



UNIVERSIDAD BOLIVARIANA DEL ECUADOR
REPUBLICA DE ECUADOR

TITLE

IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK-BASED INSTRUCTION TO IMPROVE ENGLISH
SPEAKING FLUENCY IN A2-LEVEL STUDENTS

MAESTRÍA EN PEDAGOGÍA DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

RESEARCH WORK PRESENTED TO OBTAIN THE ACADEMIC TITLE OF
MAGISTER IN PEDAGOGY OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

AUTHOR:

Arias Cevallos, Anabel de Jesús, Lic.

TUTOR:

Johnny Campoverde López, PhD

Duran, 2025





CERTIFICADO DE AVAL DEL TUTOR DE TESIS

AVAL DEL TUTOR DE LA TESIS

Guayaquil, 10 de marzo de 2025

Siendo designado como tutor del programa de maestría Pedagogía del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera de la Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador (UBE), se avala el trabajo titulado "Implementation of Task-Based Instruction to Improve English Speaking Fluency in A2-Level Students", que ha sido elaborado por Anabel de Jesus Arias Cevallos, bajo mi tutoría y que reúne los requisitos para ser defendido ante el tribunal que se designe a tal efecto.

Firma:

Msc. JOHNNY CAMPOVERDE LÓPEZ, PhD (c)
Docente Tutor
C.I.





DEDICATORY

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved daughter, Sofia, who has always been—and will always be—my greatest source of motivation and inspiration. Her love and presence have been invaluable throughout this journey, giving me the strength to keep moving forward and becoming a better person every day.

To my adored parents, Amparito and Marlon, whose unwavering support and encouragement, have been instrumental in my academic and professional growth. Their love and guidance have fueled my determination to pursue knowledge and achieve my goals.

Anabel Arias



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the prestigious Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador for providing me with the opportunity to pursue and achieve my goal of earning a master's degree in my field.

My sincere appreciation goes to my thesis tutor, Ph.D. Johnny Campoverde, for his patience, guidance, and unwavering support. His dedication and willingness to selflessly share his knowledge have been invaluable throughout this entire process.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the professors of the English Pedagogy program for their dedication to teaching and for enriching my classmates and me with their expertise. Their guidance has played a crucial role in shaping us into better professionals in our field.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my most genuine gratitude to my classmates—Martha, Sandy, Gerardo, Victor, and Javier—for their continuous support, kindness, and camaraderie. Their friendship and encouragement have made this journey even more meaningful, exemplifying the true essence of companionship.

Anabel Arias





RESUMEN

En Ecuador, a los estudiantes de bachillerato y universitarios se les exige poseer un nivel de inglés B1. Sin embargo, un gran número de ellos presenta niveles de inglés bajos y enfrentan grandes dificultades cuando se trata de dominar habilidades productivas como hablar y escribir. Después de identificar la necesidad de mejorar las habilidades del habla de los estudiantes ecuatorianos, esta investigación planteó descubrir la efectividad de la Instrucción Basada en Tareas (TBI, por sus siglas en inglés) en la mejora de la fluidez del habla en estudiantes de inglés de nivel A2, así como explorar sus percepciones sobre este enfoque de enseñanza. La investigación se llevó a cabo en una academia de inglés privada ubicada en Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador. Se empleó un muestreo intencional y los participantes fueron 10 estudiantes de EFL de entre 15 y 16 años y un nivel de competencia A2 según el CEFR. Se empleó un enfoque mixto, lo que implica que se combinaron enfoques cuantitativos y cualitativos. Los instrumentos utilizados fueron un pretest y un posttest, una rúbrica, una ficha de observación y una encuesta. Los resultados revelaron una correlación positiva entre la TBI y la mejora de las habilidades de habla de los estudiantes, ya que ayudó a los participantes a mejorar sus habilidades de habla, incluida su fluidez oral. Se evidenció una mejora progresiva en la fluidez de los estudiantes en las tareas, con algunas fluctuaciones atribuidas a la complejidad de la tarea y a factores emocionales. Los resultados de la encuesta encontraron que los estudiantes tienen una actitud positiva hacia el uso de la TBI para mejorar su habla. Esta investigación propuso encontrar formas de mejorar las prácticas de enseñanza de EFL mediante la aplicación de la TBI para mejorar la fluidez oral de los estudiantes. Se concluyó que TBI mejoró las habilidades de habla de los estudiantes, particularmente la fluidez y promovió un progreso equilibrado entre todos los estudiantes, independientemente de su capacidad inicial. Además, los estudiantes respondieron positivamente, reconociendo el papel de TBI en la mejora de su fluidez y el desarrollo general del habla.

Palabras claves: inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL), fluidez oral, instrucción basada en tareas (TBI), estudiantes de EFL A2, contexto ecuatoriano.



ABSTRACT

In Ecuador, high school and university students are required to possess a B1 English proficiency level. Nevertheless, a large number of them present very low English levels and face great difficulties when it comes to mastering productive skills such as speaking and writing. Consequently, after identifying the need to improve Ecuadorian learners' speaking skills, this research proposal aimed to discover the effectiveness of Task-Based Instruction (TBI) in improving English speaking fluency in A2 level EFL learners as well as explore their perceptions towards the implementation of this educational model. The research was conducted at a private English Academy located in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador. Purposive sampling was employed and the participants were 10 EFL learners with ages ranging from 15 to 16 years old and an A2 proficiency level according to the CEFR. This study employed a mixed approach which implies that both quantitative and qualitative research were combined. The instruments used to collect the data were a pre-test and post-test, a rubric, an observation checklist, and a survey. Pre and post-test results revealed a positive correlation between TBI and the improvement of learners' speaking skills since it helped the participants to enhance their speaking skills including their oral fluency. The checklist demonstrated a progressive enhancement in the learners' fluency across tasks, with some fluctuations attributed to task complexity and emotional factors that impacted their speaking performance. The survey outcomes found that learners have a positive attitude towards the use of TBI to enhance their speaking. This research sought to find ways of enhancing EFL teaching practices by applying TBI to improve EFL learners' speaking fluency. It was concluded that Task-Based Instruction (TBI) effectively improved learners' speaking skills, particularly oral fluency. It promoted balanced progress among all students, regardless of their initial proficiency. There was a continuous improvement in their speaking performance. Additionally, learners responded positively to TBI, recognizing its role in enhancing their fluency and overall speaking development.

Keywords: English as a foreign language (EFL), speaking fluency, task-based instruction (*TBI*), A2 EFL learners, Ecuadorian context.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE	i
FICHA SENESCYT PARA EL REPOSITORIO	ii
COPIA INFORME DE SIMILITUD (ANTI-PLAGIO)	iii
CERTIFICACIÓN DE AUTORÍA Y CESIÓN DE DERECHOS DE LA AUTORA.....	iv
CERTIFICADO DE AVAL DEL TUTOR DE TESIS	v
DEDICATORY	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	vii
RESUMEN.....	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
TABLE INDEX.....	xiii
INDEX OF FIGURES.....	xiv
INTRODUCTION	16
Description of the general background and analysis of the situation that justifies the presentation of the proposal.	16
Description of the problem to be investigated and the elements that justify the proposal ...	17
Statement of the problem	18
Precision of the topic	18
Description of the research object	19
Research aim	19
Specific research objectives	19
Description of the conceptual and operational categories	19
Description of the research approaches and methodologies to be used.....	22
Description of the research instruments.....	22
Description of the beneficiaries of the proposal.....	22
Description of the research context	23
Description of the practical contributions of the proposal, its importance, and its social need	23
Description of the contents of each chapter	24
CHAPTER I.....	27
1.1 EFL teaching and learning	27
1.2 EFL teaching and learning in the Ecuadorian context	28
1.3 Dependent variable: Speaking fluency	28





1.3.1	English language skills	28
1.3.2	EFL Speaking skill	29
1.3.3	Speaking components	31
1.3.4	Vocabulary	31
1.3.5	Grammar	32
1.3.6	Pronunciation	32
1.3.7	Fluency	33
1.4	Independent variable: Task Based Instruction	34
1.4.1	Language teaching methods.....	34
1.4.2	Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)	35
1.4.3	Task-Based Instruction	35
1.4.4	Communicative Task.....	37
1.4.5	TBI Phases	37
1.4.6	Pre-task stage	38
1.4.7	Task cycle stage	39
1.4.8	Language focus stage.....	39
1.5	Previous Studies.....	40
CHAPTER II.....		42
METHODOLOGY		42
2.1	Research Question and Objectives	42
2.1.1	Research questions	42
2.1.2	Research Object.....	42
2.1.3	General Objective	42
2.1.4	Specific Objectives	42
2.2	Paradigm.....	42
2.3	Conceptualization and Operationalization of Main Categories.....	43
2.4	Definition and explanation of main categories.....	44
2.4.1	Independent Variable: Task-Based Instruction (TBI).	44
2.4.2	Dependent Variable: Speaking Fluency	44
2.5	Operationalization of Main Categories	45
2.5.1	Task-Based Instruction (TBI)	45
2.5.2	Speaking Fluency	45
2.6	Justification of Data Collection Methods	46





2.7	Delimitation of population, sample, and sampling	47
2.8	Research context	48
2.9	Research stages	48
2.10.	Research Scope	50
2.11.	Type of Research.....	51
2.12.	Description of the Instruments	52
2.12.1.	Pre-tests and Post-tests	52
2.12.2.	Observation Checklist.....	52
2.12.3.	Survey	53
2.13.	The Validation.....	53
2.13.1	<i>Description of the methodological proposal.....</i>	<i>53</i>
CHAPTER III.....		56
3.1	Presentation.....	56
3.2	Description of the intervention	56
3.2.1	The pretest phase	56
3.2.2	The intervention phase.....	57
3.2.3	The posttest phase	57
3.2.4	The survey phase	57
3.3	Location.....	58
3.4	Equipment and materials	58
3.5	Research question 1: How would the implementation of Task-Based Instruction improve the English-speaking fluency of A2-level students attending an English Academy?	59
3.6	Research question 2: What are the participants' attitudes and perceptions regarding the use of Task-Based Instruction to enhance their speaking fluency?.....	78
CONCLUSIONS		85
RECOMMENDATIONS		86
REFERENCES		87





TABLE INDEX

Table 1.	47
Table 2.	48
Table 3.	59
Table 4.	61
Table 5.	64
Table 6.	66
Table 7.	68
Table 8.	70
Table 9.	72
Table 10.	74
Table 11.	76
Table 12.	78
Table 13.	80
Table 14.	82





INDEX OF FIGURES

Figure 1.....	38
Figure 2.....	59
Figure 3.....	62
Figure 4.....	64
Figure 5.....	66
Figure 6.....	68
Figure 7.....	70
Figure 8.....	73
Figure 9.....	75
Figure 10.....	77
Figure 11.....	79
Figure 12.....	80
Figure 13.....	82

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Presentation of the topic letter	1
Appendix 2. Pre-project	2
Appendix 3. Presentation of the research design	8
Appendix 4. Request for permission to the institution's manager	9
Appendix 5. Authorization letter	10
Appendix 6. Consent form for parents	11
Appendix 7. Operationalization Matrix	12
Appendix 8. Certificate of validation of instruments by experts.....	14
Appendix 9. Didact plan for the intervention.....	16
Appendix 10. Pre-test	31
Appendix 11. Post-test.....	32
Appendix 12. Rubric for Pre and Post-tests.....	33
Appendix 13. Observation Checklist.....	34
Appendix 14. Survey	35
Appendix 15. Intervention and Data Collection Evidence	37



INTRODUCTION

Description of the general background and analysis of the situation that justifies the presentation of the proposal.

One of the main goals within the EFL teaching field is to discover ways of improving learners' language skills namely reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Each of them is, in turn, composed of subskills or components. Acosta et al. (2019) and Hossain (2015) assure that for most language learners' productive skills are considered the most important as well as difficult ones to develop, especially speaking skills since they require spontaneous language production, that is, fluency. As a matter of fact, one of the language skills that language learners consider the most challenging is the productive skill of speaking, and more specifically, the fluency component (Rahmatillah, 2019).

Consequently, a large number of researchers concerned with the EFL field have set out to explore ways to improve or develop learners' oral fluency. For instance, Lopez et al. (2021) conducted research in Ecuador attempting to develop EFL learners' speaking fluency through authentic oral production by employing vlogging. The study employed a mixed approach collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data through instruments such as pre-tests and post-tests, surveys, and interviews. The participants were 42 students from a public school. According to their findings, using authentic oral production via vlogging does help learners develop their speaking fluency.

Nonetheless, recently, scholars have proposed other alternatives to enhance the speaking component of fluency such as integrating innovative language teaching approaches e.g., Task-based Instruction (TBI). Richards and Renandya (2002) define TBI as the implementation of tasks in order to foster meaningful communication among learners. The authors claim that adequately designed instructional tasks will give rise to effective language learning. Therefore, it is essential to mention some related previous studies that have been conducted around the world in order to understand how this issue has been approached.

By way of illustration, Afifah and Devana (2020) carried out quasi-experimental research in Indonesia exploring the effectiveness of TBI to improve speaking skills. According to their results, they affirmed that TBI significantly improves students' speaking skills and students approved the implementation of this method because it allows them to enjoy learning English vocabulary. In the same way, Masuram and Sripada (2020) conducted research in India seeking to examine how effective task-based language

teaching is in enhancing English oral fluency. According to these authors, applying this method allows learners to practice the language by simulating real-world situations by employing meaningful tasks and having a clear learning goal. Concerning the study results, the researchers found that there was an improvement in learners' speaking fluency after applying task-based teaching.

