use of artifacts. Artifacts are any form of physical documentation that provides further insight into the research process (Phillips and Carr, 2006). In the light of this research, artifacts served the purpose of assessing the way in which students interpreted their peers' meanings through communicative activities. Hence, artifacts served as a way of interpreting the way in which students interacted and exchanged information during the tasks, which offered relevant data for the analysis.

3.4 Ethical considerations

Considering that this research involved the participation of minors, it was important to inform their parents about the characteristics of the study and ask for their consent (Appendix E) to carry out the process. Besides, it is worth mentioning that no personal

data from the participants was collected during the process, and only information that concerned the research question was considered.

Chapter IV: Pedagogical intervention

This chapter is about the implementation phase of the research. The different perspectives that guided the pedagogical proposal are discussed here, as well as the guidelines that were followed for the instructional design.

4.1 Pedagogical approach

The pedagogical approach that served as a guideline for the implementation phase of the current study was task-based learning (TBL). As part of the communicative language teaching framework, communication is at the core of the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, one aspect of great importance for TBL methodology is meaning, and meaning the central point of communication (Cameron, 2015). For this reason, the language focus is put more on the pragmatic aspect of the language rather than on grammar.

In addition, TBL lessons are structured by the completion of a series of activities. These activities can be organized into three stages, according to their purpose: pre-task stage, that serves as a preparation for the task; during-task stage, that involves a communicative problem that constitutes the task; and post-task stage, that is related to any kind of follow-up activities (Clark & Révész, 2019).

In order to carry out this process, it is important to understand the teacher-researcher perspectives that give the bases to the pedagogical approach. For this, it is necessary to point out the different visions that give meaning to this pedagogical intervention. The following corresponds to the study's understanding of the teaching-learning process.

4.2 Vision of language

For task-based language teaching and any other communicative language teaching approach, language is a means of communication. Using a language implies understanding others' meanings and expressing one's (Cameron, 2015). To learn a language, it is necessary to use it as much as possible. In this sense, interaction is of great value for learning the target language, as it is the way in which learners get the opportunity to practice and communicate in the classroom.

Furthermore, this study is in line with Krashen and Terrell's (1998) Natural Approach theory. These authors establish that the focus should be on "the acquisition of the ability to communicate messages using the target language" (p. 58). This was precisely what this study aimed to do, and the way to get closer to this goal was by fostering the development of learners' communicative skills.

4.3 Vision of learning

The learning theory that is assumed in this proposal is constructivism. This theory may be understood by the idea that it is through meaning-making that learners build new knowledge (Brader-Araje & Jones, 2002). As can be seen, there is a direct connection with the principles of TBL, as meaning is the primary goal of the approach. Furthermore, it is important to mention that for the constructivist theory, the teaching-learning process can be thought of as a dialectical interaction between teacher and students' knowledge (Ortiz, 2015). Learners are not viewed as subjects that "absorb" new knowledge but as individuals that construct their new knowledge based on their experiences and previous knowledge.

In order to follow the constructivist teaching paradigm during the pedagogical intervention, some of the principles proposed by The Western Governors University (2020) were considered:

- New knowledge is built upon previous knowledge. This means that the learner's previous knowledge, experiences, beliefs, and insights influence the building of new knowledge. It is here where the teacher's role is to guide learners toward learning new knowledge, by providing opportunities for them to correlate what they already know with what they are yet to know.
- Learning is an active process. It is part of the learner's responsibility to become aware of their learning process, while the teacher helps them increase their level of awareness and involvement.
- Learning is a social activity. Learners do not build their knowledge on their own. their interactions with other people impact the way they learn. It is the teacher's goal to provide sufficient interactions within the classroom to assure peer involvement.
- Learning is contextual. People do not learn isolated rules or facts, as they need to connect these with what they already know in their context. For language learning, this is related to focusing on communication rather than isolated grammar teaching.
- Motivation is key to learning. Low motivation highly affects students' learning outcomes. The teacher needs to find ways to engage learners and keep them motivated throughout the teaching-learning process.

4.4 Vision of classroom

The classroom is understood as the learning environment where interaction among learners is fundamental. As was mentioned before, carrying out communicative activities is

a major point of TBL. In this vein, to achieve this the classroom must be seen as a place where interaction is not only possible but necessary. During the observation phase of the current study, it was possible to determine that interaction was not a relevant part of the class, as most of the observed classes were focused on solving the class books individually. In contrast, for the current instructional perspective, interaction is key to accomplishing the established objectives, and the classroom is the space where this is possible.

4.5 Instructional design

The pedagogical intervention started on September 5th and ended on October 26th of 2022. It consisted of 8 lessons that followed the TBL methodology. For this, the previous work during the first half of the year was considered, and the designed lessons continued with the topics that students were working on. As has already been mentioned, students were used to working on the notebook and books during most of their classes, which evidenced a decontextualized learning process. Having this in mind and following the requests of the head teacher, the topics that were taught during the lessons were adapted from those class materials. Each topic and certain exercises were taken from the books and contextualized to students' realities. In this way, it was possible to make a balance between what the head teacher expected students to learn and the research question and objectives. This was the schedule of the research activities:

Table 1*Research schedule.*

Date	Activity
April 4 th – May 18 th	Observation phase
September 5 th	Lesson 1: Introducing ourselves
September 7 th	Lesson 2: Reviewing the basics
September 19 th	Lesson 3: The body
September 26 th	Lesson 4: Making descriptions
September 28 th	Lesson 5: Activities we do
October 7 th	Lesson 6: Our families
October 5 th	Lesson 7: Family relationships
October 19 th	Lesson 8: Healthy and unhealthy habits

4.5.1 Roles

- **Teacher**

In this instruction design, the teacher served as a facilitator for students' learning process. It was not through knowledge transmission that the process was carried out, but through the mediation of student's previous knowledge and the new one. The teacher was also responsible for creating enough communicative opportunities in the classroom to foster the development of oral communicative skills, as well as the contextualization of the class contents to meet students' own interests and keep an optimal level of motivation.

- **Students**

Students were viewed as active subjects and protagonists of their learning process. In this vein, they were expected to attain control of their learning process by developing their autonomy and participating actively during the activities proposed by the teacher. Also, they needed to be aware of the gaps in their knowledge to address them with the

teacher's guidance. For this, it was important for them to understand the relevance of making mistakes and how they could to take advantage of them.

4.5.2 Lesson plan

Regarding lesson planning, there are a few important things to mention. Every lesson plan started by establishing the objectives of the lesson, which were divided into communicative and language objectives. Besides, each lesson was structured following the three phases of TBL instruction: pre-task, during-task, and post-task. Additionally, every lesson included a warm-up activity, which helped activate students' knowledge at the beginning of each class. Doing this was important because of the class's schedule: First, Monday's class was just after break time. This meant that students usually attended the class in a playful state. Second, the class on Wednesdays was the first one of the day, which implied that many students often attended class in a sleepy state. In this sense, warm-ups helped prepare students for each lesson. Moreover, it is important to mention that a space for students to assess the class was present during every lesson. This was relevant for keeping track of their perceptions, motivations, and suggestions, which were all considered for the planning of the following lessons. An example of a lesson plan can be found in the annexes (Appendix G).

Chapter V: Data analysis and findings

This chapter is about the analysis of the data and the findings of the research process in the light of the pedagogical intervention. Data were analyzed to describe the impact of the Task-Based Learning methodology in students' oral communication skills. In order to obtain a meaningful analysis of the data and to answer the research question, this study followed the analytical process proposed by Burns (1999), as it supports the reflexive nature of action research.

This analytical process is in line with the goal of educational action research in the sense that it promotes the continuous spiral of planification, implementation, and reflection (Phillips and Carr, 2010). The purpose of the data analysis is to comprehend the underlying characteristics of the teaching practice with the purpose of expanding the comprehension of the teaching phenomenon. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the analysis of action research data is not separated from data collection, as they often overlap during practice (Burns, 1999). In this vein, the analysis aims for a dynamic treatment of the data to reach a thorough understanding of the dynamics and implications behind the implementation phase.

Accordingly, Burns (1999) proposes four steps for the analysis of action research data: a) assembling of the data, where data are organized and broad patterns begin to show up; b) coding of the data, where different categories or codes are developed to identify specific patterns; c) comparing the data, where comparisons between different gathering techniques are made to identify repetition of themes; and d) building of interpretations, where the researcher goes beyond the descriptive dimension to the articulation of concepts and the development of theories about the emergence of the patterns.