As can be noted in the abovementioned studies, favorable results have been evidenced both in the improvement of the EFL learners' speaking skills as well as in their perceptions and satisfaction after TBI implementation in their EFL lessons. However, despite there being some previous research related to the improvement of speaking through the TBI approach, the need to conduct more research specifically focused on exploring the effectiveness of TBI in the development of English oral fluency has been identified. For this reason, the present study aims to build on relevant information to this line of research by applying TBI to enhance A2-level EFL learners' speaking fluency.

Description of the problem to be investigated and the elements that justify the proposal

After conducting empirical research through direct observation and a needs analysis in a group of ten A2-level EFL students, it was found that oral fluency is one of the aspects that causes the most difficulty. As a matter of fact, language learners commonly consider speaking as one of the most important language skills because it allows them to express themselves easily in the target language. Yet, as mentioned above, this skill, and especially the fluency component is also considered the most challenging one.

Consequently, after performing a needs analysis the researcher was able to note that the students show considerable strength in the receptive skills of listening and reading. On the other hand, several weaknesses were detected when it came to producing the language, especially, orally, which led to the conclusion that these learners need to improve their productive skills.

In order to further limit the study, speaking fluency was selected since the researcher witnessed that the subjects presented major problems when attempting to express themselves orally without pauses and hesitations. Therefore, the need to improve their speaking fluency was spotted. In other words, a major problem related to fluency has been discovered which is greatly affecting the EFL learners' proficiency level and therefore, hindering their language learning journey. After observing learners' behavior, it was possible to determine that they are aware of the benefits of mastering English; however, it

is hard for them to communicate due to their lack of fluency. This lack of fluency can be mainly caused by poor grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary knowledge (Normawati, Nugrahaeni, Kusuma Hadi Manggolo, et al., 2023).

Moreover, another main cause of oral fluency difficulties is the use of inadequate language teaching methods and approaches. By way of illustration a considerable number of EFL instructors still employ traditional language teaching methods where learners are not considered the central characters, that is, they are not assigned the main role within English lessons. In addition, classes are held monotonously and tend to be focused more on teaching grammar points explicitly as well as isolated vocabulary which does not help to enhance their oral fluency (Gonzalez et al., 2015; Quezada-Sarmiento et al., 2017; Soria-Guerrero et al., 2020).

Consequently, the necessity to find innovative ways to improve this language component has been pinpointed. An effective alternative is by switching to or integrating current language teaching methods that have emerged from the CLT approach. One of these methods is Task-Based Language Teaching also called Task-Based Instruction which consists of assigning learners meaningful tasks that boost their active participation, cooperation, and engagement as well as interaction and communication (Corwin, 2022).

By employing this language teaching approach, it is sought to overcome the lack of speaking fluency faced by A2 EFL students from a private English Academy located in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador.

Statement of the problem

It has been determined that this research seeks to provide an answer to the following question: How would the implementation of Task-Based Instruction improve the English-speaking fluency of A2-level students attending an English Academy?

Precision of the topic

The present study entitled 'Implementation of Task-Based Instruction to Improve English Speaking Fluency in A2-level students' seeks to clarify the pedagogical and didactic understanding of language teaching approaches and methods by exploring the effectiveness of TBI in enhancing EFL learners' speaking fluency. This research proposal is framed within the pedagogy, didactics, and management of education general research line established by Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador. Moreover, this research aims to provide significant insights for the EFL teaching and learning field and all those who make up the educational community including teachers, educational authorities, and curriculum

designers by finding ways of enhancing EFL teaching practices by assessing a language teaching approach. Hence, the topic aligns with the specific research lines of research, evaluation, and application of educational models and pedagogical innovations established as well by Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador.

Description of the research object

The object of the present study is the improvement of A2 learners' speaking fluency by applying the Task-based Instruction approach. By focusing on this object, the present research seeks to provide valuable insights for all educational entities that are looking for innovative and effective ways to enhance EFL learners' speaking fluency.

Research aim

To determine the effectiveness of Task-Based Instruction to enhance the speaking fluency of A2-level learners from an English Academy located in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador.

Specific research objectives

- ✓ To diagnose the participants' main language difficulties before the intervention through classroom observation and analysis of existing documents, previous coursework, and performance records.
- ✓ To apply TBI to improve participants' speaking fluency using a checklist to track their progress.
- ✓ To assess the effectiveness of TBI in enhancing the participants' speaking fluency by applying a pretest and posttest.
- ✓ To discover the participants' attitudes and perceptions after using TBI to improve their speaking fluency.

Description of the conceptual and operational categories

Independent variable: Task-Based Language Instruction (TBI)

Throughout the history of teaching English as a second or foreign language, it can be noted how various language teaching methods and approaches have been used in order to improve the quality of language teaching, among them are grammar-translation, direct, and audio-lingual methods (Majeed & Memon, 2022).

These methods and approaches have evolved into one of the most recent ones, which is communicative language teaching (CLT). This approach has gained great relevance in the EFL field and from it, other innovative methods, strategies, and techniques have emerged that nowadays are successively employed in EFL classrooms around the world as is the case of task-based instruction (TBI). TBI came to light in the 70s and refers

to the implementation of tasks in order to foster meaningful communications among EFL learners (Majeed & Memon, 2022; Richards & Renandya, 2002). According to Richards and Renandya (2002), TBI maintains that adequately designed instructional tasks will give rise to effective language learning. In other words, the TBI method assures that engaging EFL learners in interactive or communicative tasks will enable them to advance their grammar as well as communicative competences. In this regard, it is also important to define the term 'communicative task' which Masuram and Sripada (2020) describe as the exchange of meanings.

Task-based instruction offers opportunities for EFL learners to test their own abilities and motivates them to keep improving their speaking fluency (Soria-Guerrero et al., 2020). In addition, this language teaching approach enables EFL learners to be involved in meaning-focused tasks that allow them to interact in the target language resembling real-life situations which in turn helps them to improve their language skills (Masuram & Sripada, 2020).

Some researchers have already implemented this method such as Nita et al. (2020) who applied TBI to improve EFL learners speaking skills and concluded that this is indeed effective in improving speaking skills and especially the students' oral fluency. The tasks proposed during the study managed to encourage learners to interact and express themselves using L2 freely and with very little intervention and correction by the instructor. Likewise, the learners' motivation increased greatly since they had to use the target language to develop meaningful tasks that became quite interesting and engaging to them. Moreover, Rahmatillah (2019) after applying TBI and role-play found that the learners themselves acknowledged that the tasks they conducted motivated and allowed them to practice the L2 in a much more interesting and attractive way.

Additionally, TBI focuses on natural language use in collaborative work to facilitate idea exchange. This approach suggests that effective language learning occurs in real-life situations using real-world tasks. By way of illustration, key task types in TBI include pair/group tasks, information gap tasks, open/closed tasks, opinion and reasoning gap tasks, problem-solving tasks, and social interactive tasks like role-plays and interviews (Majeed & Memon, 2022).

Dependent variable: Speaking fluency

The present study focuses on EFL learners' speaking ability which according to Kashinathan and Aziz (2021) is a productive skill that enables people to engage in

meaningful verbal communication in order to share information, interact, and connect with others. Therefore, speaking is considered one of the most useful and important macro skills. Speaking skills allow language learners to maintain a conversation in the target language and negotiate meaning by applying the knowledge they are acquiring (Bakar et al., 2013). Additionally, this term is closely related to oral communication which involves speaking and listening skills. Knowing how to communicate orally is fundamental for many aspects of our lives. In this sense, English is considered an international language; hence, knowing how to communicate verbally brings great benefits including better job and education opportunities (Bakar et al., 2013).

Speaking is also referred to as a macro skill which means that it is made up of several important micro-skills that contribute to an effective production of spoken language. The speaking components are mainly pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, coherence and cohesion, and nonverbal communication among others (Arini & Wahyudin, 2022; Brown, 2006).

Accordingly, in order to fulfill the present study's objectives, the need to focus on only one aspect was identified. Consequently, the present research focuses on the component of fluency. As reported by Fatehi et al. (2016) fluency can be defined as a speaker's ability to express his or her thoughts naturally and without hesitation. In other words, this author describes fluency as the production of speech in a spontaneous and comprehensible way.

In line with the aforementioned authors, Rajendran and Yunus (2021) define fluency as the students' ability to speak English using facilitation skills such as fillers, lexical phrases, and compensation skills e.g., self-correction, rephrasing, or repeating to manage fast-paced communication. This author further expresses that fluency is also referred to as "smoothness" and involves the ease and regularity with which a speaker can deliver spoken content without stammering, stuttering, or mumbling.

Moreover, Tilwani et al. (2022) explain that fluency refers to how well a learner communicates without paying much attention to grammatical, pronunciation, and vocabulary mistakes. They further describe fluency as the ability to speak comprehensibly without pausing and maintaining the listener's interest. It involves speaking and communicating smoothly without searching for words or phrases. Brown (2006) emphasized that while fluent students might not be 100% accurate, they can still be understood.

Ecuadorian EFL learners exhibit significant hindrances when trying to express themselves orally in English which is even more notorious when it comes to the fluency component (Gonzalez et al., 2015; Quezada-Sarmiento et al., 2017; Soria-Guerrero et al., 2020). According to the aforementioned authors, these speaking fluency difficulties are due to the persistent utilization of traditional and outdated language teaching methods and approaches within Ecuadorian EFL classrooms. Hence, due to the visible deficiency of Ecuadorian EFL learners' speaking fluency, it was found necessary to conduct research on how to improve the learners' speaking fluency by employing an effective and innovative EFL teaching approach.

Description of the research approaches and methodologies to be used

The present study uses a mixed research method which implies that in order to achieve the research purpose quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed in order to identify the level of improvement in the participants' speaking fluency and gain a deeper understanding of their perceptions and attitudes regarding TBI. For this research, an intervention is going to take place in a classroom setting, where a group of 10 teenage students at the A2 level will receive Task-Based Instruction over a 5-week period. During this intervention, the speaking tasks will be audio recorded in order to collect the evidence and fill out the instruments to track their progress.

Description of the research instruments

The research instruments designed to gather the data consist of pre and post-tests and their corresponding rubrics applied before and after the intervention, an observation checklist to track learners' speaking fluency progress in each task, and a survey aiming at discovering the students' perceptions towards the implementation of TBI in speaking lessons.

Description of the beneficiaries of the proposal

The primary beneficiaries of this research are the A2 EFL learners themselves who at the end of the intervention will have improved their speaking fluency as well as their overall language proficiency and confidence in using spoken English. In addition, educators can also benefit from gaining insights into the effectiveness of the TBI method which can inspire them to design more engaging and effective lesson plans that efficiently cover their students' needs. Moreover, educational institutions in Ecuador and all around the world can benefit from implementing proven teaching strategies, leading to better language learning outcomes. Furthermore, curriculum developers can consider the present study findings to

incorporate TBI elements that have been proven effective in the design of the materials and curricula. Finally, this study can also contribute to the academic field by providing new data and insights, which can inform further research and theory development.

Description of the research context

This research takes place at Lingua Franca Academy located in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador. This private educational establishment welcomes around 180 students of all ages, from 3 years old onwards, of which approximately 100 are teenagers. Class sizes are a maximum of 10 students per class. In addition, the institution has 7 English teachers specialized in different age groups and language proficiency levels. This educational establishment operates in the morning, afternoon, and evening, that is, the groups attend English classes on different schedules. The group that will undergo the intervention is a sample population chosen by convenience sampling. The participants are 10 teenage learners taking level A2, seven of them are female and three are male with ages ranging from 15 to 17 years old. Most learners are from the city of Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador (where the educational establishment is located) while a small number are from surrounding cantons.

Description of the practical contributions of the proposal, its importance, and its social need

Practical contributions

The outcomes of this research are expected to enhance language teaching practices by providing evidence of the benefits of Task-Based Instruction (TBI). This will encourage EFL teachers to adopt more effective strategies to increase engagement and efficiency in language learning. Additionally, the findings can contribute useful evidence for the development of instructional materials specifically designed to enhance A2 learners' speaking fluency, making lessons more practical and relevant. Furthermore, the research demonstrates the positive impact of TBI on speaking fluency, promoting a shift towards more student-centered learning environments where learners engage in meaningful communication tasks. Improved fluency can boost students' confidence and motivation, fostering a more positive attitude toward language learning and higher participation levels. Additionally, enhanced speaking skills can offer long-term academic and career benefits, as proficiency in English is often essential for further education and employment. Ultimately, as EFL learners become more proficient in English, they can engage more effectively in global communication, fostering cross-cultural understanding and collaboration.

Importance

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it provides empirical evidence on the effectiveness of TBI which contributes to the growing body of knowledge on language teaching methodologies. This helps language teachers to make informed decisions about their teaching practices. In addition, this research promotes the implementation of innovative and interactive teaching methods such as TBI that can replace traditional approaches, making language learning more dynamic and effective. Moreover, it offers relevant information about A2-level teenagers, addressing their specific needs and providing insights into how instructional strategies can be tailored to their proficiency level and learning styles. In the same way, this investigation directly contributes to better oral communication skills among EFL learners. Finally, the research outcomes also lead to improvement in EFL learners' overall academic performance in language courses since improved speaking fluency enhances students' ability to participate in class, understand content, and express their ideas clearly.