5.1 Categories of analysis

After organizing and revising all gathered data, the coding phase was done by identifying common themes and patterns. By doing this, and taking into consideration the theoretical framework, the following categories emerged to make sense of the pedagogical intervention process:

Table 2

Categories and subcategories of analysis.

Research question	Objectives	Categories	Subcategories
To what extent does TBL methodology foster the oral communication skills of a group of sixth graders at Colegio Técnico Domingo Faustino Sarmiento IED?	-To determine which techniques are better to foster the group's oral communication skills.	Influence of TBL on the listening skill	- Processing of meaning - Use of listening strategies
	-To describe students' communicative skills throughout the pedagogical implementation.	Influence of TBL on the speaking skill	- Expression of meaning - Use of speaking strategies
	-To indicate the influence of a TBL approach on students' intrinsic motivation.	Students' perceptions and motivations	

In this sense, there are some things to mention about the research specific objectives. The objective *to determine which activities are better to foster the group's oral communication skills*, was addressed by examining data regarding oral communication skills (field notes, teacher logs, questionnaires) and students' motivation (questionnaires).

The second specific objective *to describe students' communicative skills throughout the pedagogical implementation*, was addressed along the pedagogical intervention through the use of teacher logs. Finally, the last specific objective *to indicate the influence of a TBL approach on students' intrinsic motivations*, was assessed through students' responses in both questionnaires.

In view of the above, findings derived from the analysis are organized in terms of the established categories and are discussed as follows.

5.2 Findings

This section corresponds to the interpretation of the data in the light of the established categories and subcategories. For this, the analysis focuses on data from field notes, teacher logs, and artifacts. Besides, as students' perceptions were very important throughout the development of the pedagogical intervention, data from questionnaires #1 and #2 are used to contrast the teacher-researcher's insights. In addition, an overview of students' performance during the implementation phase is presented before the analysis of the categories, as it illustrates the relevance of a particular strategy to engage students' use of English in the fostering of oral communication skills.

According to the data, the first three lessons show results that are significantly below the expected outcomes when compared to the rest of the lessons. In contrast, it was possible to identify a common characteristic among the lessons that showed the most interesting and rich data regarding students' oral communication skills. Hence, it is necessary to determine the reasons behind the unexpected results during the first lessons, as well as the circumstances that led to achieving better performance levels during further lessons.

First, lessons #1 and #3 share an important characteristic in terms of students' interactions: "Ss are not using English at all. I tried to engage a conversation between two Ss but they were reluctant to use the target language" (Teacher log #1), "Ss were discussing the creation of the aliens in Spanish" (Teacher log #3). As it is evident, Spanish had a major role in students' performances during the two lessons. Specifically, the previous comments correspond to the lessons' main activities (tasks). As Clark and Révész (2019) mention, the core of the task in TBL relies on presenting students with a communicative problem to solve, of course, by using the target language. In this sense, students' only use of the mother tongue clearly represents a disruption of the purpose of tasks during TBL instruction. However, it is important to note that these two instances of Spanish-speaking might have been caused by different reasons.

In the first case, there could be a connection between students' reluctance to speak English and the way they were accustomed to being taught before the implementation phase. As it was established during the statement of the problem, one of the main problems that were identified was the lack of communicative activities during almost every observed class: "Not a single student spoke English during the class. Maybe it was because the focus was on the book activities" (Field Note #1), "I noticed that students are not used to speaking in English. When they participate, they do it in Spanish" (Field Note #2), "Once again, the methodology during the class was all about working on the books" (Field Note #6). As it was previously established during the statement of the problem, the way students were being taught English has a clear connection with their lack of communicative skills, which is what happened during the first lesson of the implementation.

On the other hand, the data show that students' Spanish-speaking during the third lesson corresponds to a different reason. This may be appreciated in two fragments from

Teacher log #3: “Many Ss wanted to participate in the hangman game. (...) I let each student participate a maximum of two times”, “Students only use English when they are asked to do so.” What these fragments show is that the attitude towards English speaking slightly improved since the first lesson, as students were at least using English when being told to do so. Students did not show any form of reluctance to speak in English during the warmup activity. In this context, it is suggested that the extensive use of Spanish during the third lesson’s task was not because of an unwillingness to speak English, but because the instructions of the task did not contemplate a way to engage them to use the target language actively. The arrival of this interpretation does not come from data regarding lesson #3, but from lessons that showed an improvement regarding students’ use of English, as it is explained below.

Accordingly, the lessons that show better results regarding students’ use of English share some characteristics in terms of the application of strategies to engage them in English-speaking during tasks. Having identified a lack of English use during the first lessons, the teacher-researcher put some strategies into practice. The most efficient of these, and the one that showed better results, corresponds to the application of a no-Spanish rule during the tasks: “The rule I gave Ss for the task of ‘No Spanish’ worked well. They had to speak English and use other means (non-verbal) to achieve communication” (Teacher log #5), “the no-Spanish rule worked well once again for encouraging Ss to practice their English” (Teacher log #7). In addition, it is important to mention that despite the somewhat restrictive nature of the strategy used, the data show that students found this dynamic attractive and interesting: “For most students it was fun to work without being able to speak Spanish” (Teacher log #5). This fact may also be appreciated in the second questionnaire, where activities that followed this approach were among students’ favorite kind of activities during the pedagogical intervention (Appendix C).

As may be appreciated, what has been discussed so far has relevant implications regarding the fostering of oral communication skills during the implementation phase. The no-Spanish dynamic along with TBL methodology was fundamental in the emergence of the data that constitutes the following sections.

5.2.1 Influence of TBL on the listening skill

The first category of analysis corresponds to the influence of TBL on students' listening skill. It was possible to identify certain aspects of interest related to this oral communication skill throughout the intervention phase. The aim of TBL instruction was to encourage students to use their listening skill in an active way through meaningful tasks. It was expected that the approach would help them with the development of their ability to understand the spoken language. Accordingly, findings regarding listening skills were organized in terms of students' abilities to process others' meanings and the emergence of listening strategies derived from TBL instruction.

- ***Processing of meaning***

It has been established that listening corresponds to the active process of accessing other people's meanings (Cameron, 2005). It was possible to identify this reality during the pedagogical intervention, in which students made an effort to understand not only the teacher's meanings but also their peers' throughout different communicative activities.

During the pedagogical instruction students were exposed to different tasks in which the use of Spanish was not allowed, a fact that influenced them to use their English knowledge and other means to solve the communicative problems in each task. It was evident that there was an increase in their efforts to understand others. During lesson #6, for instance, students had to inquire about their partners' family members, which included

asking about the number of brothers, sisters and cousins they had. Learners had to take notes of all their partners' responses during the activity, which implied an understanding of the meanings behind their answers.

Figure 1

Artifacts from lesson #6

Name: Isabel Pulido Ricón

Partner #1: <u>Isabel Pulido Ricón</u>	
Questions	Answers
Do you have brothers or sisters?	Yes 2
What is your mother's name?	Mariluz Arco
What is your father's name?	Wilson
Do you have cousins?	Yes 3

Partner #2: Isabella

Questions	Answers
Do you have brothers or sisters?	Yes 4
What is your mother's name?	Patricia
What is your father's name?	No Father
Do you have cousins?	Yes 6

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Name: Alfonso Flores Arango

Partner #1: <u>Alfonso Flores Arango</u>	
Questions	Answers
Do you have brothers or sisters?	Yes, I have ~~two~~ ^{two} ~~sisters~~
What is your mother's name?	her name is Diana Mendez
What is your father's name?	her name is Andres Garcia
Do you have cousins?	Yes, I have ~~five~~ ^{five} ~~cousins~~

Partner #2: Juan Pablo Perez Cardona

Questions	Answers
Do you have brothers or sisters?	yes, one brother
What is your mother's name?	her name is Ruby Andrea
What is your father's name?	her name is Rodolfo
Do you have cousins?	yes, I have two cousins

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Name: Isabella Pulido Ricón

Partner #1: <u>Isabella Pulido Ricón</u>	
Questions	Answers
Do you have brothers or sisters?	yes, one sister
What is your mother's name?	Adriana Conde
What is your father's name?	ibardo Arco
Do you have cousins?	yes, 20 cousins