Social Need

This investigative work addresses the social need for practical language skills in this globalized world where proficiency in English speaking skills is essential for effective communication across cultures for learners to engage in global interactions. In the same way, this study's findings foster the need for employment opportunities since most industries and international corporations require employees to possess solid communication skills in English. Similarly, this research helps in social integration and cultural exchange since by improving speaking fluency, non-native speakers living or planning to live in English-speaking countries better integrate into society as well as engage in cultural exchange programs, travel, and international collaborations, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation of different cultures.

Description of the contents of each chapter

The present research is divided into four main segments, the first one is labeled '*Introduction*' which offers a clear overview of the research. In this section, the general background is thoroughly described in order to justify the research proposal. The problem is described and stated and the topic is defined according to the institutional research lines. In addition, the object, aim, specific objectives, and conceptual and operational categories are meticulously elucidated. Likewise, this section provides a brief and clear overview of the research approaches, methodologies, instruments, beneficiaries, and context. Finally,

the practical contributions of the proposal, its importance, and its social need are expounded and the contents of each chapter are described.

The next part is entitled *Chapter I: 'Literature Review'* and it provides a detailed synthesis of the most relevant information, data, findings, and contributions that have been delivered by other authors and scholars over the years. This section covers the emergence of the TBI approach and its dimensions or characteristics to its application in various contexts as well as the history of language skills and especially speaking fluency development over the years. To put it concisely, this chapter places the current research within the wider academic framework, showing how it expands on or differs from existing knowledge. This part places the groundwork for the research, justifying the study's necessity and shaping its aims and methodology also ensuring that the research is firmly rooted in a comprehensive understanding of the field and adds to the ongoing scholarly discourse.

The following section is termed *Chapter II: 'Research Methodology'* and it clearly outlines the research design and approach employed to conduct this investigative work. In other words, in this section the sampling methods, participant selection, and data collection are detailed. This includes the description of the planned intervention, the research instruments designed, and the research techniques chosen to accomplish this study's objectives. Additionally, this chapter enlightens the data analysis approach, ensuring transparency and replicability. Finally, in this section, ethical considerations are discussed and the methodology is justified, demonstrating its appropriateness for addressing this research's purpose. To sum up, this chapter ensures that the research process is methodical, thorough, and scientifically valid.

Subsequently, the third chapter titled *Data Analysis and Results* presents the findings obtained after applying the research tools. Since this was a quantitative study the statistical and numerical data obtained from the rubrics, checklists, and survey are displayed in tables, graphs, and charts. In addition, in this section, the findings are thoroughly described, interpreted, analyzed, and discussed in order to bring to light significant information that helps to reach the study's objective. This chapter aims to present the evidence supporting the study's conclusions and contribute to the overall study's validity and reliability.

Finally, the last section belongs to *'Conclusions and Recommendations'* and it summarizes the main outcomes obtained after analyzing the data collected. In addition,

based on the conclusions, some recommendations are also presented in order to provide useful information for further studies related to this topic. Lastly, the limitations and difficulties encountered by the researcher during the development of this study are also revealed.

CHAPTER I

LITERATURE REVIEW

The present chapter outlines a comprehensive overview involving the most relevant topics for the present research, addressing both the dependent variable, speaking fluency, and the independent variable, which is the Task-Based Instruction approach. In the following paragraphs, an extensive review of the most remarkable existing literature on the most relevant topics is carried out in order to establish a theoretical foundation for this study. It should be noted that the information presented here is derived from highly reliable and up-to-date sources ensuring to have a clear and global idea of both variables that are included in this research.

1.1 EFL teaching and learning

English language teaching and learning has gained great relevance in recent years in this globalized world. With the advent of ICT, society has advanced in many aspects, and language teaching is also one of them. Language teaching methods have changed revolutionarily and thus teaching EFL has become a real challenge. Furthermore, in current times, the use of teacher-centered has become outdated; therefore, a more learner-centered teaching approach is now used (L. P. Bhandari, 2020).

Likewise, traditional teaching methods in which drilling and translation were the focus of lessons have been harshly criticized in the current era and have therefore been left behind, giving way to more communicative approaches and methods (Nget et al., 2020). In other words, due to the fact that these language learning methodologies seek to improve learners' communication skills and prioritize this before memorizing (L. P. Bhandari, 2020).

Focusing specifically on the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language, it can be seen that it has become a requirement for all those who make up today's society. In other words, mastery of English has been shown to offer substantial opportunities for employment, education, and economic growth (Nget et al., 2020).

As a matter of fact, this language is considered the lingua franca or the international language since it is used as the main language in countless fields such as trading, politics, diplomacy, international trade, sciences, technology, education, mass media, and popular culture. For all the above reasons, countless people learn it all over the world (Said et al., 2018).

1.2 EFL teaching and learning in the Ecuadorian context

In the Ecuadorian context, most public school students present a low level of English proficiency which results in limited opportunities to engage in global economic activities. In other words, this lack of English mastery hinders the Ecuadorians' personal as well as the national economic well-being. Additionally, it hampers the advancement of global citizenship in Ecuador which is a crucial aspect of our globalized society (Newman et al., 2023).

According to the abovementioned authors, EFL Ecuadorian teachers are willing and committed to overcoming the proficiency difficulties but they still find it challenging to put into practice the communicative teaching methods and the learner-centered approach proposed in the Ecuadorian EFL curriculum. Thus, the Ecuadorian educational system remains traditional and keeps employing a teacher-centered approach.

In addition, teachers are also dissatisfied with the large class sizes and the lack of teaching resources. Therefore, Espinosa and Soto (2015) maintain that in order to change these circumstances it is necessary for all stakeholders to make some reforms. Similarly, effective teaching requires the implementation of a communicative, interactive, and context-specific approach that is sensitive to students' needs, encourages their active involvement, and helps foster problem-solving abilities.

As reported by authors such as Gonzalez et al. (2015), Quezada et al. (2017), and Soria et al. (2020), Ecuadorian EFL learners exhibit significant hindrances when trying to express themselves orally in English which is even more notable when it comes to oral fluency. According to these authors, the fluency difficulties are due to the persistent utilization of traditional and outdated language teaching methods and approaches within Ecuadorian EFL classrooms. Hence, due to the visible deficiency of Ecuadorian EFL learners' speaking fluency, it is indispensable to find out how to improve Ecuadorian EFL learners' speaking fluency by employing effective and innovative EFL teaching approaches.

1.3 Dependent variable: Speaking fluency

1.3.1 English language skills

Learning a language involves mastering the four basic language skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing which is no different in the field of learning English as a second or foreign language. On this matter, it can be stated that the main goal of EFL

teaching and learning is to help learners effectively communicate in daily life situations both in spoken and written form. In other words, this field aims to allow EFL learners to produce and understand the language spontaneously (Safitri, 2018).

Nevertheless, according to the aforementioned authors, oral skills i.e., listening and speaking are the most employed ones; therefore, learners are more eager to master them. Speaking is the first skill developed by people in their native language, therefore, it is always considered the most necessary one since allows people to communicate their thoughts easily and fast.

The four language skills have been categorized into receptive skills (reading and listening) and productive skills (speaking and writing) with the purpose of better organizing the teaching of languages (Harmer, 2015). In other words, this categorization helps language instructors grasp how students acquire and interact with the target language to be able to find the best ways to improve each of them (Sreena & Ilankumaran, 2018).

Regarding productive skills, speaking can be defined as the action of accurately producing oral language to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings. This skill is commonly considered the most important as well as difficult to develop since it involves producing oral language in real time (Lara et al., 2022). Similarly, the productive skill of writing can be described as the ability to convey coherent, clear, and understandable ideas in written form, which requires learners to possess linguistic accuracy, creativity, and organization (Kumar, 2020).

On the other hand, the receptive skill of listening refers to the active process of receiving understanding, and interpreting an oral message (Regis & Agwuocha, 2024). In the same way, the receptive skill of reading is considered a complex process of interpreting symbols, such as letters and words, to extract meaning (Pandey, 2023).

1.3.2 EFL Speaking skill

As stated by Kashinathan and Aziz (2021), speaking is a productive skill that enables people to engage in meaningful verbal communication in order to share information, interact, and connect with others. Therefore, this language skill is considered one of the most useful and important ones. Speaking skills allow language learners to maintain a conversation in the target language and negotiate meaning by applying the knowledge they have acquired. This term is closely related to oral communication which involves both speaking and listening skills (Bakar et al., 2013).

As Daar (2019) points out, knowing how to communicate orally is fundamental for

many aspects of our lives. As a matter of fact, English is commonly considered an international language; hence, knowing how to communicate verbally in this language brings great benefits including better job and education opportunities.

Moreover, Safitri (2018) describes speaking as an oral interchange of ideas and opinions whose form and meaning depend on the context, however, the author highlights that most of the speaking is informal since we use speaking to interact and communicate in daily interactions. For speaking to fulfill its role in mutual communication, it is essential to have at least two individuals who alternate between the roles of listener and speaker. Based on this, the author concludes that there is a dependent relationship between speaking skills and communication, with communication being defined as the means by which individuals can convey their feelings, and thoughts as well as ask for help, argue, and persuade, among other purposes.

In a similar vein, Adiantika and Purnomo (2018) affirm that one of the primary and most essential outcomes of EFL teaching is for learners to achieve proficiency in oral communication skills since their ability to express themselves in spoken English serves as a key indicator of their language learning progress. That is to say, speaking is often regarded as the most important skill, as EFL learners typically assess their overall language proficiency by demonstrating how effectively they can communicate in the target language.

Nonetheless, Normawati et al. (2023) emphasize that speaking is also perceived as one of the most challenging skills to master since it requires the learners to be able to express their thoughts in a spontaneous and accurate way. On this matter, Aleksandrzak (2011) examines the historical background of speaking instruction in EFL classrooms, highlighting the shift from traditional approaches, such as the Grammar-Translation Method, which largely neglected the development of speaking skills to Direct and Audiolingual methods where the focus on this skill significantly increased. According to the author, nowadays, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has revolutionized EFL instruction by integrating both linguistic and communicative competences. The author asserts that CLT aims to help EFL learners acquire the necessary skills for effective interaction and language use in authentic contexts.

Nevertheless, despite all this advancement, developing speaking skills is still considered one of the most challenging goals, especially for EFL learners which can be attributed to the restricted opportunities for speaking practice learners have during class and the discrepancy between classroom activities and real-life communicative contexts (Natasia

& Angelianawati, 2022). Furthermore, Richards and Rodgers (2001) suggest that there are many reasons why speaking is considered the most difficult skill to master i.e., their lack of exposure to the target language, lack of confidence, and motivation, among others.

1.3.3 Speaking components

Speaking is also referred to as a macro skill which means that it comprises several components that contribute to an effective production of spoken language. These are mainly pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, coherence and cohesion, and nonverbal communication among others (Arini & Wahyudin, 2022; Brown, 2006).

In addition, Harris (1974) also claims that there are some criteria that are considered essential for the overall development of speaking, these components are grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. In the same way, Das (2023) mentions that some of the elements that make up speaking are grammatical, discourse, and pragmatic sub-skills as well as fluency.

Additionally, Masuram and Sripada (2020) claim that in order to fully develop speaking skills it is essential to consider some primary components such as functions, fluency, accuracy, grammar, turn-taking, responding and initiating, range of words, and discourse markers, among others.

Moreover, as stated by Rosado and Vaca (2023), mastering EFL speaking skills involves improving each of the subskills that make up this skill such as grammar, pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, word and sentence stress, vocabulary and word choice, accuracy, pragmatics, fluency, among others. In addition, this author differentiates the terms accuracy and fluency by explaining that accuracy refers to the correct use of the language (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) while fluency relates to the ability to express naturally in the target language.

1.3.4 Vocabulary

As reported by Alharthi (2020), learning vocabulary refers to understanding words and their meaning in a second or foreign language. Hence, this linguistic component is considered fundamental for language learning to be effective and achieve successful communication in the target language. Nevertheless, this author declares that although having a sufficient vocabulary is crucial for the proper development of all language skills, it does not necessarily ensure strong speaking abilities.

Richards and Renandya (2002) assert that a lack of vocabulary knowledge can significantly impact the development of all language skills which hinders the language

learning process. Therefore, the authors suggest that it is necessary for EFL students to develop some vocabulary strategies in order to enrich their word repertoire. In the same way, Güneş and Sarıgöz (2021) claim that one of the main causes of learners' lack of oral fluency is related to their lack of vocabulary knowledge and retention.

In this sense, Chand (2021) affirms that one of the main problems that EFL learners experience when attempting to express themselves orally is the lack of vocabulary. In other words, the students commonly encounter the difficulty of not finding the right words to convey a message in the target language. Similarly, another important aspect that causes vocabulary problems is the influence of the learners' native language since they always tend to translate the words and sentences from their mother tongue to English.

Therefore, it is essential to increase the EFL students' vocabulary stock by employing a variety of strategies, techniques, and interactive activities according to the learners' characteristics (Khan et al., 2018).

1.3.5 Grammar

As reported by Anggini and Arjulayana (2021), grammar mastery is fundamental in order to formulate correct utterances that can be easily understood by the listener. Grasping grammar is necessary for mastering all four language skills. In the same way, Fattah (2006) asserts that grammatical competence involves using grammatical rules accurately while producing language.

Moreover, Zrekat and Al-Sohbani (2022) highlight that grammatical competence is considered one of the language aspects that cause the most difficulty to EFL learners, especially when they are trying to express themselves orally in the target language. The authors explain that most learners believe that grammar is the central aspect of a language and if they have not completely mastered it they cannot be proficient in the language. This is why students tend to feel concerned about making grammar mistakes while expressing themselves orally and start to avoid taking part in speaking activities.

1.3.6 Pronunciation

According to Suseno (2023), pronunciation is a crucial speaking sub-skill that allows us to achieve intelligible speech. In conjunction with grammar and vocabulary mastery, pronunciation makes up speaking accuracy which means that grasping pronunciation is crucial for EFL learners to be able to convey a clear spoken message (Masuram & Sripada, 2020).

Additionally, Farhat and Hussein (2021) declare that in order to express ourselves

accurately in spoken English, it is fundamental to know the correct pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation of words and sentences. The author adds that not possessing correct pronunciation significantly affects speaking accuracy and can lead to misunderstandings; Therefore, it is indispensable for EFL learners to be aware of the pronunciation of words and structures to avoid miscommunication in the target language.

In addition, Ahmed (2017) affirms that pronunciation is commonly considered one of the most challenging aspects for EFL learners when it comes to speaking skills. According to the author, pronunciation problems students encounter are mainly due to the different pronunciation components e.g., word and sentence stress, intonation, and rhythm.

In this sense, Chand (2021) stipulates that EFL learners tend to avoid using words that they do not know the correct pronunciation of which greatly hampers their speaking enhancement. Thus, Ahmed (2017) explains that learning pronunciation becomes a quite challenging task mainly due to the mother tongue influence, the lack of appropriate teaching methods, and the limited or lack of time allocated to practice speaking during EFL lessons.

1.3.7 Fluency

As reported by Fatehi et al. (2016) fluency can be defined as a speaker's ability to express his or her thoughts naturally and without hesitation. In other words, this fluency refers to the production of speech in a spontaneous and comprehensible way, "demonstrating a reasonable rate of speech" (Fattah, 2006, p. 27).

In line with the aforementioned authors, Rajendran and Yunus (2021) define fluency as the students' ability to speak English using facilitation skills such as fillers, lexical phrases, and compensation skills e.g., self-correction, rephrasing, or repeating to manage fast-paced communication. This author further expresses that fluency is also referred to as "smoothness" and involves the ease and regularity with which a speaker can deliver spoken content without stammering, stuttering, or mumbling.

Moreover, Tilwani et al. (2022) explain that fluency refers to how well a learner communicates without paying much attention to grammatical, pronunciation, and vocabulary mistakes. They further describe fluency as the ability to speak comprehensibly without pausing and maintaining the listener's interest. It involves speaking and communicating smoothly without searching for words or phrases. Likewise, Aleksandrak (2011) declares that in order to achieve fluent speech production, that is, speaking within a normal speed and rhythm, constant practice is essential.

Furthermore, Anggini and Arjulayana (2021) define fluency as the ability to use the language effortlessly and meaningfully which means that the English user is able to produce clear or easy-to-understand messages. This speaking component is one of the most pursued by EFL learners. Additionally, the authors mention some characteristics of good fluency such as fast speed of speaking and a few pauses and filler words.

Nonetheless, Al-Tamimi et al. (2020) claim that oral fluency is typically ignored by EFL teachers because most of them consciously or unconsciously tend to focus more on linguistic aspects such as grammar and vocabulary even when developing speaking skills. Therefore, despite its importance, fluency is relegated to the background in English lessons which hinders EFL learners from enhancing their oral proficiency.

Congruently, Abdulrahman and Abdaldfi (2020) conclude that EFL teachers lean towards teaching speaking accuracy rather than fluency despite the fact that both are equally essential in language learning and even complement each other. Moreover, Aleksandrak (2011) adds that another reason why EFL learners struggle with fluency is the excessive self-monitoring and translation of sentences from their native language which greatly disrupts fluency, resulting in unnatural speech.

1.4 Independent variable: Task Based Instruction

1.4.1 Language teaching methods

Throughout history, language teaching methods have evolved in response to language learners' needs and shifting theories and approaches to language learning. 500 years ago, Latin was the most studied language and the main objective of studying this language was reading comprehension. Nevertheless, as the years went by, the aim changed, and the study of Latin grammar gained relevance. This method of teaching grammar rules and translation was later applied to other languages that gained relevance such as French, Italian, and English gained in importance. Despite their poor effectiveness, these traditional methods persisted, shaping the way languages were taught for centuries. One of these traditional methods is now known as the Grammar Translation Method. By the mid-nineteenth century, several factors led to a questioning and rejection of this method and the growing opportunities for communication among Europeans uncovered a necessity to possess oral proficiency in foreign languages. It was at that moment when other methods were raised such as the more naturalistic method labeled Direct method. From there until now a variety of methods have emerged such as The Audiolingual Method, Total Physical Response, The Silent Way, Community Language Learning, and Suggestopedia, among

others (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Similarly, Majeed and Memon (2022) also stipulate that throughout the years, various language teaching methods and approaches have been used in English as a second or foreign language teaching aiming at improving the quality of language teaching, among them are grammar-translation, direct, and audio-lingual methods.

1.4.2 *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)*

During a time when traditional methodologies, such as Situational Language Teaching and Audiolingual, were becoming gradually outdated, a language teaching method emerged, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The origin of this methodology dates from the late 60's. This language-teaching approach was appealing to those who were looking for a more humanistic approach, highlighting the importance of interactive communication processes. This approach rapidly gained worldwide recognition. Thenceforth, CLT has been constantly refined and successfully implemented in ESL and EFL contexts (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Similarly, according to Alofi and Almalki (2022), Communicative Language Teaching emerged in order to overcome the limitations of earlier methods i.e., the Audiolingual Method. That is to say, it was proposed in order to achieve a more effective development of EFL learners' communicative skills. CLT introduces a framework that guides both the content and the methods used to teach English as a second or foreign language. In other words, this CLT approach influences the learning goals, how learning takes place, the activities planned and employed in lessons, and the instructor and learners' roles. Thanks to this method, recently, language teachers have placed more emphasis on developing learners' communicative competence in their students.

Hence, it can be acknowledged that CLT has earned great significance in the EFL field. Moreover, from this approach, other innovative methods, strategies, and techniques have emerged nowadays and are successively employed in EFL classrooms around the world as is the case of task-based instruction (TBI) which is going to be addressed in the following paragraphs (Akramy et al., 2024).

1.4.3 *Task-Based Instruction*

Task-Based Instruction (TBI) came to light in the 70s and refers to the implementation of tasks in order to foster meaningful communications among EFL learners (Majeed & Memon, 2022; Richards & Renandya, 2002). According to Richards and Renandya (2002), TBI maintains that adequately designed instructional tasks give rise to

effective language learning. In other words, the aforementioned authors define TBI as the implementation of tasks in order to foster meaningful communication among learners. They further assert applying TBI engages EFL learners in interactive and communicative tasks which will enable them to advance their linguistic as well as communicative competences. Additionally, this language teaching approach enables EFL learners to be involved in meaning-focused tasks that allow them to interact in the target language resembling real-life situations which in turn helps them to improve their language skills as well as their overall (Masuram & Sripada, 2020).

Moreover, Rodríguez and Rodríguez (2010) stipulate that even though this approach has been utilized for many years now, its popularity has grown significantly in the past few years. According to the abovementioned authors, TBI's increased attention and application is largely due to the need to foster authentic communication and the exchange of meaning rather than focusing solely on the target language's linguistic aspects. In the same way, it has been determined that minimizing the emphasis on language forms reduces anxiety and improves language learning, which is precisely what Task-Based Instruction achieves in the classroom.

In relation to speaking skills, the TBI approach offers opportunities for EFL learners to test their own oral communication abilities and motivates them to keep enhancing them (Soria-Guerrero et al., 2020).

In this sense, several researchers have already explored the results of TBI in the enhancement of speaking skills. By way of illustration, Nita et al. (2020) applied TBI to improve EFL learners speaking skills and concluded that this is indeed effective in improving speaking skills and especially the students' oral fluency. The tasks proposed during the study managed to encourage learners to interact and express themselves using L2 freely and with very little intervention and correction by the instructor. Likewise, the learners' motivation increased greatly since they had to use the target language to develop meaningful tasks that became quite interesting and engaging to them.

In the same way, Rahmatillah (2019) after applying TBI and role-play found that EFL learners themselves acknowledged that the tasks they performed greatly motivated them and allowed them to practice the L2 in a much more interesting and attractive way. Furthermore, Majeed and Memon (2022) declare that TBI focuses on natural language use in collaborative work to facilitate the exchange of ideas. They clarify that TBI is based on the idea that effective language learning only occurs in real-life situations that require using

real-world tasks. By way of illustration, key task types in TBI include pair/group tasks, information gap tasks, open/closed tasks, opinion and reasoning gap tasks, problem-solving tasks, and social interactive tasks like role-plays and interviews (Majeed & Memon, 2022).

In addition, Bhandari (2020) suggests that TBI promotes a learner-centered approach that encourages learners to actively engage in and shape their language learning outcomes. According to this author, this approach also involves social practices that help learners in managing and resolving social challenges. In this approach, learners actively participate in tasks, using language to complete them while collaboratively supporting each other's learning. This includes monitoring peers' tasks, offering constructive feedback, and interpreting messages by drawing on their linguistic knowledge and prior experiences.

1.4.4 Communicative Task

It is also important to define the term 'communicative task' which according to Masuram and Sripada (2020) refers to the exchange of meanings in order to achieve a specific outcome or goal. In addition, Nunan (2004) elucidates that a pedagogical task can be a simulation of a real-world task that was adapted and performed within the classroom setting. Hence, Nget et al. (2020) conclude that a pedagogical task requires that learners use their language mastery as well as their communicative and interactional skills effectively in order to achieve a goal that replicates an authentic daily life scenario.

Similarly, Van den Branden (2006) defines 'task' as the activity that employs language in order to achieve a specific goal, and explains these tasks are aimed at enhancing language mastery by monitoring learners' language production, interaction, and negotiation of meaning skills.

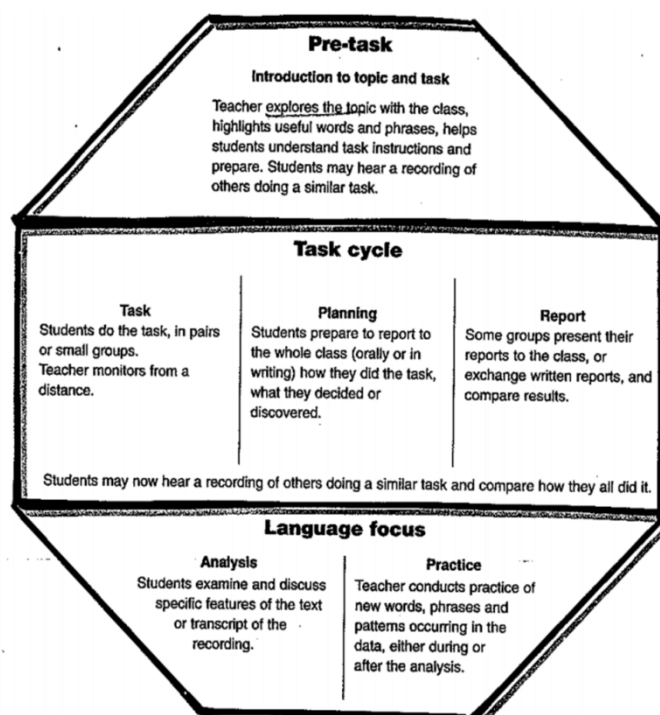
Furthermore, Rodríguez and Rodríguez (2010) emphasize that, unlike traditional approaches, when performing a task, language is not the final aim but the means to successfully complete a real-life communicative situation. In other words, these authors sustain that "tasks are goal-oriented activities and meaning-centered" (p. 166).

1.4.5 TBI Phases

Adiantika and Purnomo (2018) affirm that the TBLT method allows teachers and learners to complete a meaningful task by following a series of well-organized steps. In this sense, several authors have reached the conclusion that the implementation of TBI is done in three sequencing phases. In other words, this approach is classified into three stages. For instance, Willis (1996), mentions pre-task, the task, and language focus. In the same way, Ellis (2003) labels them as pre-task, during-task, and post-task.

Figure 1.

TBL Framework



Note. Taken from Willis (1996, p. 135).

1.4.6 Pre-task stage

Regarding the first stage of TBI, Adiantika and Purnomo (2018) state that this first step involves introducing the topic and explaining the task to the learners. In other words, the pre-task phase aims at preparing the students to carry out the task in a way that facilitates language acquisition. On this matter, Sae-ong (2010) points out that this stage is essential since the learners need to clearly understand what they are supposed to do during the task cycle and the nature of the product they have to present.

During the Pre-task stage, the teacher's role is to put learners in context, explain the task guidelines, and encourage them to recall relevant vocabulary that they already know which can be helpful later during the next stage (Adiantika & Purnomo, 2018). In the same way, the Pre-task phase also attempts to engage or motivate the learners in the task through the completion of some preliminary activities (Adiantika & Purnomo, 2018).