Partner #2: Isabella Pulido Ricón

Questions	Answers
Do you have brothers or sisters?	yes, one brother and one sister
What is your mother's name?	Lady Arco
What is your father's name?	Jimmy Ruiz
Do you have cousins?	yes, 2

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Name: Isabella Pulido Ricón

Partner #1: <u>Isabella Pulido Ricón</u>	
Questions	Answers
Do you have brothers or sisters?	yes, one brother and one sister
What is your mother's name?	Jessy Arango
What is your father's name?	Krist Camilo
Do you have cousins?	yes, 1

Partner #2: Isabella Pulido Ricón

Questions	Answers
Do you have brothers or sisters?	yes, I have
What is your mother's name?	C9101
What is your father's name?	i don't have
Do you have cousins?	yes, 2

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As may be appreciated, students inquired about certain information that was necessary to complete the task, but in certain cases they registered different information than the one necessary. This is evident in the cases when, being asked about their fathers' names, certain students informed their peers about not having one. It was possible to register some of these interactions during that lesson:

Student A "Don't father, no"

Student B: "Not is father"

Student C: "I don't have"

(Teacher log #6)

Hence, TBL's quality of bringing real-world activities to the classroom provides different communicative opportunities, for there is a correlation between students' performance and their own realities. Consequently, these communicative possibilities have major implications both for the development of speaking and listening strategies.

Another noticeable aspect of students' listening skill development is related to Brown's (2015) micro-skill of listening comprehension about the ability to "discriminate among the distinctive sounds of English" (p. 327), as it is important that students identify the differences between their mother tongue and the target language. Taking into consideration the differences between English and Spanish sounds, a proper discrimination of sounds is useful when processing meaning. In this vein, it was evident throughout the implementation phase that warmups and pre-tasks were ideal spaces for fostering the identification and recognition of unfamiliar sounds. Pre-task activities served the purpose of preparing students for the task, which means providing them with vocabulary, guiding structures, and other means they would need for completing the task. Moreover, preparation for the tasks also included introducing new vocabulary to students and helping them associate this new vocabulary and pronunciations with their meanings.

Hence, pre-tasks provided students with the tools for producing (speaking) and understanding (listening) meanings.

In contrast, it is important to note that data from the observation phase revealed that practicing pronunciation was not an important part of the class. In fact, there were no instances in which any form of emphasis on pronunciation was evidenced during any of the observed classes. Accordingly, this might be a major reason for students' struggle to pronounce certain words, and their difficulties with English phonemes.

Table 2

English phonemes practiced during warmups and pre-tasks.

Lesson	Phonemes	Key words
Introducing ourselves	-	-
Reviewing the basics	-	-
The body	/θ/ /h/	mouth, teeth hand
Making descriptions	/f/ /v/ /j/ /h/	short wavy young hair
Activities we do	/v/ /h/ /f/	video games homework shopping
Our families	/ð/	brother, mother, father
Family relationships	/h/ /ð/	husband brother, mother, father
Healthy and unhealthy habits	/dʒ/ /θ/ /h/ /v/ /f/	junk healthy hands, healthy vegetables wash

Furthermore, data regarding students' performance during communicative tasks show some results about their ability to "process speech containing pauses, errors, corrections, and other performance variables" (Brown, 2025, p. 327). This was perceived through students' interactions, as there were differences among students' speech:

Student: Read books? (Vowel mispronunciation in both words)

(Teacher log #5)

Student: You chat with friends? ("with friends" wasn't very clear)

(Teacher log #5)

Variation 1: Do you eat fruits?

Variation 2: Eat fruits?

Variation 3: You eat fruits?

(Teacher log #8)

Student: You eat vegetables? (Unclear pronunciation of "vegetables")

(Teacher log #8)

Accordingly, the TBL methodology fostered students' ability to process others' meanings (listening) in different ways. Thanks to the nature of the approach, there was some variation in students' task performance, which promoted the recognition of differences among peers' meanings. Also, by recognizing the distinctive sounds of English carried out through pre-task activities, students had the opportunity to connect new vocabulary and pronunciation with meaning, which was helpful for task performance. Besides, the challenge of achieving communication through the target language implied differences in students' productions of meaning, which also had implications in the way

they accessed these meanings. This fact is expanded in the following subcategory of analysis.

- ***Use of listening strategies***

Considering that listening corresponds to accessing others' meanings (Cameron, 2005), it is pertinent to determine if students' difficulties to achieve communication throughout class tasks influenced their use of listening skills. It is in this context that the subcategory *use of listening strategies* unfolds. In the previous section it was suggested that certain communicative difficulties fostered the emergence of strategies during students' interactions. In this vein, it was possible to identify different occasions in which students relied on different listening strategies during communicative tasks.

First, during the completion of tasks, many students relied on the use of nonverbal communication to access their peers' meanings. Besides, these instances of nonverbal communication served different purposes. For instance, it was noticeable that students used it to inform their interlocutors about their messages not being clear:

Student A: You chat with friends?

Student B: (moves her head to one side and makes a face of confusion)

Student A: "Chat with friends" (Emphasizing pronunciation and imitating the action of chatting with his fingers)

Student B: "Ahh, yes yes"

(Teacher log #5)

Student A: "You eat vegetables?" (Mispronunciation of "vegetables")

Student B: (moves his head forward and slightly closes his eyes) "Ah?"

Student A: "Eat vegetables" (emphasizing "vegetables")

Student B: "Yes, I eat vegetables"

(Teacher log #8)

Student A: Read books? (Vowel mispronunciation in both words)

Student B: (makes a funny face and looks at me) "No understand"

Teacher: (to student A) "Read books" (emphasizing the correct pronunciation)

Student A: (to teacher) Ah, Ok. (To student B) you read books?

Student B: No, no books.

(Teacher log #5)

In addition, another strategy that could be identified was the repetition of key words to confirm interlocutors' speeches:

Student A: "What is your mother's name?"

Student B: "My mother?"

Student A: "Yes, mother"

Student B: "Janeth is"

Student A: "Ok"

(Teacher log #6)

Student A: “Do you wash hands? (Very low)

Student B: “wash hands?”

Student A: (nods)

Student B: “Yes”

(Teacher log #8)

What has been discussed so far represents an important contrast with what was identified during the observation phase. The change of approach allowed students to practice their listening skills in a more active way, as focusing on meaning implies the need of understanding others. This is a relevant aspect to note about the role of TBL methodology during the whole process, as it implied a change in students' relationship with the language. That is, instead of using English in a decontextualized way, they used it to access others' meaning during contextualized and meaningful communicative activities. However, it is worth mentioning that in this case the focus on meaning was possible mostly because of the strategy that accompanied each of the lessons' tasks, as students tended to rely on their first language when it was allowed. In fact, as it will be described in the next section, the role of the no-Spanish strategy was fundamental for fostering speaking skills as well.

5.2.2 Influence of TBL on the speaking skill

The second category of analysis corresponds to the influence of TBL on students' speaking skill. It is relevant to mention that findings regarding this skill are more extensive than those related to listening skills, as productive skills were easier to assess during interactive activities. This was due to TBL's quality of promoting interaction among students. Each lesson's objective was to get students to communicate actively during

tasks. Hence, the analysis focuses on the way in which the pedagogical intervention influenced students' ability to express meaning and the emergence of speaking strategies derived from communicative tasks.

- ***Expression of meaning***

Considering that the speaking skill is defined as an active way of expressing meaning (Cameron, 2005), this part of the analysis revolves around data regarding the way in which students conveyed meaning orally during communicative tasks, and how TBL influenced it.

First, it is possible to establish that students were able to produce chunks of language at different rates of delivery during most of the tasks (Brown, 2015). Every activity that involved student-student interaction required the use of previously presented vocabulary and structures to express real-world information. For instance, lesson #4 required students to understand certain adjectives and the present simple structure to describe their partners in real time. In this way, during the task they "created simple sentences by using vocabulary from the class and the guiding structures to describe their partners' physical appearance" (Teacher log #4).

Similarly, during lessons #5, #6, and #8, students followed previously provided structures and class vocabulary to ask questions to their peers:

Student A: "You chat with friends?" ("chat with friends" wasn't very clear)

Student B: (Moves her head to one side and makes a face of confusion)

Student A: "Chat with friends" (while imitating the action of chatting with his fingers)

Student B: "Ahh, yes, yes"

(Teacher log #5)

Student A: "What is your mother's name?"