Willis (1996) asserts that the primary aim of this phase is to activate students' prior linguistic knowledge, ensuring they are adequately prepared for the task cycle. In a few words, the authors explain that during this stage, the teacher introduces the topic and reflects on it, reviews relevant phrases and expressions, clarifies task instructions, and often

presents examples or models of the task that students will undertake.

1.4.7 Task cycle stage

Concerning the second stage of TBI, Dorathy and Mahalakshmi (2016) state that it is termed Task Cycle and involves learners engaging in the task collaboratively or independently which totally depends on the nature of the task. During this step, learners put their existing linguistic knowledge into practice in order to accomplish the task. In this stage, the teacher's role is that of a facilitator, that is, offering support only when required.

As reported by Willis (1996), during this phase, learners are supposed to work collaboratively, that is, in groups or pairs in order to achieve the task's objective. In the same way, Yildiz (2020) explains that during the task cycle learners are encouraged to employ their language mastery to communicate and share ideas with their teammates and the teacher acts as a monitor who provides encouragement and advice when needed or required.

Additionally, Adiantika and Purnomo (2018) point out that this stage fosters teamwork skills and allows learners to use the language to communicate in a spontaneous manner. On this matter, Willis (1996) clarifies that this stage can be subdivided into three parts. The first part is the task itself, when learners work together to achieve the task's goal; the planning which is when the learners prepare to present the task's outcomes to the rest of the class orally or in writing; and, finally the report which is when learners reflect on their classmates and their own task results (Dorathy & Mahalakshmi, 2016; Willis, 1996).

1.4.8 Language focus stage

The third and last stage corresponds to the language focus which as the name implies is the phase where the language employed during the task is analyzed and feedback is provided. Hence, this part is focused on language form and use. This stage is as essential as the previous ones since it allows learners to realize the mistakes they committed during the task performance and presentation and correct them. (Ellis, 2020; Willis, 1996).

According to Nunan (2004) and Willis (1996), this phase can be divided into two main events, the first one is known as Language Analysis where language awareness activities are carried out and explicit grammar and form instruction is provided by the teacher allowing students to notice their linguistics mistakes. On the other hand, the second part of this last stage is called Language Practice which refers to the activities proposed by the instructor and conducted by the learners after analyzing the language features in order to raise their self-confidence and enhance their fluency in using them (Ellis, 2020; Nunan,

2004; Van den Branden, 2006).

1.5 Previous Studies

It is also fundamental to reference some previous studies that have been conducted around the world in order to have an idea of the potential outcomes of applying TBI to overcome the lack of speaking fluency in EFL learners.

Afifah and Devana (2020) carried out quasi-experimental research in Indonesia exploring the effectiveness of TBI to improve speaking skills. The sample population consisted of 36 EFL students who were divided into two groups: experimental and control groups. According to their results, they affirmed that TBI significantly improves students' speaking skills and students approved the implementation of this method because it allows them to enjoy learning English vocabulary.

In the same way, Masuram and Sripada (2020) conducted research in India seeking to examine how effective task-based language teaching enhances English oral fluency. According to these authors, applying this method allows learners to practice the language by simulating real-world situations by employing meaningful tasks and having a clear learning goal. Concerning the study results, the researchers found that there was an improvement in learners' speaking fluency after applying task-based teaching. Therefore, they suggest that EFL teachers employ task-based instruction since this type of task significantly enhances learners' fluency.

Similarly, Nget et al. (2020) tested the effectiveness of TBI on Cambodian EFL students' speaking skills as well as their perception of receiving speaking instruction employing this approach. They conducted a quasi-experimental study dividing 78 participants into a control group and an experimental group. Additionally, they used a mixed method since they collected both quantitative and qualitative data by employing speaking tests and a questionnaire as instruments. According to their findings, there was a clear advance after applying TBI. Moreover, the participants affirmed being satisfied with this approach, they claimed that it allows them to practice the language in a better way since it fosters speaking confidence and motivation.

To sum up, the previous paragraphs clearly demonstrate that favorable results are obtained both in the improvement of the EFL learners' speaking skills as well as in their perceptions and satisfaction after TBI implementation. However, the need to conduct more research specifically focused on exploring the effectiveness of TBI in the development of English oral fluency has been identified. For this reason, the present study aims to build on

relevant information to this line of research by applying TBI to enhance A2-level EFL learners' speaking fluency.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Question and Objectives

2.1.1 Research questions

How would the implementation of Task-Based Instruction improve the English-speaking fluency of A2-level students attending an English Academy?

What are the participants' attitudes and perceptions regarding the use of Task-Based Instruction to enhance their speaking fluency?

2.1.2 Research Object

The object of the present study is the improvement of A2 learners' speaking fluency by applying the Task-based Instruction approach.

2.1.3 General Objective

To determine the effectiveness of Task-Based Instruction to enhance the speaking fluency of A2-level learners from an English Academy located in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador.

2.1.4 Specific Objectives

To apply TBI to improve participants' speaking fluency and track their progress during the intervention.

To assess the effectiveness of TBI in enhancing the participants' speaking fluency by applying a pretest and posttest.

To discover the participants' attitudes and perceptions towards TBI to improve their speaking fluency.

2.2 Paradigm

Selecting the most appropriate method of data collection and analysis is key in order to obtain clear outcomes when conducting research. Research methods are mainly divided into three which are quantitative, qualitative, and mixed. Each of them has its own features and advantages, and they also use different data collection tools (Sarwono, 2022; Sreekumar, 2023). In order to thoroughly explore the effect of TBI on speaking fluency, for this research proposal a mixed-method approach has been chosen. This approach allows for the collection of both quantitative data and qualitative data. It was concluded that the mixed approach was the most suitable method for data collection since in order to determine TBI's effectiveness in enhancing fluency, track the participants' evolution during the intervention, and explore their perceptions regarding TBI implementation, it is necessary to obtain measurable as well as non-numerical data to offer depth and context to the findings.

Therefore, the instruments selected to gather the data in this study are pretests and posttests, a progress-tracking checklist, and surveys. Regarding the pretest and posttest, they were designed to assess the learners' speaking fluency before and after the intervention which allows the researcher to explore the effectiveness of TBI quantitatively. In order to grade these tests a rubric is employed which provides structured criteria for evaluating the learners' speaking advances during the intervention.

The observation checklist which in this study is considered a mixed method instrument since it allows gathering both quantitative and qualitative information is used after every task (there were six tasks in total). The checklist helps to monitor students' progress on each task and provides comments on the students' performance enabling the identification of gradual improvements especially in speaking fluency.

Finally, with regards to the survey on learners' perceptions, this is a quantitative tool that enables the researcher to explore students' opinions and how they felt after the speaking lessons applying TBI. Understanding their attitudes toward the tasks and their engagement levels helps validate whether the method is beneficial beyond mere fluency advances.

2.3 Conceptualization and Operationalization of Main Categories

The present section addresses the primary categories that are the basis for determining the effectiveness of Task-Based Instruction (TBI) in improving EFL A2-level students at an English academy in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador. Defining and explaining these categories is essential as they provide a structured foundation for shaping and analyzing all the data retrieved throughout the research process. By defining the study's main terms and translating them into measurable indicators clarity, validity, and reliability are ensured and ambiguity is avoided, ensuring a shared understanding among researcher and readers (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Therefore, it is worth mentioning that the two main categories identified in this research are Task-based Instruction (TBI) and Speaking fluency. Task-Based Instruction denotes a language teaching approach that originated from the popular Communicative Language Teaching method. However, the TBI approach focuses on the completion of meaningful tasks as the central unit of planning and instruction, focusing on language use in real-world contexts. On the other hand, speaking fluency refers to the students' ability to produce spoken language with fluidity, accuracy, and confidence while using appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

2.4 Definition and explanation of main categories

2.4.1 Independent Variable: Task-Based Instruction (TBI).

TBI refers to the implementation of tasks in order to foster meaningful communications among EFL learners (Majeed & Memon, 2022; Richards & Renandya, 2002). According to Richards and Renandya (2002), the TBI approach assures that engaging EFL learners in interactive or communicative tasks will enable them to advance their grammar as well as communicative competences. In order to be able to understand the process and implementation of this approach more easily, it has been further divided into the following dimensions:

Pre-task: In this stage, activities that prepare learners for task completion are conducted including topic introduction, activating prior knowledge, and providing instructions and guidelines. The emphasis is placed on using authentic materials and aligning activities with task goals.

Task Cycle: The activities carried out in this second are mainly aimed at engaging learners in meaningful use of the target language through a specific task that requires them to communicate and share their ideas. This stage attempts to foster problem-solving skills, collaboration, and interaction among learners.

Language Focus and Feedback: During the third dimension, the instructor and learners reflect on language use during tasks. The activities commonly performed at this stage are analyzing and practicing specific language forms and providing feedback on the part of the teacher in order to improve fluency.

Learner Perceptions: Another essential aspect of this category is capturing the participants' perceptions and opinions on task difficulty, relevance, and effectiveness.

2.4.2 Dependent Variable: Speaking Fluency

As reported by Fatehi et al. (2016) fluency can be defined as a speaker's ability to express his or her thoughts naturally and without hesitation. In other words, this author describes fluency as the production of speech in a spontaneous and comprehensible way. This main category can also be further classified into the following dimensions. **Accuracy:** The ability to produce grammatically correct speech with minimal errors during tasks. **Pronunciation and Clarity:** Clear and intelligible speech with minimal or no pronunciation mistakes. **Speed and Hesitation:** Producing speech at an appropriate pace with limited pauses or hesitations. **Vocabulary:** Demonstrating a broad range of vocabulary knowledge relevant to the task. **Coherence:** Logical flow and use of linking words to maintain smooth

communication.

2.5 Operationalization of Main Categories

In the following paragraphs, the operationalization of variables is thoroughly explained which involves defining the study's measurable indicators to successfully assess the implementation and impact. Here, the research establishes how variables are going to be measured and provides clarity on the instruments selected to obtain accurate results. By breaking variables into dimensions and identifying indicators, the researcher is able to choose the most suitable data collection methods. This, in turn, ensures the instruments chosen to align with the study's objectives and provide reliable insights. Hence, the dimensions, indicators, and scales identified for this study are described in order to assess TBI's effectiveness in improving speaking fluency (Arias, 2012; P. Bhandari, 2022).

2.5.1 *Task-Based Instruction (TBI)*

In this study, TBI was implemented through carefully designed speaking tasks tailored to the learners' A2-level proficiency. Tasks included activities such as role-plays and collaborative projects about real-life situations and personal experiences. The dimensions, indicators, and scales identified based on the researcher's experience, the literature review, and previous related studies were the following.

For the Pre-task dimension, the identified indicators were the use of authentic materials, activation of prior knowledge, and providing clear instructions. In addition, the alignment of activities with task goals and preparation for meaningful engagement. For the Task Cycle, the indicators are the tasks requiring problem-solving, collaboration, and communication in English. As well as the type of task and evidence of meaningful language use. For the Language Focus and Feedback stage, the indicators were the activities of analyzing language forms, practicing target structures, and incorporating constructive feedback.

These three states are measured by a nominal scale, that is, considering the three TBI stages and Type of tasks employed. On the other hand, for the Learner Perception dimension, the indicators are the student's perspectives on task difficulty, relevance, and effectiveness. Here a 4-point agreement scale (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) was established in order to evaluate students' views on task effectiveness and difficulty.

2.5.2 *Speaking Fluency*

The other main category is operationalized by evaluating learners' oral performance based on the following indicators and scales. Accuracy is assessed by measuring the

frequency and quantity of grammatical errors during spoken tasks. Pronunciation and Clarity are evaluated by measuring clear and intelligible speech, with minimal pronunciation errors. Speed and Hesitation are measured by assessing speech pace and the frequency of pauses or hesitations. Vocabulary is Assessed by the range and appropriateness of vocabulary used during tasks. In addition, Coherence is Evaluated based on logical flow and effective use of linking words to maintain structured communication. The dimensions are scored with 5-point Likert quality scales with the options: Excellent, Good, Average, Fair, or Poor; and they also employ a 4-point frequency scale with the options Always, Often, Sometimes, and Never.

2.6 Justification of Data Collection Methods

Selecting the most appropriate method of data collection and analysis is key in order to obtain clear outcomes when conducting research. Research methods are mainly divided into three which are quantitative, qualitative, and mixed. Each of them is suitable for different types of studies, they have their own advantages depending on the expected outcomes, and they also employ different data collection tools (Sarwono, 2022; Sreekumar, 2023). Regarding quantitative method, as the name implies, focuses on collecting and analyzing numerical data with the purpose of identifying patterns, relationships, or trends.

On the other hand, the qualitative method focuses on analyzing the issue thoroughly seeking to comprehend experiences, beliefs, or contexts. One of the main characteristics of this method is that it is more flexible and interpretative compared to the previous one (Hyginus & Eze, 2023).

Furthermore, many researchers in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the problem, opt to use a mixed-method approach which as the name implies, combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. As Johnson and Teddlie (2021) argue, a mixed method enables researchers to take advantage of the benefits that both methods offer, which in turn, results in robust and detailed findings.

Therefore, in order to thoroughly explore the effect of TBI on speaking fluency, the present research uses a mixed-method approach. This approach allows for the collection of both quantitative data by measuring improvements in fluency through pre-test and post-test results and a survey to collect information on the students' perceptions; and, mixed (quantitative and qualitative) data by understanding students' fluency gradual improvement during the intervention through an observation checklist. To sum up, it was concluded that the mixed approach was the most suitable method for data collection to be able to conduct

triangulation and offer depth and context to the findings.