Student B: "Mother?"

Student A (nods)

Student B: "Kelly"

(Teacher log #6)

Student A: "Do you wash hands?" (Very low)

Student B: "wash hands?"

Student A: (nods)

Student B: "Yes"

(Teacher log #8)

It comes to notice that although some of the students' sentences evidenced some grammar issues, the framework for TBL establishes that this is not a major problem, as they were able to convey and understand their meanings. What their use of grammar shows is in fact the progression and development of their skills, which is something they were not accustomed to before due to their lack of practice. As it was previously mentioned in the statement of the problem, students were learning in a decontextualized way, where the focus was put on the books. Having this in mind, these results are positive in terms of TBL methodology in the sense that the expression of meaning was successful despite the inaccurate grammar. Also, as part of students' first oral expressions, it is important that the communicative goals of these tasks were achieved regardless of the difficulties.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the data revealed a significant improvement regarding students' use of spoken English in the classroom when comparing the observation and implementation phases. Besides, this increase of students' oral production does not only come from task performance and other class activities, as it was possible to identify certain instances in which students used English outside of class activities. For instance, this was evidenced through students' use of English for greeting and saying goodbye. As it was mentioned earlier, they were accustomed to only use English when being told to do so. This fact was noticeable up to lesson #4, before the implementation of the no-Spanish dynamic: "Students are only using English only when they are asked to do so" (Teacher log #4). However, an interesting pattern was identified since lesson #6:

"Some Ss greeted me in English when entering the classroom, so far they would only do this after I greeted them first"

(Teacher log #6)

"There are some Ss that have been greeting and saying goodbye to me in English since last class"

(Teacher log #7)

"I noticed many Ss greeted me in English as they entered the classroom. It seems like more students than previous times"

(Teacher log #8)

According to these findings, students started using English in a more autonomous way. Similarly, another instance that supports this claim comes from the eighth lesson, where a clear connection between autonomous English speaking and this dynamic was evident: “There was something interesting about the no-Spanish rule. As soon as I mentioned it, a group of Ss started speaking English. They were trying to continue with a conversation they were having” (Teacher log #8).

As it is evident, the no-Spanish dynamic to support TBL instruction promoted important results regarding students’ meaning expression. The whole process fostered different opportunities for students to communicate in the target language and practice the way they expressed themselves. Similarly, this practice also involved certain speaking strategies that students used and developed to convey their meanings, which is discussed in the following section.

- ***Use of speaking strategies***

Just as Brown (2015) explains, speaking involves a whole set of skills. It is possible to establish connections between the gathered data and the emergence and use of a set of speaking strategies that students used when interacting during TBL instruction. In this sense, this subcategory of analysis revolves around the description of the strategies students used to convey meaning.

Firstly, one of the most predominant speaking strategies that could be identified is related to the use of body language to achieve communication. According to the data, students’ use of body language was mainly as a reinforcement of oral messages. This was evident in the following cases:

Case 1: She is... long hair (she puts both hands over her shoulders, pointing upwards)

Case 2: she is beautiful (moves his hand in her direction)

(Teacher log #4)

Student A: "You chat with friends? ("chat with friends" wasn't very clear)

Student B: (Moves her head to one side and makes a face of confusion)

Student A: "Chat with friends" (while imitating the action of chatting with his fingers)

Student B: "Ahh, yes, yes"

(Teacher log #5)

"Another thing they did was to use their fingers to confirm numbers".

(Teacher log #6)

Accordingly, fragments from teacher logs #5 and #6 confirm what has already been established. That is, difficulties to convey and understand meanings orally might have fostered the emergence of not only listening strategies, but also speaking strategies. This is where Brown's (2015) listening skill about the processing of speech containing performance variables, evidence an important characteristic of students' interactions during the pedagogical proposal. As the instructions of the tasks involved the need of expressing and processing meanings, students had to make sure that their peers understood what they said and inform their interlocutors when their message was not clear enough. By means of these exchanges, they were able to achieve communication despite those performance variables.

Similarly, other strategies used by students to express their meanings include emphasizing key words to reach clarity and making self-corrections during speech. Regarding word emphasis, it is possible to point out that students used this strategy when their interlocutors expressed a lack of understanding: “Sometimes when Ss made a question that their partners didn’t understand, they asked again while emphasizing key words. They would raise the volume or exaggerate vocalization while pronouncing these words so that the other person could understand” (Teacher log #6).

This use of word emphasis may be better appreciated in the following interaction from the eighth lesson:

Student A: “You eat vegetables?” (Mispronunciation of “vegetables”)

Student B: (moves his head forward and slightly closes his eyes) “Ah?”

Student A: “Eat VEGETABLES” (emphasizing “vegetables”)

Student B: “Yes, I eat vegetables”

(Teacher log #8)

Just as the data revealed, the speaking strategy related to key word emphasis served the same purpose as body language, as students used both when facing situations in which messages were not clear enough to their interlocutors. In addition, it was thanks to the listening strategies their interlocutors used that students were able to notice problems in the expression of their meanings; thus, using speaking strategies to address the issues. This reveals the importance of viewing speaking and listening as simultaneous skills that happen during oral communication (Cameron, 2005).

Furthermore, another identified speaking strategy corresponds to self-corrections during speech. This was mostly evident in lesson #4, where students were asked to make some descriptions of a partner:

*Student 1: "She is... long hair (she puts both hands over her shoulders, pointing upwards).
No, no. She HAS long hair".*

Student 2: "He has tall hair, he..., ay no perdón. He has SHORT hair".

(Teacher log #4)

The use of this strategy is different from the previous ones in the sense that students themselves were the ones who noticed and corrected their expression of meaning, without the need of an interlocutor to assess the messages. It is worth mentioning that the activity in which this strategy emerged included time for students to prepare the descriptions they were going to make. In this sense, adequate preparation of the task entailed more awareness regarding students' expression of meaning. This is precisely one of the reasons why TBL instruction is relevant for English teaching, as it provides spaces for preparing and completing the proposed communicative tasks in a meaningful way for students.

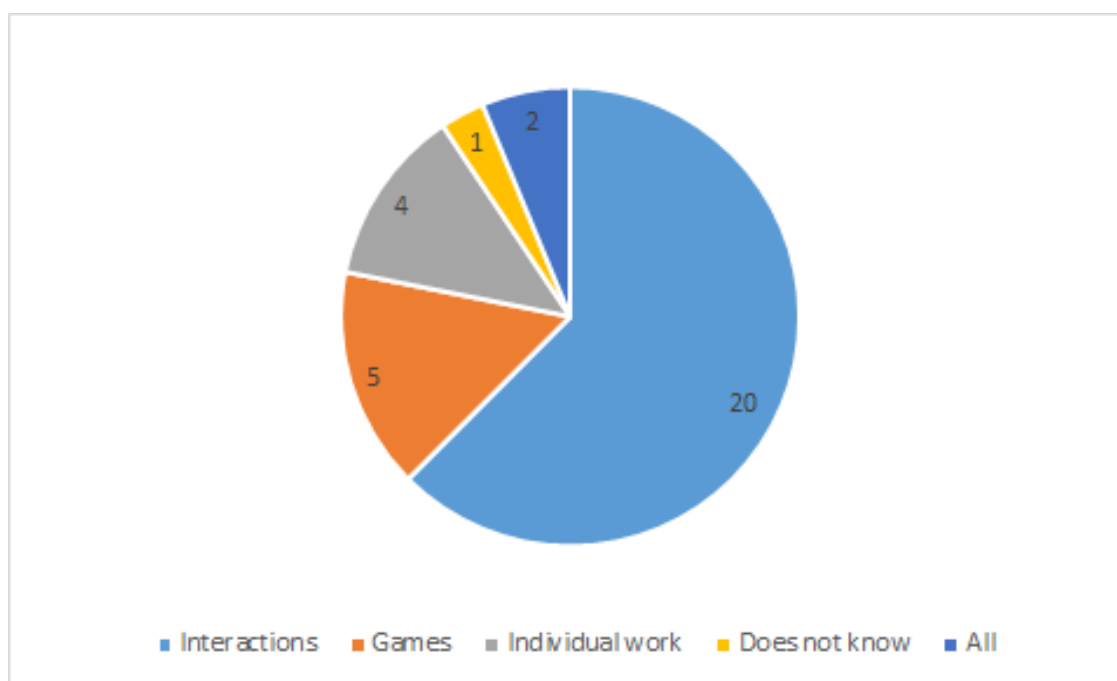
In general terms, what the data show is that TBL instruction fostered students' speaking skills, seen through their abilities to express their meanings and their use of different strategies to convey those meanings. What has been described implies an improvement when compared to students' prior performance. Besides, there were also significant results in relation to students' motivations, as is described in the final section of this chapter.

5.2.3 Students' perceptions and motivations

Overall, data analyzed thus far indicates a strong connection between the teaching approach and the fostering of oral communication skills. Specifically, these findings demonstrate that the implementation of the no-Spanish dynamic during communicative tasks played an important role in the emergence of both listening and speaking strategies. Besides, it is possible to find similarities between the teacher-researcher's vision on the matter and students' perceptions, as data from the second questionnaire show:

Figure 2

Results from question No. 5 – Activities that helped students practice their English skills



Note. The options that appear on the graph correspond to a categorization of students' responses, as it was an open question: De todas las actividades que se han hecho, ¿cuál crees que te ha dado una mayor oportunidad para practicar o mejorar tu uso del inglés?

Clearly, there is a big difference between interactive tasks and other kinds of activities in terms of promoting English practice in the classroom. This may be further appreciated by examining some of students' perceptions about these kinds of tasks: "Hablar inglés en toda la clase, ya que nos ayuda a mejorar muchísimo nuestro vocabulario", "me parece bien que hagamos eso porque mejoramos mucho el vocabulario en inglés. Nos pone a hacer preguntas en inglés con el resto de compañeros", "pues casi todas, como las de hacerle preguntas a compañeros y solo poder hablar en inglés" (Appendix C). By considering the results regarding oral communication skills, it is possible to establish that activities in which the no-Spanish dynamic was used were the ones that worked better for fostering students' oral communication skills, while maintaining good levels of intrinsic motivation, as students tended to enjoy this kind of activities.

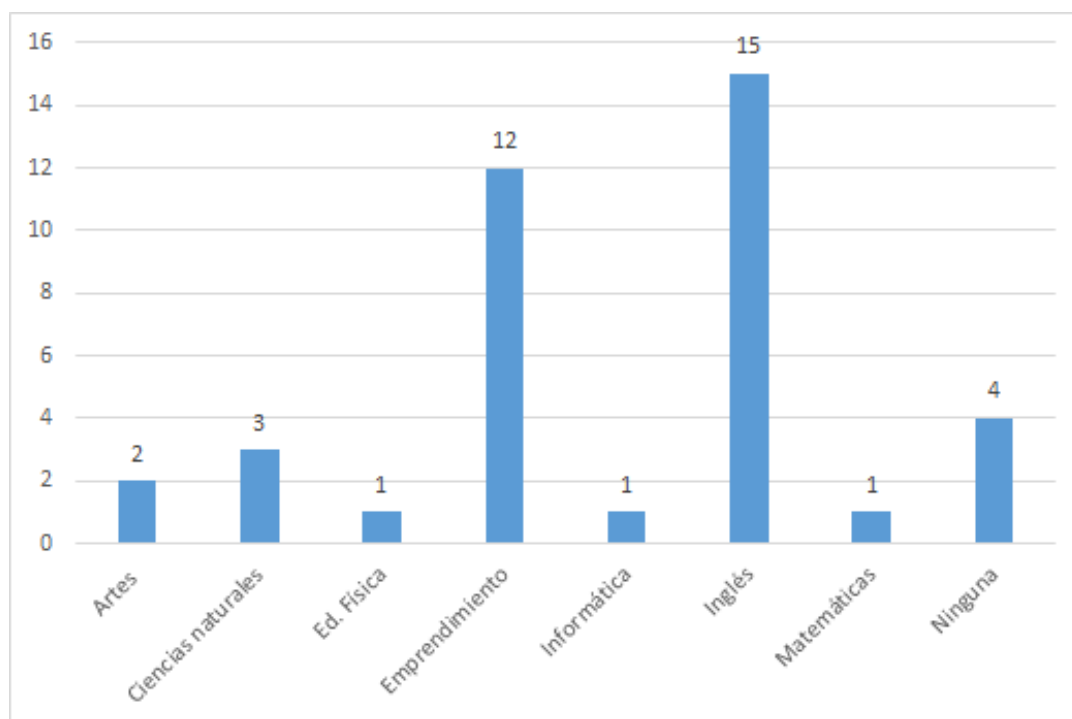
In contrast, results regarding students' favorite activities are more variable. Responses for question No. 7 indicate that the activities students liked the most were games (16) and interactions (10). Other responses include specific activities like the family tree (1), pronunciation activities (1), and some students mentioned liking every activity (4). It is worth noting that games were mostly used as warm-ups, so they were a relevant way of preparing students for the class, while interactions served as the core of most of the lesson plans (tasks). These results are relevant as they show that the activities that were helpful for fostering students' oral communication skills were also among their favorite ones. This means that TBL instruction achieved good levels of intrinsic motivations that also supported the established teaching objectives.

More interestingly, the data show a very positive effect of students' perceptions of the English class in general. As it was mentioned in Chapter I, the English class was mentioned fifteen times by students when asked about the school subjects they did not like, making it the least favorite (Appendix A). Consequently, there was a specific question

in the second questionnaire that addressed this matter, and served as a way of contrasting students' perceptions of the class before and after the pedagogical intervention:

Figure 3

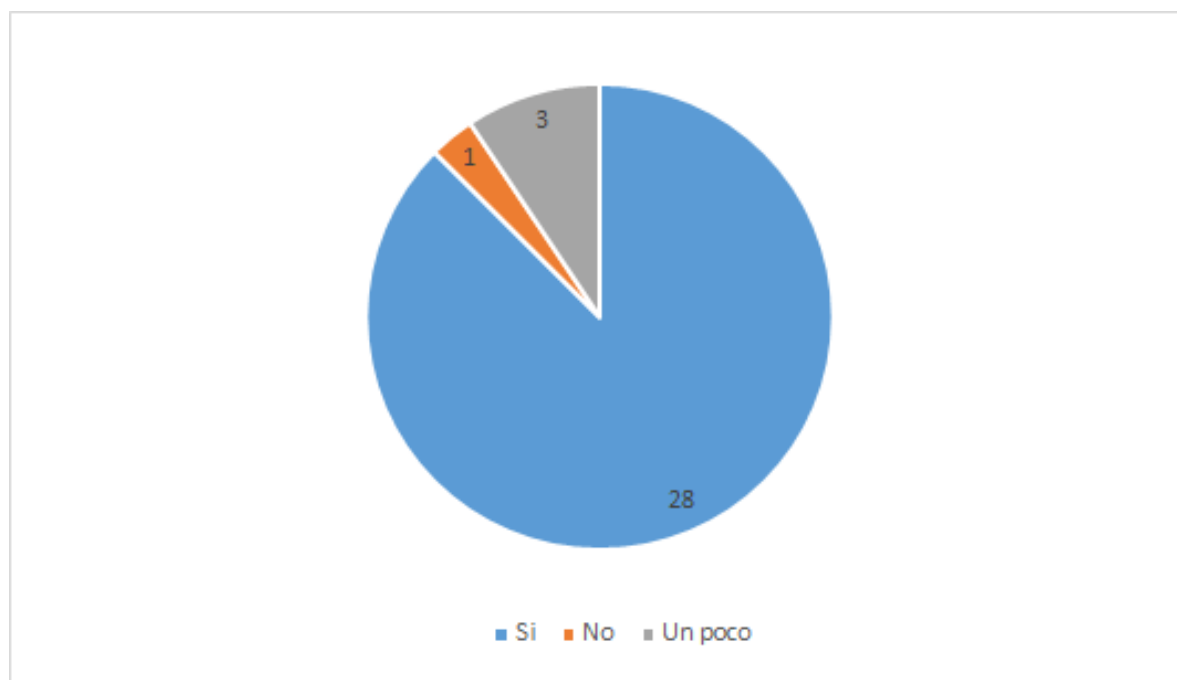
Results from the first questionnaire regarding students' least favorite school subjects



Note. Some students mentioned more than one subject, so the total of answers does not correspond to the number of students who took the survey.