2.7 Delimitation of population, sample, and sampling

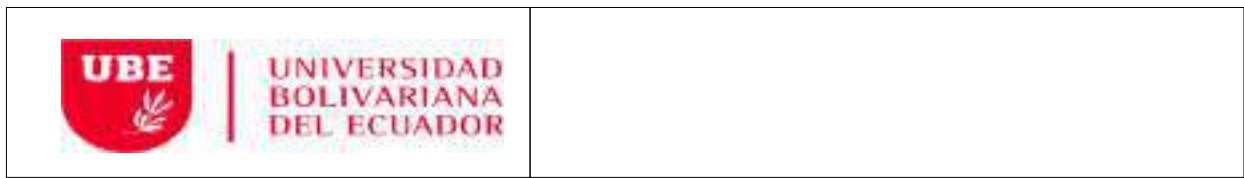
The population of interest for this research proposal involves EFL teenage learners attending English Lingua Franca Academy in the city of Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador. This educational establishment serves a diverse student body of over 300 individuals, ranging from toddlers to adults. Of these, approximately 100 are teenagers, and around half are enrolled in A2-level, making them the primary population of interest. This demographic is particularly significant because teenagers at the A2 proficiency level often struggle to develop speaking fluency due to a combination of internal and external factors. This makes them an ideal group for assessing the effectiveness of Task-Based Instruction (TBI) in improving oral fluency.

An essential step during the sample selection is defining the population boundaries since it allows identifying eligible subjects that is the individuals that are qualified for the study. It also enables the selection of a representative sample which increases the external validity of the study. This step is also essential for drawing meaningful conclusions, obtaining a more defined answer to the research question, and applying the results to other populations (Casteel & Bridier, 2021; Martínez-Mesa et al., 2016; Palinkas et al., 2015). Hence, after considering this study’s objectives, overall population size as well as representativeness and practicality it was found that the best type of sampling method was a non-probabilistic one.

Consequently, purposive sampling was selected based on the following criteria. 1) These students are at the same English proficiency level A2. 2) All the subjects are students in the Academy. 3) These students have the same class schedule. 4) They come to the Academy to improve their English skill. 5) The participants are all teenagers of 15 to 17 years old. 6) Students have the availability and willingness to take part in this study. 7) All their parents or legal representatives have consented to their children to partake in this study.

Table 1.
Sample

Participants	Sample Population	Percentage
Female	7	70%
Men	3	30%



Total	10	100%
-------	----	------

Note. Demographic information of the study’s sample population

2.8 Research context

This research takes place at Lingua Franca Academy, RUC: 0702398959001, CIU code: P854994. This private educational establishment is located in the urban area of Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador and it welcomes around 300 students of all ages, from 3 years old onwards, of which approximately 100 are teenagers. Class sizes are a maximum of 10 students. In addition, the institution has seven English teachers specialized in different age groups and language proficiency levels. This educational establishment operates in the morning, afternoon, and evening shifts. The students attend English classes on different schedules coordinating their school schedules and teachers’ availability.

2.9 Research stages

In order to conduct the present research a series of steps were meticulously followed. The first one was the delimitation of the problem where the researcher carefully identified her students’ needs, lacks, and wants through observation and the application of a skill test. After identifying the problem, the object, general and specific objectives, and research questions were established and the most appropriate research approach was selected. Then, the second step started, which was the elaboration of the Literature Review also known as the theoretical framework, in this stage the researcher collected relevant information about both the dependent and independent variables from the research’s theme as well as previous studies, all this data was taken from reliable and updated sources.

Subsequently, the third stage corresponds to the elaboration of the instruments and lesson plan (intervention). For the present study a pretest, a posttest, an observation checklist, and a survey were created or adapted by the researcher based on the study’s specific objectives. After that, the following stage was the application of instruments in order to collect relevant data and information to solve the research question proposed at the beginning of the study. Afterward, the fifth stage was the data tabulation, analysis, and discussion of results, after collecting the information from the participants, the quantitative data was tabulated and organized into datasets in order to better analyze the information which was also contrasted and supported by the qualitative data which was also coded in order to better analyze it. Finally, the sixth step was drawing conclusions and recommendations based on the research findings.

Table 2.



Stages of the research

	Description	Activities	Performers
Delimitation of the problem	Define the object of the study and the methodology.	Identify students' needs, lacks, and wants through a diagnostic test. Establish the object, general and specific objectives, and research questions Select the most appropriate research approach.	Researcher Tutor
Literature review	Define the Theoretical Framework.	Search for and explore previous bibliographic information related to the study's topic from reliable and updated sources such as books and articles.	Researcher
Elaboration or Adaptation of Instruments	Considering the research objectives select and research method chosen, and create or adapt the best instruments to collect data.	Elaboration of the lesson plan (intervention), a pretest, a posttest with a rubric, a checklist, and a survey.	Researcher Experts to validate the instruments.

Application of Instruments	Apply the instruments to collect quantitative and qualitative data.	Conduct the intervention Apply the pretest, posttest, checklist, and survey.	Researcher
Data analysis	Tabulation and analysis of data	Tabulation and coding of quantitative and qualitative data. Analyze the data and contrast it to previous studies.	Researcher
Conclusions and Recommendations	Gather the research findings.	Write the conclusions and recommendations based on the study findings.	Researcher

Note. Description, activities, and who performed each stage of the research process.

2.10. Research Scope

The scope of this study is both descriptive and explanatory, aiming to evaluate the effectiveness of Task-Based Instruction (TBI) in enhancing the speaking fluency of A2-level learners at an English Academy in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador. The study focuses on a population of ten EFL teenage learners, aged 15 to 17, who share the same proficiency level (A2) and class schedule at the Academy. These students attend the Academy with the shared objective of improving their English skills and have expressed their willingness to participate in this research, with parental or legal consent obtained for all participants.

The descriptive aspect of the study involves assessing the students' preliminary speaking proficiency through pretests to establish a starting point for comparison. Additionally, the present research details the design and implementation of the TBI intervention, providing an exhaustive description of the tasks employed during the 5 weeks.

The study's explanatory component seeks to analyze the relationship between TBI and the observed improvements in speaking fluency, with specific attention to the speaking subcomponents such as fluency, pronunciation and clarity, grammar, and vocabulary.

To achieve these objectives, the study employs a mixed approach which combines quantitative data from pre- and post-tests and surveys, and mixed data, that is quantitative and qualitative, from the observation checklist to track gradual oral fluency improvements. This method enables triangulation, providing depth and context to the findings, making it the most suitable choice for the study. By integrating these methods, the study validates findings through methodological triangulation and provides both statistical and contextual insights into the relationship between TBI and the development of speaking fluency.

2.11.Type of Research

The research was primarily a field and quasi-experimental study. The field study was justified by the need to collect empirical data directly from the English Academy, involving teenage participants aged 15 to 17 and their classroom environment. Conducting the study in this setting allowed for direct observation and interaction with the participants during the implementation of Task-Based Instruction (TBI). The field research approach facilitated the collection of real-time data through pre-tests, post-tests, observation checklists, and surveys. This method was essential in understanding the practical application and effectiveness of TBI in the specific context of the Academy. Furthermore, the field research allowed for the integration of quantitative and qualitative data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the intervention and aligning with the mixed-methods approach chosen for the study.

The research was also quasi-experimental as it sought to investigate the effectiveness of TBI in improving the speaking fluency of A2-level learners. Unlike a true experimental design, the study involved a single group of ten participants selected through purposive sampling, without the inclusion of a control group. The TBI intervention was conducted over five weeks, during which the approach was systematically applied to the selected participants. This design enabled the assessment of the impact of TBI on students' speaking fluency by comparing pre-test and post-test results within the same group. The quasi-experimental component aimed to explore the relationship between the intervention and improvements in speaking skills, focusing on fluency metrics such as accuracy, speed, and complexity. By employing both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, the research provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of TBI in enhancing speaking

proficiency, contributing to the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy.

2.12. Description of the Instruments

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach, requiring the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. To gather the necessary information, a series of instruments were thoughtfully developed or adapted. Each instrument is detailed in the following paragraphs to ensure clarity regarding their validity and reliability.

2.12.1. Pre-tests and Post-tests

The Pretest and Posttest are designed to evaluate the speaking fluency of participants before and after the Task-Based Instruction (TBI) intervention. The pretest was administered before conducting the intervention in the first week, lesson 1, in order to diagnose the student's speaking proficiency level, and more specifically their level of oral fluency. This test involves a role-play where students simulate a conversation with a receptionist at a music school, covering tasks such as expressing what they want to do, asking about the lesson time and location, and signing up for lessons.

The posttest was applied after concluding the intervention, that is, on the fifth week, lesson 14, in order to diagnose the learners' speaking level after experiencing the TBI approach to improve their oral fluency. This test uses a similar role-play scenario as the pre-test, that is, the learners prepare a conversation with a receptionist at a language school, where students inquire about English classes, they also ask about the class schedule and location, and sign up for the class.

Both assessments are graded using a rubric that evaluates fluency, vocabulary, language usage (grammar and syntax), and pronunciation, with scores ranging from poor (1 to 2 points) to excellent (9 to 10) for each criterion. The total score for each test is 40 points, and the comparison of pretest and posttest results helps measure the impact of TBI on students' speaking fluency.

2.12.2. Observation Checklist

The Observation Checklist is a tool used after each of the sixth tasks that constitute the intervention to monitor students' progress in speaking fluency. The checklist helps track gradual improvements in the speaking categories of Pronunciation and Clarity, Fluency, Grammar, and Vocabulary. This instrument assesses the student's performance using a frequency scale: Always, Often, Sometimes, and Never. For each task, the observer rates whether the student demonstrates clear speech, spontaneous communication, and minimal pauses, hesitations, or stuttering. It also evaluates the student's use of appropriate grammar

structures and vocabulary relevant to the task.

The observer which is the researcher herself is encouraged to provide comments or additional observations, offering qualitative insights into the student's performance and areas for improvement. This checklist allowed for continuous tracking of each student's speaking abilities, providing valuable data to explore the effectiveness of TBI in enhancing fluency.

2.12.3. Survey

The Survey is a quantitative instrument used to gather students' perceptions of Task-Based Instruction (TBI) in improving their speaking skills. This survey aims to explore students' attitudes towards TBI, their engagement levels, and how they perceive the impact of TBI on their speaking fluency. This research tool was applied at the end of the data collection stage, on the fifth week, lesson 15. The survey consists of 12 questions, categorized into three main sections: general attitudes toward TBI implementation, the effect of TBI on speaking skills, and the effect of TBI on speaking fluency. It used a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) to assess students' responses.

The survey's questions focus on various aspects such as comfort with tasks, enjoyment, confidence in speaking, the frequency of speaking opportunities, vocabulary use, and grammar knowledge improvement. Additionally, it evaluates how TBI influences fluency, including the reduction of hesitation, pauses, and the ability to speak confidently in front of peers. The responses help determine students' overall satisfaction with TBI and provide insights into how the method affects their speaking performance.

2.13. The Validation

2.13.1 Description of the methodological proposal

A methodological proposal in EFL teaching and learning provides a structured plan to examine a research issue in English language education. It details the research design, tools, procedures, and data collection and analysis methods, ensuring they align with the study's goals. Such proposals often investigate teaching approaches, such as Task-Based Instruction (TBI) or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), to evaluate their impact on developing specific language skills like speaking, listening, or writing (Ellis, 2003). Accordingly, the present research which aims to determine the effectiveness of Task-Based Instruction to enhance the speaking fluency of A2-level learners from an English Academy located in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador is a methodological proposal. It was intended to deepen

the pedagogical and didactic understanding of language teaching approaches and methods by exploring the effectiveness of TBI in enhancing EFL learners' speaking fluency.

2.12.4. Description of the Evaluation and Validation of the Proposal

The evaluation and validation of the proposal involved a thorough and multi-dimensional process designed to assess its effectiveness and impact on language learning. This procedure included both formative and summative evaluation methods, alongside careful validation through expert judgment.

2.13.2 Expert Validation

To ensure the research proposal's validity, expert input was sought at every stage of the process, from selecting the theme to carrying out the research. Each step, including the conceptual and operational matrices of the variables, underwent meticulous review and validation by the thesis tutor, a distinguished engineer, and a bachelor in education with two master's degrees, one in education and innovation technology and the other in English. This expert carefully evaluated the proposal to ensure alignment with contemporary language learning theories and practices. Additionally, the tutor approved the research design and methodology, providing valuable advice and suggestions throughout the process. These contributions significantly enhanced the proposal's rigor and educational effectiveness, supporting the master's students in refining and validating their work.

2.14 Data Collection Process

The data collection process started with gathering raw data from the pre-test, which was organized into a structured dataset using the pre-test rubric which evaluates the criteria of fluency, vocabulary, language usage (grammar and syntax), and pronunciation. During the five-week TBI intervention, the observation checklist was applied consistently at the end of each task to monitor students' progress. The checklist data was tabulated for easier analysis, while the observations were coded and systematically analyzed to identify significant trends and patterns in the students' speaking fluency development throughout the intervention. Following this, the post-test was conducted, and the data collected through the rubric was compiled to compare and contrast with the pre-test results. Finally, the survey aimed at capturing learners' perceptions and attitudes toward TBI implementation was administered, with the responses organized into a dataset for subsequent analysis.

2.15 Description of the Analysis

Quantitative data from the pre and post-tests were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and percentage improvements, to compare

participants' performance in fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. This comparison highlighted measurable changes and overall improvements in speaking proficiency, with results visualized through tables and graphs. The observation checklist data, collected after each task, were tabulated to monitor participants' progress over time. Performance trends in fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary were quantified using a frequency scale (Always, Often, Sometimes, Never) and supported by qualitative comments from the observer/researcher, providing context and deeper insights into students' development. Survey responses were analyzed to explore learners' perceptions and attitudes toward TBI, with Likert-scale results summarized as percentages and averages across categories like engagement, motivation, and fluency improvement. Finally, data triangulation ensured validity by comparing pre and post-test and survey outcomes with trends from checklists, providing a holistic view of TBI's effectiveness. This integrated analysis highlights both measurable gains in speaking fluency and the participants' positive attitudes toward TBI, offering valuable insights into its application in EFL classrooms.

2.16 Ethical Considerations

Concerning ethical considerations, privacy and consent were essential aspects that were contemplated especially because this study was conducted in a classroom setting with teenage (underage) participants. Hence, informed consent was obtained from the learners' parents or guardians. In this consent form, information such as the study's purpose, procedures, and the voluntary nature of participation was detailed. This process ensured that participants and their families were fully aware of what the study entailed. Similarly, other important aspects that were taken into consideration were data protection and confidentiality. Therefore, in order to respect the subjects' privacy, it was also clearly stated in the form that all the data collected from the participants such as video or audio recordings of speaking tasks, test results, and survey responses were going to be kept confidential and securely stored. In addition, in the study's reports or publications, the participants' anonymity is maintained to protect participant identities.

CHAPTER III

PROPOSAL PRESENTATION AND VALIDATION

3.1 Presentation

The current chapter presents the implementation of the methodological proposal which consisted of an intervention employing Task Based Instruction Approach to enhance A2 EFL learners speaking fluency which was already identified as the most challenging aspect for EFL learners. TBI was implemented in a series of three phases, Pre-Task, Task Cycle, and Post-Task.

In the following paragraphs, the description of the whole implementation process is presented as well as the results obtained after applying the data collection instruments. The data is thoroughly analyzed and interpreted in order to answer the two researcher questions proposed at the beginning of this study.

3.2 Description of the intervention

The study's intervention phase had a duration of five weeks, with three hours of class per week, totaling 15 hours/lessons. It encompassed a series of phases that took place during that period of time starting from the pre-test application, the intervention itself, the post-test, and finally survey administration. In the following epigraphs, each phase is explained in detail.

3.2.1 *The pretest phase*

In the first lesson, after having asked for permission from the institution and the participants' legal representatives, the researcher who was also the students' EFL teacher proceeded to briefly and clearly explain the study's objectives and the instruments to the participants. After this explanation, the researcher started with the pre-test which consisted of a roleplay which was a conversation between a receptionist of a music school and a student interested in taking beginner guitar lessons. The students had to work in pairs and plan a dialogue following the prompts provided by the researcher.

Before carrying out the activity the teachers activated prior knowledge, explained the task, divided the students into pairs, and assigned A and B roles. Students had 20 minutes to prepare and rehearse their parts and then they presented the roleplay. During the activity, the teacher audio-recorded their performances in order to grade their speaking using the rubric designed for the Pre-test and Post-test. The rubric covered 4 main criteria fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation each criterion was graded over 5 points that is the total grade was out of 40 points. It had a 5-point Likert ordinal rating scale with

the parameters Excellent, Good, Average, Fair, and Poor.

3.2.2 *The intervention phase*

The next step was the implementation of TBI into speaking lessons to enhance the learners' oral fluency. The intervention lasted 12 hours of class and it consisted of six tasks that followed Willis (1996)'s TBL Framework. In this sense, every task was divided into 3 stages, the first was the Pre-Task which started with a warm-up for prior knowledge activation and then the introduction to the topic and task. In this part, the teacher presented the most useful expressions and vocabulary related to the topic as well as sample conversations (video and audio). After that, the learners practiced the vocabulary and pronunciation through some activities. Finally, the tasks were clearly explained, instructions were provided and the roles were assigned or the groups were formed randomly by the researcher.

Regarding the second phase which was the Task Cycle, the students were given around 30 minutes to prepare their dialogues and rehearse them after that, learners had to present their final result in front of the class. Finally, the Post-Task was the last step where learners received the teacher's feedback. These phases were followed for the six tasks which were basically roleplays simulating different real-life situations. The topics of the tasks were: Task 1 'Making plans with a friend', Task 2 'Ordering a meal at a restaurant', Task 3 'Asking and Giving Directions', Task 4 'Calling and Leaving a message', Task 5 'Asking a friend how he/she is feeling, showing sympathy', and Task 6 'Shopping for clothes'.

3.2.3 *The posttest phase*

After completing the intervention, the next step was measuring the learners' speaking proficiency in order to compare the results and identify variances in their performance after experiencing TBI. Similar to the pre-test, the learners had to carry out a task in pairs where one of the students was the receptionist in a language school and the other was a student interested in taking English lessons. In the same way, the teacher explained the task, presented useful vocabulary, assigned roles and after giving learners around 20 minutes to prepare and rehearse they presented the roleplay and the researchers audio-recorded the students' dialogues in order to analyze their performance and fill in the post-test rubric.

3.2.4 *The survey phase*

During the last lesson, the teacher/researcher reflected on the tasks students had

been conducting throughout the five weeks and reminded them of the purpose of the study. Then the researcher explained that she would send them a link to an online form (survey) where they had to express their honest opinions regarding the implementation of the TBI approach to improve their speaking. The students completed the form and the researchers thanked them for all their participation and cooperation in this project.

3.3 Location

The present study was conducted in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador at a private English Academy.

3.4 Equipment and materials

The resources employed during this research were a small classroom for a maximum of 10 students, a laptop and a TV to project the activities and sample videos and audios, and a cellphone for audio recordings that were used to carefully fill out the instruments and grade the learners' oral performances throughout the tasks, a whiteboard and markers, Speaking cards/prompts, rubric, and an observation checklist.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the data collected from the application of the research instruments are displayed. These results are described, analyzed, and discussed in order to answer the research questions proposed at the beginning of this study.

3.5 Research question 1: How would the implementation of Task-Based Instruction improve the English-speaking fluency of A2-level students attending an English Academy?

In order to address this question, the researcher designed three instruments: a pre-test, administered at the beginning of the study prior to the intervention; a post-test, conducted after the intervention was concluded; and a checklist, completed throughout the intervention after each task to monitor students' progress. All these instruments were applied to a total of 10 participants. In the following tables and graphs, the results from the pre-test, post-test, and checklist are presented, interpreted, and analyzed in detail in order to solve the first research question.

First, the pre-test and post-test results will be analyzed individually, followed by a comparison between them. Hence, it is worth mentioning that in order to grade these tests, the researcher utilized a rubric that included the following criteria: Fluency, Vocabulary, Language Usage (Grammar), and Pronunciation, each scored out of 10 points, for a total of 40 points.

Table 3.
Pre-Test Results by criterion

	N	Mean	Max	Min	SD
Fluency	10	5,6	8	3	1,6465452
Vocabulary	10	7	9	5	1,15470054
Language Usage	10	7,5	9	6	1,26929552
Pronunciation	10	6,2	9	4	1,75119007

Note. Descriptive statistics of the pretest organized by criterion.

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 2.
Pre-Test Results by criterion

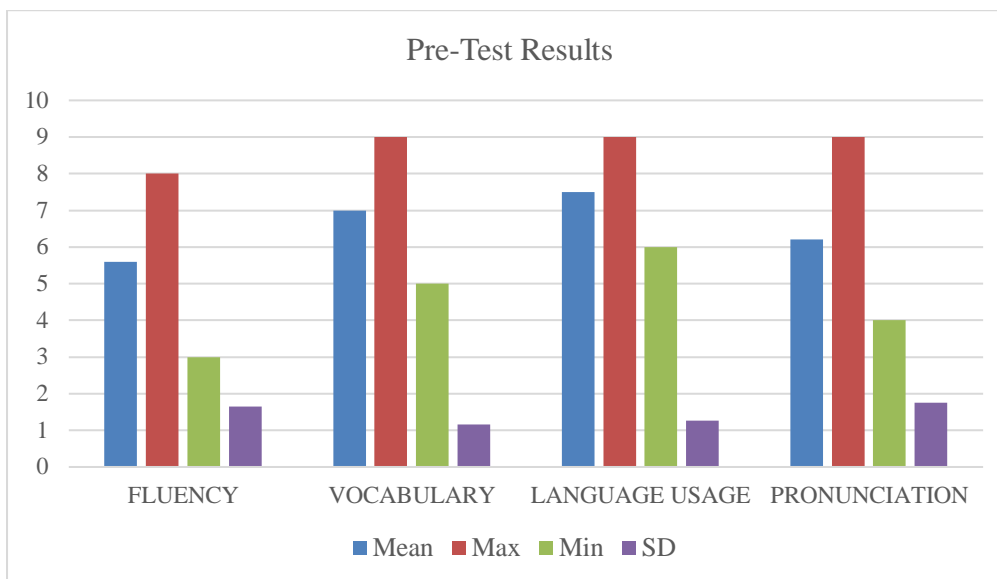


Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the pretest marks, with the data organized by criteria. The pre-test was applied to a total of 10 A2-level students before the intervention. Regarding the aspect of fluency, as it is observed, the maximum score was 8, while the minimum was 3. The average score in this component was 5.6, with a standard deviation of 1.65. These statistics evidence a somewhat low level of speaking fluency among the students. In addition, the standard deviation suggests a moderate level of dispersion which means that students' fluency levels varied, that is, some students performed significantly better than others. According to the researcher's comments, some learners demonstrated more fluency when speaking in English than others did despite being at the same level in the English proficiency course, due to variations in their individual learning styles and personality traits.

Concerning the vocabulary aspect, as it is presented, the maximum score was 9 and the minimum was 5, with a mean score of 7 and a standard deviation of 1.15. These data suggest that students had a relatively strong mastery of vocabulary. The standard deviation was low compared to the previous speaking subskill (fluency) which implies that students showed a more consistent performance and understanding in this area. According to the comments, learners present a similar level of vocabulary knowledge due to the fact that they have acquired it over the duration of the course. Consequently, most of them have successfully internalized the learned expressions and can effectively incorporate them into their dialogues.

Regarding the linguistic component of language usage (grammar), the results were slightly higher, with a maximum score of 9 and a minimum of 6. The mean score was 7.5,

and the standard deviation was 1.27. These outcomes indicate that most of the participants showed a fair understanding of grammatical structures. The standard deviation was slightly low which suggests that students' performances were steadier, with fewer extreme variations. According to the researcher's comments, the pre-test was designed for learners at their proficiency level (A2) therefore most of them were able to successfully employ the grammar structures they have acquired throughout the course such as the simple present, modal verbs, and affirmative, negative, and interrogative forms.

Finally, for pronunciation, the maximum score recorded was 9, while the minimum was 4. The average grade was 6.2, with a standard deviation of 1.75 which turns out to be the highest SD among all the criteria. These statistical results suggest that pronunciation was another challenging area for students. The standard deviation reflects greater variability in pronunciation skills among participants. In other words, some participants had good pronunciation while others struggled significantly in this area. These results were corroborated by the researcher who noticed that some participants mispronounced words more frequently than others. This variation may be due to internal factors such as their individual linguistic skills. For example, some students excel in written language but face greater challenges with listening and speaking.

To sum up, according to the pretest results, the students demonstrated mastery of vocabulary and language usage areas, whereas they evidenced weaknesses as well as more variability and lower mean scores in fluency and pronunciation aspects. These findings confirmed the necessity to develop targeted interventions focused on improving fluency and pronunciation to enhance their overall speaking level. Pre-test outcomes align with Quezada et al., 2017 and Soria et al. (2020) who declared that Ecuadorian EFL students present greater difficulties in developing their speaking skills, with fluency being the most prominent challenge.

Table 4.

Post-Test Results by criterion

	N	Mean	Max	Min	SD
Fluency	10	7,6	10	5	1,57762128
Vocabulary	10	8,3	10	6	1,33749351
Language Usage	10	7,8	9	6	1,13529242
Pronunciation	10	7,4	10	5	1,42984071

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 3.