Figure 4

Results from question No. 9 – Change of students' perceptions towards the English class



Note. Students answered the following question: “En el cuestionario que se hizo a principio de año se descubrió que la materia que menos le gustaba a la mayoría de estudiantes del grado 601 era inglés. ¿Crees que eso ha cambiado?”

Moreover, the graph gains more importance when analyzing some of students' comments regarding this matter: “si, eso ha cambiado porque la clase está más chévere”, “Muy significativamente. Pase de no (hacer) nada a ser mi profesor favorito”, “Si, antes en ese cuestionario había dicho que la que menos me gustaba era inglés y ahora no es la que menos me gusta”, “era inglés pero gracias al profe la amo, es una de mis favoritas”. It is also worth mentioning that just one of the few students who did not feel a big improvement in the class expanded her answer: “depende ya que a veces son muy feas las clases”. In general terms, it is evident that these findings are highly significant in

terms of the expected outcomes of the pedagogical process, as it is solid evidence of an improvement regarding the motivation problem identified during the observation phase.

Chapter VI: Conclusions and implications

This chapter is about the conclusions that arose from the research process. At the beginning of this study some objectives were set to be met during the implementation of the pedagogical proposal. The general objective was to describe the influence of a TBL approach on the oral communication skills in English of a group of sixth graders at Colegio Técnico Domingo Faustino Sarmiento IED. In this vein, a review of the fulfillment of the research goal is presented in terms of the specific objectives that were established.

First, it is possible to mention that the activities that worked better for the fostering of students' oral communication skills were those that involved conversation and demanded them to communicate actively to get different kinds of information. Moreover, these activities were among students' favorite ones, which means that there was an achievement in both learning and motivation outcomes. However, it is worth noting that it was necessary to implement a strategy to engage students in speaking English. For the population of this study, the best way to engage students to speak in English actively during the tasks was to incorporate a dynamic in which students were not allowed to speak Spanish during communicative tasks, presenting it as a challenge for them or even a game. Students responded in a positive way to both conversational tasks and the no-Spanish dynamic. Hence, communicative tasks with a proper way of encouraging English-speaking are a good way of developing oral communication skills in the classroom.

Moreover, the characterization of students' communication skills throughout the pedagogical instruction revealed an important contrast with the way students were used to learning. Before the intervention phase, students learned English in a passive and decontextualized way, in which working with the textbooks was the predominant activity. During that time, there were no instances in which students' communicative competence was addressed. In contrast, the TBL approach allowed many opportunities for students to

learn in a more active and contextualized manner. Each lesson provided a space for practicing and improving different skills. Thus, by describing students' communicative skills, it was possible to identify an improvement in the way the learning process was conducted.

Furthermore, TBL instruction worked well to raise and maintain good levels of intrinsic motivation. There was a significant improvement regarding students' motivation when comparing the observation and implementation phases. This is relevant to mention as motivation serves an important role in TBL for its connection with meaningful learning. According to the data, it is possible to indicate that English went from being the least liked subject to being highly enjoyed by students. In addition, it is important to mention that these results were possible due to the efforts put into linking the class's contents with students' likes and interests.

Additionally, it should be noted that TBL methodology presents certain characteristics regarding class structure that are worth mentioning. The stages in which lessons are organized allow a coherent progression of class work. The role of pre-tasks, for instance, was of great importance for students' preparation for the task. That is, their performance during tasks was influenced by previous work in pre-tasks. In this vein, the researcher praises the relevance of pre-tasks and tasks, for they presented a natural and coherent progression throughout each lesson.

In view of the above, it is reasonable to conclude that TBL's influence on students' oral communication skills was highly positive. The contrast between the observation and implementation phases shows a clear improvement regarding class dynamics that fostered the practice and development of these skills. Besides, the implications of the approach on intrinsic motivation suggest its effectiveness on engaging students into active learning. All in all, this approach was useful for fostering the oral communication skills of sixth grade

students from Colegio Técnico Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, as well as keeping a good level of motivation in the classroom.

In the light of everything discussed so far, this study has some implications regarding language teaching and learning. Clearly, there is a lot of room for improvement regarding English teaching in the Colombian context, as it comes to notice that outdated teaching practices are still present in classrooms. This seems to point in a different direction from the goals set in terms of reaching bilingualism in the country. In this sense, this study reaffirms previous research processes about the relevance of TBL on English teaching. The research also provides a view on the effectiveness of the approach on a group of sixth graders, as well as presenting certain strategies to enhance its implementation.

Moreover, the implementation of the pedagogical intervention showed a different understanding of students' learning process. The observation phase and certain comments from the head teacher revealed some degree of biased thoughts regarding students' performance. Certain students would have negative labels based on their performance during the previous teaching paradigm. In contrast, this was not evidenced during the implementation, and sometimes it was even the opposite. For instance, some students that were supposed to have a bad performance in the English class (according to the previous assessment criteria) were among the most participative ones during TBL instruction, and the ones that showed more interest in the proposed tasks. The teaching-learning process is not as simple as affirming that students know or do not know things based on their grades, as different teaching practices determine different scopes of assessment. It is a part of teachers' responsibility to understand who they are teaching to, and to assess their own practices so that the teaching-learning process is held in the most meaningful way. Accordingly, this research project shows that through TBL methodology it

is possible for students to assume active roles during their process that leads to meaningful teaching practices.

6.1 Limitations

It is important to mention that due to the flexibility of TBL methodology there were no limitations regarding accessing or using of class materials during the pedagogical intervention. However, there were some constraints related to certain school dynamics that caused the cancelation of many of the classes, which resulted in less carried-out lessons than expected. Parents meetings, teachers meetings, and various workshops that had to be done during class time were some of the situations that limited the implementation phase of the research project.

6.2 General recommendations

Taking into consideration the research process and teaching practice, it is relevant to mention some investigative and pedagogical recommendations for future research processes on the subject, especially for action research.

It is worth noting the importance of the teacher's log as a data collection instrument. Keeping track of different class dynamics was relevant for gathering the most productive sets of data. In this sense, it is recommended to have a clear notion of what kind of information will be useful before the implementation phase, so that teacher log formats may have all the necessary fields for registering data. Moreover, adding fields to register students' opinions and suggestions was useful for keeping track of their perception of the class. Consequently, it is relevant to start the analysis process as soon as data collection starts. Doing this allows the teacher-researcher to reflect on their practices *in situ*, which allows the making of changes between lessons when necessary.

6.3 Further research

As this study focused on oral communication skills, there were not many instances to assess the effectiveness of TBL on the development of skills such as reading and writing. Taking into consideration that meaning processing and expression are not limited to orality, further research about the influence of TBL on these skills could broaden the understanding of the approach. Furthermore, considering that this study's time of application was not very extensive, it would be relevant to see the impact of TBL over a longer period to check its long-term results.

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Annexes

Appendix A: Students' questionnaire #1

Cuestionario

Este cuestionario forma parte de la etapa inicial de un trabajo de grado para la Licenciatura en español e inglés de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Estas preguntas son importantes para caracterizar a los estudiantes del grupo 601, grupo con el que se va a desarrollar el proceso de investigación.

Por favor responde las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Cuál es tu nombre?

2. ¿Cuántos años tienes?

3. ¿En qué ciudad naciste? ¿en qué barrio vives?

4. ¿Te gusta pasar tiempo con tus compañeros y compañeras del salón?

Si ___ No___

¿Por qué?

5. ¿Cuál es tu clase favorita? ¿por qué?

6. ¿Cuál es la clase que menos te gusta? ¿por qué?

7. ¿Qué opinas de las clases de inglés? ¿cambiarías algo de la clase?

8. ¿Para qué crees que te sirve aprender inglés?

9. ¿Qué te gusta hacer en tu tiempo libre?

Appendix B: Teacher's interview

Entrevista docente

Lugar: IED Domingo Faustino Sarmiento		Fecha: 19/05/22
Entrevistador: Jorge López		Entrevistado: Elvira Ramírez
Preguntas	Notas	
1. ¿El colegio ofrece algún otro tipo de espacios u oportunidades en relación con la lengua inglesa además de la clase?	La docente manifiesta que en el colegio no existen espacios adicionales en relación al inglés. En ocasiones se llevan a cabo actividades curriculares en las que participa toda la escuela (spelling bees, etc.). Adicional a esto, está también el English Day, en donde, por cursos, se les da la oportunidad a los estudiantes de participar libremente con algún tipo de actividad. Principalmente se suelen dar el canto o la entrevista como las actividades de mayor recurrencia. Sin embargo, se manifiesta que el desarrollo de este día no suele darse de una forma tan estructural y que más bien se hacen las actividades “como para cumplir con agenda”.	
2. ¿Cómo describe a los estudiantes en términos socioafectivos y cognitivos?	Para la profesora, el grupo 601 es uno muy variado. Desde su perspectiva, los estudiantes no suelen tener problemas de convivencia y más bien es un grupo que se apoya. “Hay algunos que se les facilita más y entonces ayudan a sus compañeros con los ejercicios de la cartilla”.	
3. ¿Cómo es su relación con el grupo?	La docente considera que se lleva bien con el grupo. Que de vez en cuando hay problemas de disciplina pero que la mayoría de las veces trabajan sin problemas.	
4. ¿Cuáles son los mayores obstáculos en la clase de inglés?	Principalmente el hecho de que en el colegio se suelen dar cierto tipo de actividades que a veces ocurren los días de clase (talleres, jornadas pedagógicas, festivos, etc.). Este tipo de situaciones han llevado a que haya un atraso en cuanto a los contenidos de este año, pues “no ha sido posible avanzar en la cartilla”.	
5. ¿Cómo sería una caracterización general del nivel de inglés de los estudiantes?	La profesora considera que los estudiantes no llegan al bachillerato con las bases adecuadas y que normalmente toca repasar las cosas más básicas. Esto dificulta el desarrollo de las clases pues es más complejo avanzar en temas nuevos. Considera que el nivel de inglés del grupo es en general mucho más bajo de lo que debería, con algunas excepciones que tienen un nivel acorde al curso en el que están.	

6. ¿Cuál es el rol del español en la clase de inglés?	Considera que es imposible dictar la clase completamente en inglés, pues eso dificultaría la comunicación con el grupo. No lo menciona explícitamente, pero parte de su metodología es utilizar el translanguaging como estrategia para utilizar el inglés al mismo tiempo que se logra el entendimiento por parte de los estudiantes.
7. ¿Qué se espera de los estudiantes al terminar este año escolar?	Las expectativas de la docente con el grupo son principalmente que éstos adquieran las estructuras más sencillas y sean capaces de entender un responder sobre ellos mismos. “Que puedan presentarse, decir su rutina diaria, y ese tipo de cosas”

Appendix C: Students' questionnaire #2

Nombre: _____

Cuestionario #2

Este cuestionario es para conocer tus opiniones sobre la clase de inglés y las actividades que se han desarrollado con el profesor Jorge. Por favor, responde las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Cuál es tu opinión general sobre las clases que ha dado el profesor?

2. ¿Hay algo que no te haya gustado de las clases? ¿por qué?

3. ¿Se ha promovido la interacción en inglés durante las clases? ¿cómo?

4. ¿Crees que has aprendido más trabajando así que haciendo otro tipo de actividades (resolver cartilla, trabajo en el cuaderno, etc.)?

5. De todas las actividades que se han hecho, ¿cuál crees que te ha dado una mayor oportunidad para practicar o mejorar tu uso del inglés?

-
-
-
6. ¿Crees que las actividades realizadas fueron interesantes o divertidas? ¿cuáles y por qué?

7. ¿Qué tipo de actividades te han gustado más? ¿cuáles quieres que se repitan?

8. ¿Hay alguna actividad que te haya motivado a hablar en inglés durante la clase?

9. En el cuestionario que se hizo a principio de año se descubrió que la materia que **menos** le gustaba a la mayoría de estudiantes del grado 601 era inglés. ¿Crees que eso ha cambiado?

10. ¿Tienes alguna recomendación para que la clase de inglés pueda mejorar? ¿cuál?

Appendix D: Teacher log #5

Teacher log #5	
Lesson plan: #5 Activities we do	Date: 28/09/22
Researcher: Jorge López	Class: 601
Aspects	Comments
Participation	Some Ss were willing to participate during the warm-up activity. At first, they were kind of shy to make the mimics, but after a few Ss passed, many others wanted to try. I also focused on the ones who were not participating voluntarily, to give them the chance to participate as well.
Oral expression	Ss made questions using present simple structures. Some of them had a few issues with pronunciation but still tried. The warm-up activity was useful to get Ss to practice the pronunciation of certain phonemes: “Videogames” “Homework” “Shopping” The rule I gave Ss for the task of “No Spanish” worked well. They had to use English and use other means (non-verbal) to achieve communication. Many of them had to put an effort into making the other students understand what they were trying to say. Many of them nodded after asking the question to check if their partner understood the question, also, when the other person did not understand they would usually ask again, putting emphasis on the activity they were asking about, or asking again. S1: “You chat with friends?” (“chat with friends” wasn’t very clear) S2: (Moves her head to one side and makes a face of confusion) S1: “Chat with friends” (while imitating the action of chatting with his fingers) S2: “Ahh, yes, yes” I heard some of them asking for their partners’ names, which wasn’t part of the original instruction but was really good. They are using some words and simple sentences to ask for clarity: S3: Read books? (Vowel mispronunciation in both words) S4: (makes a funny face and looks at me) “No understand” T: (to S3) “Read books” S3: (to me) Ah, Ok. (To S4) Read books? S4: No, no read books.
Attitude towards the activities	In general, the attitude was good. Ss were quiet at the beginning of the class (maybe because the other teacher was also there for a while). There were just a few moments of noise during the pre-task. I had no problems with making Ss participate in today’s activities.

Expected results • To have students interact with their peers • To have students ask and answer questions • To understand the meaning of today's vocabulary. • To engage students to communicate without Spanish during the task	Results • Students interacted with their peers. They moved around the classroom looking for partners to whom they could ask questions • Students used present simple structures to ask questions to their peers. • The “no Spanish” dynamic worked really well. Students were forced to put into practice their English knowledge as well as using other means to achieve communication.	
Students' feedback		
Things they liked A student told me that he liked the “no Spanish” dynamic.	How they felt For most students it was fun to work without being able to speak Spanish. Someone also mentioned that this was a good way for making them feel more confident about using English.	Suggestions There were no suggestions today
Class development Class started at 6:30. I started with the warm-up. Ss provided a lot of activities that were written on the board. Three Ss from 11th grade had to apply a little survey to the class, it took them 10 minutes. I had to adjust the pre-task planning. I didn't use the flashcards I brought, but wrote on the board the remaining activities that weren't there yet. I also used a ball for the activity. I threw the ball to a student and asked him a question using one of the activities from the board. After he answered, it was his turn to throw the ball to a partner and ask another question. At some point a student from another grade came in, she had to check if there were students interested in participating in a raffle they were organizing. It was just a couple of minutes. I could develop the pre-task with no major issues. For the task, I decided to make students come closer to me in a semi-circle, so that everyone understood the instructions. I gave them the papers and they started working in the task with the no-Spanish rule. I moved around listening to students' interactions. I surprised a few speaking Spanish a few times. Students were even asking for their partners' names in English, which was something that wasn't part of the rules. Students used their knowledge of the language and non-verbal communication to complete the task. In general terms, the activity was a big success.		
Self-reflection Today has been the best session so far. I could complete all the planned activities even when there were two moments in which the class was interrupted. I noticed that students		

liked the activities, as most of them were participating actively. However, there were a couple of students who showed disinterest in the class. The task activity worked a lot better than expected. Students managed to communicate even when Spanish was forbidden. I expected them to just ask the assigned questions, but they even used English to ask for their partners' names. I consider that the no-Spanish dynamic must be included in future classes, as it showed interesting results regarding the fostering of students' oral expressions.

Appendix E: Data processing authorization format

 UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL	FOMATO		
	AUTORIZACIÓN TRATAMIENTO DE DATOS PERSONALES Y DE MENORES DE EDAD		
	Resolución 767 de 18 de junio 2018		
FOR009GSI	Fecha de Aprobación: 18-06-2018	Versión: 01	Página 2 de 2

AUTORIZACIÓN TRATAMIENTO DE DATOS PERSONALES DE MENORES DE EDAD

Ciudad y fecha: _____

Yo, _____, identificado con C.C. ☐ C.E. ☐ No.
 _____ expedida en _____, representante legal del menor
 _____, identificado con T.I. ☐ NUIP ☐ No.
 declaro que he sido informado por **LA UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL** (en adelante la **UPN**), identificada con NIT. 899.999.124-4, con domicilio en la ciudad de Bogotá y sede principal en la calle 72 No. 11 – 86 de Bogotá, que, de conformidad con los procedimientos establecidos en la Ley 1581 de 2012, Decreto Reglamentario 1377 de 2013 y el *Manual de política interna y procedimientos para el tratamiento y protección de datos personales de la Universidad*, disponible en la página web www.pedagogica.edu.co, actuará como Responsable del tratamiento de mis datos personales³, necesarios para el cumplimiento de la misión de la **UPN**, obtenidos a través de canales y dependencias institucionales y que podrá recolectar, almacenar, usar, actualizar, transmitir, transferir y poner en circulación o suprimirlos, mediante el uso de las medidas necesarias para otorgar seguridad a los registros, evitando su adulteración, pérdida, consulta, uso o acceso no autorizado o fraudulento incluso por terceros.

Que tratándose de datos sensibles⁴ y de menores de edad no está obligado a autorizar su tratamiento, salvo las excepciones consagradas en la ley o que medie su consentimiento expreso. Que es de carácter facultativo responder a las preguntas que traten de datos sensibles o menores de edad.

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La Universidad garantiza la confidencialidad, libertad, seguridad, veracidad, transparencia, acceso y circulación restringida de los datos y se reserva el derecho de modificar su Política de Tratamiento de datos personales en cualquier momento. Cualquier cambio será informado y publicado oportunamente en la página web.

Teniendo en cuenta lo anterior, autorizo de manera voluntaria, previa, explícita, informada e inequívoca a la **UPN** para tratar los datos personales del menor que represento, de acuerdo con el *Manual de política interna y procedimientos para el tratamiento y protección de datos personales de la Universidad* y para los fines relacionados con su Misión.

Leído lo anterior, manifiesto que la información para el Tratamiento de los datos personales del menor de edad que represento, ha sido suministrada de forma voluntaria y es veraz, completa, exacta, actualizada, comprobable y comprensible.

FIRMA _____

Nombre: _____

Identificación: _____

³ La UPN garantiza la confidencialidad, libertad, seguridad, veracidad, transparencia, acceso y circulación restringida de mis datos y se reserva el derecho de modificar su Política de Tratamiento de datos personales en cualquier momento. Cualquier cambio será informado y publicado oportunamente en la página web.

⁴ Son **datos sensibles** aquellos que afectan la intimidad del Titular o cuyo uso indebido puede generar su discriminación, tales como aquellos que revelen el origen racial o étnico, la orientación política, las convicciones religiosas o filosóficas, la pertenencia a sindicatos, organizaciones sociales, de derechos humanos o que promueva intereses de cualquier partido político o que garanticen los derechos y garantías de partidos políticos de oposición, así como los datos relativos a la salud, a la vida sexual, y los datos biométricos (Art. 5° Ley 1581 de 2012, art. 3° Decreto 1377 de 2013).

Appendix F: Field Note #6

Field Note #6	
Observer: Jorge Iván López Bernal	
Date: 16/05/22	
Time: 9:45 – 11:00	
Place: IED Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (Classroom #3)	
Grade: 601	
Description	Notes
9:50 -T starts handing the student's books. -There is a S who is helping T with the quick distribution of the books. -Some Ss are walking around during this process. 9:59 -T asks Ss to hand their workbooks, apparently there was a HW. 10:00 -T asks Ss to sit down and take the notebook out. -T asks for the date. Some Ss say "Monday", but no one mentions today's date. -T asks for the "pictures" HW. Some Ss have not handed It yet. 10:03 -T writes down: "Remember WB: vocabulary activity page 59 unit 2" 10:05 -A S is told to stop eating. She hides the chips in her bag and continues eating. -T is asking Ss if they remember previous activities. She continues writing: "Notebook, pictures, write about them" "Student's book activity" 10:07 -T tells Ss about the "plan de mejoramiento"	-Students seemed kind of annoyed today. -Once again, the methodology during the class was all about working on the books.

-Certain Ss might be able to deserve this plan, depending on their attitudes. Recover first term grades.

10:10

-T: "open your book on page 24"

-T writes down; "Lina's typical day" she asks Ss about what they were supposed to do in that activity

10:12

-T asks for a volunteer for reading

-A S reads: "What time does Lina wake up?"

-T asks about the meanings of "does" and "wake up". Ss answer.

-T tells Ss to notice the words written in a different color (verbs, auxiliaries, time)

10:20

-T asks Ss for the next question. One S says: "What time does Lina have breakfast?"

-T asks for the answer and one S says "she has..." he is not sure about how to continue.

10:24

-The same S goes to board and writes down the next question. He makes some mistakes but T tells him so he can correct them.

-T asks for another volunteer. So far only 3 Ss have participated in today's class.

10:27

-The same S goes and writes the next question because no one else wanted to go.

-He has some troubles writing fifty. The teacher spelled the word to him, but he still struggled (spelling problems)

10:30

-A different S(f) tries with the next question.

10:35

-Even though today's methodology was about the book, the class was more dynamic than previous classes, as T was trying to make students participate.

-I should think about was to make Ss participate more actively during mu implementation. Very few Ss are willing to do it by themselves.

-T makes a quick review of the following questions so Ss know what to do.

10:37

-Ss must finish the remaining questions and raise their hands so T can go and check.

10:40

-Ss go to T's desk to show their progress.
-Many Ss seem to not be working on the task.

10:45

-A S(f) was hitting her desk with her pens, as if playing drums. T asks her to stop, and she does.

10:49

-T goes to Ss places checking their work.
-Some Ss are working slower than T expected.

10:53

-T is still checking Ss work
-Many Ss are walking around.

10:56

-The rest of today's task is left as a HW
-The first S of each line takes the books to T's desk.
-The rest of the Ss prepare to leave the room.

Conclusions:

I should plan activities that engage Ss' to participate more actively. I should really take into consideration the data I got through the questionnaire.

Appendix G: Lesson plan format

Lesson plan #5					
Topic: Activities we do			Population: 6 th grade (11-14 years)		Level: A2
Objectives Communicative: - To talk about activities we do - To interact with our partners to exchange information about activities - To practice our fluency when talking with others Language: - To use present simple structures to provide information about activities - To practice the pronunciation of the class's vocabulary				Expected time 80 minutes	
Time	Stage	AIM	Procedure	Interaction	Materials
20	Warm-up	Reviewing verbs	Charades The teacher will ask students for activities they usually do. The teacher will write a list on the board of all the activities they provide. He checks the pronunciation and meaning of each one. Once there are a bunch of activities, and students have written them on their notebooks, the teacher will erase everything. Then he will start making the mimics of any of the previous actions or others. Students need to guess the verb or phrase. Then the teacher asks for volunteers to go to the front and play as well, while the others continue to guess.	T-S-S	Board, notebooks
Transition “Let’s check some of the activities you do”					
25	Pre-task	Answering questions	The teacher will use flashcards with some activities in them. The teacher will show each flashcard and students who do the activity have to raise their hands. The teacher pastes the flashcards on the board each time. Then, he asks students for other activities (they may repeat verbs with different	T-S	Flashcards Board, Tape.

			objects). He writes the other activities on the board. When there are no more activities to add, the teacher will ask questions to students “Do you play soccer” and students will answer yes or no. The teacher will ask individual questions to random students or those who are not participating. Teacher assessment The teacher checks that students understand the meaning of the verbs used during the activity. He will also provide feedback to students.		
Transition The teacher will write the following structure: <i>Do you ____?</i> “Ok, now you will ask some questions to some partners”.					
25	Task	Asking and answering	Students will be given a piece of paper with a format on it. There are some activities on the papers, and students will have to ask 5 partners the questions to check whether they do the activities or not. Students won't be allowed to speak Spanish during the task completion. They will have to use English and other means to communicate. Teacher-assessment The teacher will move around, checking students' performances. If he notices students using Spanish, he will put a dot on their papers. He will also provide feedback during the task completion. The teacher will collect all the papers for evaluation.	S-S	Pieces of paper
Student's feedback: The teacher will ask students for feedback during the class's development. They will mention things they like, how they feel during the tasks, and any suggestions for future classes. The teacher will write everything students mention in the diary					