Post-Test Results by criterion

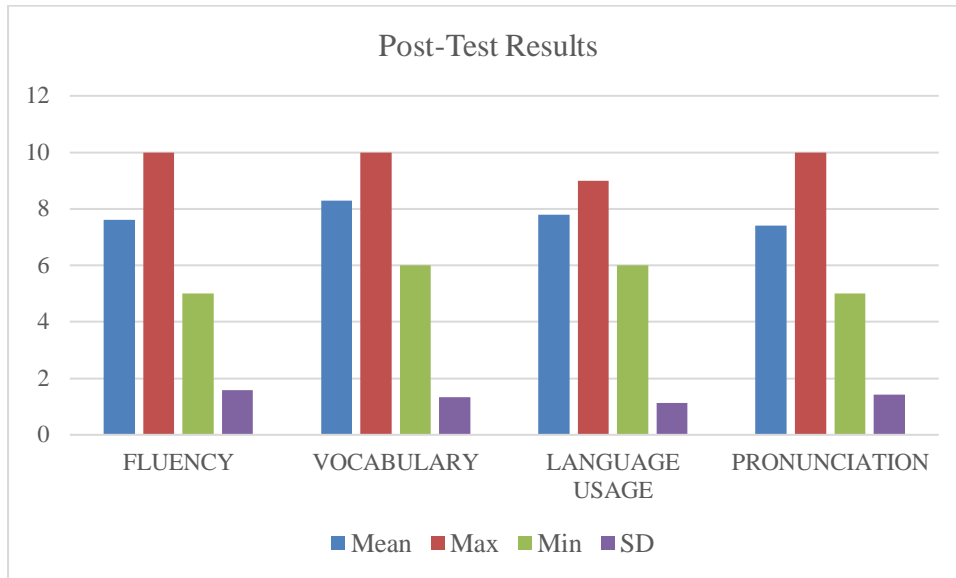


Table 3 depicts the descriptive statistics of the results obtained in the post-test. Overall, the data show a global improvement in the participants' speaking performance when comparing them with the pre-test grades. Regarding the aspect of fluency, it was obtained that the maximum score was 10 while the minimum was 5; hence, the mean score increased to 7.6. **In the same way**, the standard deviation was 1.58 **which** implies that there was **less variation** in fluency performance compared to the pre-test where the SD was 1.65. These data suggest that the learners demonstrated an improvement in their ability mastery of speaking naturally and fluently, showing as well a smaller gap between lower and higher-performing students. These findings can also be validated by the researcher's comments where she stated that the speaking fluency of the large majority of students enhanced notably as well as their speaking confidence.

Concerning vocabulary, during the posttest the students reached higher scores compared to the pretest results. For instance, the grades ranged from 6 (minimum) to 10 (maximum), and the mean score ascended to 8.3. On the other hand, the standard deviation showed a slight increase from 1.15 in the pretest to 1.34 in the posttest which indicates that there was more variation in the learners' vocabulary mastery. These results suggest that even though most students improved their vocabulary use, differences in their performances persisted. Overall, it was found that after the intervention the students demonstrated a stronger vocabulary grasp and were able to use English words more effectively while expressing themselves orally. These data were also proved by the researcher's comments where she

noted how after the interventions most learners exhibited a better grasp of vocabulary. In this sense, Khan et al. (2018) affirmed that it is crucial to implement communicative language teaching approaches such as TBI in order to increase the EFL students' vocabulary repertoire which was proved in the present study.

In relation to Language Usage (grammar), an increase in the scores was identified since the grades ranged from 6 to 9 as well as an upsurge in the mean score from (pretest) 7.5 to 7.8 (post-test). The standard deviation for this aspect was 1.14 which evidences a decline compared to the pre-test's SD which was 1.27. These outcomes indicate that participants demonstrated progress in their ability to use grammatical structures correctly after the intervention. Moreover, the statistics showed fewer variations between the learners' scores. Based on the author's comments, most of the participants showed a solid understanding of grammatical structures, therefore, it was easier for them to use the correct forms and tenses during the post-test. These results are supported by Phuong (2025) who after applying TBI and analyzing the post-test results found that the participants demonstrated a better grasp of grammatical structures and more accuracy in learners' oral performances compared to the pre-test results.

With regard to pronunciation, it was found that there was indeed an improvement in learners' scores with a maximum of 10 and a minimum of 5 and a mean score that increased from 6.2 (pre-test) to 7.4 in the post-test. In addition, the standard deviation for pronunciation was 1.43 which reveals the level of deviation declined compared to the pretest (SD=1.75). This indicates that even though there was still some variation among students' performances, they were lower than in the pre-test. These outcomes suggest that pronunciation skills improved, becoming more consistent among the group. The researcher supported these findings by affirming that learners proved to have enhanced pronunciation and were able to produce clearer and more comprehensible speech during the post-test.

On this matter, Ahmed (2017) elucidated that pronunciation is a fundamental subskill to achieve oral fluency in any language however it is very challenging too. Therefore, the author affirmed that employing the appropriate approaches where students are encouraged to use the language and play an active role in their learning can help them to overcome these challenges as it was observed in these results.

In general, the post-test results reveal noteworthy improvement in all four criteria: fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The mean scores were raised in all the speaking subskills which enables the researcher to prove the effectiveness of implementing

TBI to enhance oral fluency. Moreover, the decrease of the standard deviation in three speaking aspects (fluency, grammar, and pronunciation) points out that the learners' performance became more even, with fewer significant breaches between stronger and weaker participants. Nonetheless, when it came to vocabulary, results exhibited a slight growth in standard deviation which may indicate that despite the fact that the participants improved in this component, there was still some variation in how efficiently they applied the newly learned words.

These findings align with Phuong (2025)'s conclusion that implementing Task-Based Instruction in speaking lessons considerably improves learners' speaking skills. Similar to the present study, the author was able to obtain an increase in all the speaking subskills compared to the initial assessment, with fluency improving the most. In the same way, the overall results obtained from the post-test also line up with Safitri (2018)'s findings whose findings also revealed that the EFL learners' speaking skills significantly increased in the post-test. According to this author, most of the learners' speaking abilities were categorized as high or modest which was better than the pre-test results.

Table 5.

Comparison of the descriptive statistics between Pre-Test and Post Test total scores

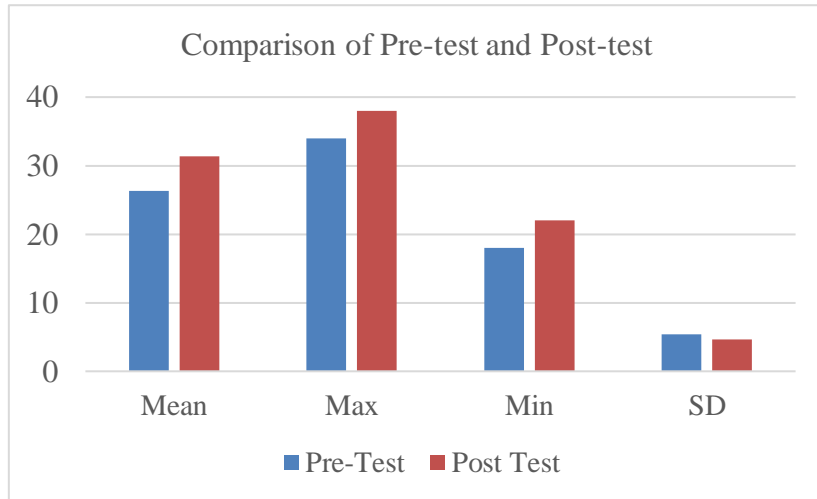
	Mean	Max	Min	SD
Pre-Test	26,3	34	18	5,41
Post Test	31,35	38	22	4,64

Note. This table shows the descriptive statistics of the total results from the pre-test and post-test data.

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 4.

Comparison of the descriptive statistics between Pre-Test and Post Test total scores



As it can be observed in the graphic, the Pre-Test and Post-Test comparison of results denote a clear improvement in student performance after the intervention. Concerning the mean of the total score, it evidenced an upsurge from 26.3 in the Pre-Test to 31.35 in the post-test. This indicates that, overall, the participants performed better after the intervention.

In a similar vein, when comparing the maximum scores, it can be stated that it certainly rose from 34 to 38 which reveals that the highest-scoring student improved their performance. Correspondingly, the minimum score also evidenced an increase from 18 to 22 which also hints that even the participant with the lowest performance showed improvement. As for the standard deviation, it can be noted that it decreased from 5.41 in the Pre-Test to 4.64 in the post-test. This lessening denotes that the learners' grades became more consistent or that there was less variation in their performance levels.

In this sense, considering the decline of the scores dispersion and the total scores surge, TBI implementation provided positive results. In other words, TBI undeniably helped learners to enhance their speaking skills including their oral fluency which was the main target of this study. In addition, the intervention also proved to promote a more balanced level of achievement amongst the whole group.

These findings agree with those attained by Nget et al. (2020) who after comparing the pretest and posttest found that TBI made significant contributions to the learners' speaking skills in general as well as in all sub-skills. As reported by these authors, in the post-test, the group showed significant improvement compared to the pre-test. They affirmed that the implementation of TBI provided extensive speaking practice which greatly enhanced their performance by permitting them to use language for meaningful

communication.

Table 6.

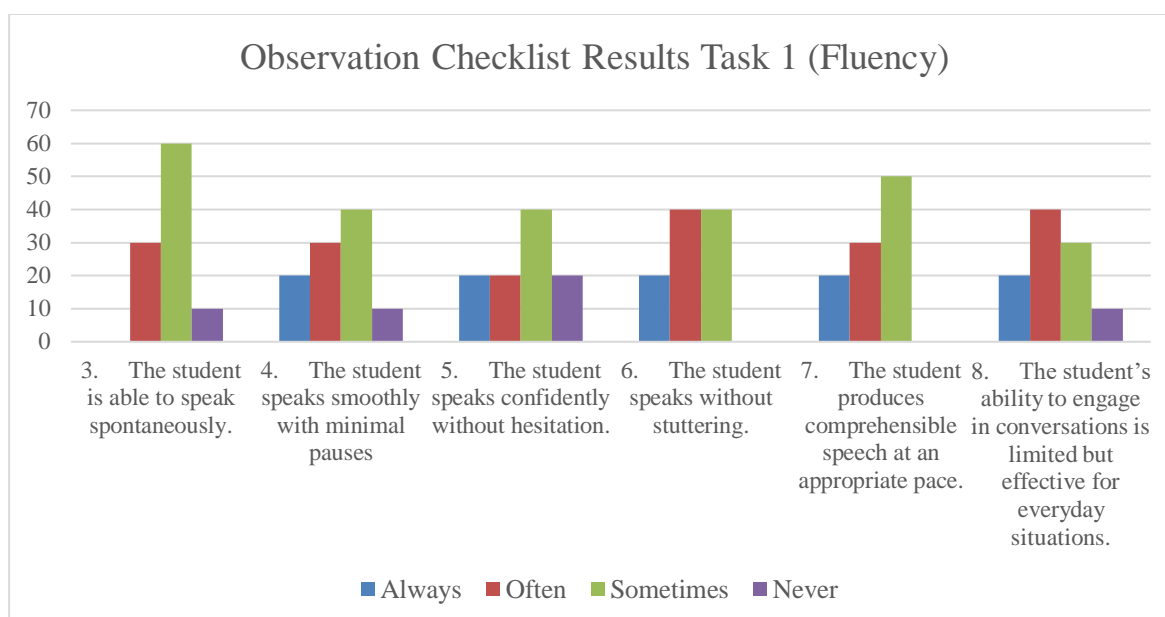
Observation Checklist Results Task 1 (Fluency)

Fluency	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)
3. The student is able to speak spontaneously.	0	30	60	10
4. The student speaks smoothly with minimal pauses	20	30	40	10
5. The student speaks confidently without hesitation.	20	20	40	20
6. The student speaks without stuttering.	20	40	40	0
7. The student produces comprehensible speech at an appropriate pace.	20	30	50	0
8. The student’s ability to engage in conversations is limited but effective for everyday situations.	20	40	30	10

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 5.

Observation Checklist Results Task 1 (Fluency)



The table only displays the results for fluency since it was the speaking subskill where the learners presented the most difficulty and therefore, the most relevant subskill for this study. When performing the first task which was the roleplay “*Making plans with a friend*”, the students were expected to work in pairs and create a dialogue between two friends making plans. As it can be noted in statement three, 60% of the participants sometimes spoke spontaneously, while 10% never did. These percentages indicate that a large portion of learners were not able to engage in a fluid conversation. These results can be supported by the comments provided by the researcher who directly observed the students’ performance during each task. The findings fully align with the researcher’s comment since she stated that even after studying the pertinent vocabulary and grammar structures and creating a script, most students were still unable to express themselves naturally in their roleplay.

Similarly, in statement five, 40% of the participants sometimes talked confidently without hesitation and another 20% never did. This reflects that more than half of the learners exhibited a lack of confidence since they struggled to express their ideas orally in English without hesitation. This issue was further highlighted in statement four, where it was found that 40% of the participants sometimes expressed themselves smoothly with few pauses and 10% never did whereas 30% of them often talked making minimal pauses and 20% always did. These statistical data indicate that although some participants were able to engage in smoother talks, some others continued to struggle with maintaining a fluid dialogue. These data were corroborated by the observer’s opinion as she affirmed that many students exhibited speaking anxiety or nervousness, likely due to a lack of confidence or feeling unprepared to express themselves clearly in English. The presence of frequent pauses among learners was also confirmed by the researcher who noticed that around half of the learners made several pauses, making their speech difficult to understand.

Finally, another important finding was that 50% of the learners sometimes produced understandable speech at a proper rate while 30% of them often did. This information suggests that while some students could produce speech at a reasonable rate, a larger proportion continued struggling with spontaneous speaking, hesitation, and maintaining a smooth flow of speech. According to the qualitative data from the researcher’s perspective half of the students struggled with comprehensibility due to the frequent pauses they made as well as the poor pronunciation they exhibited and an inappropriate speech rate. The

observer also noted that these students are not yet ready to engage in everyday conversations.

In summary, during the first task, the learners demonstrated important challenges regarding fluency since most of them struggled with spontaneity, smoothness, hesitation, and pacing in their speech.

Table 7.

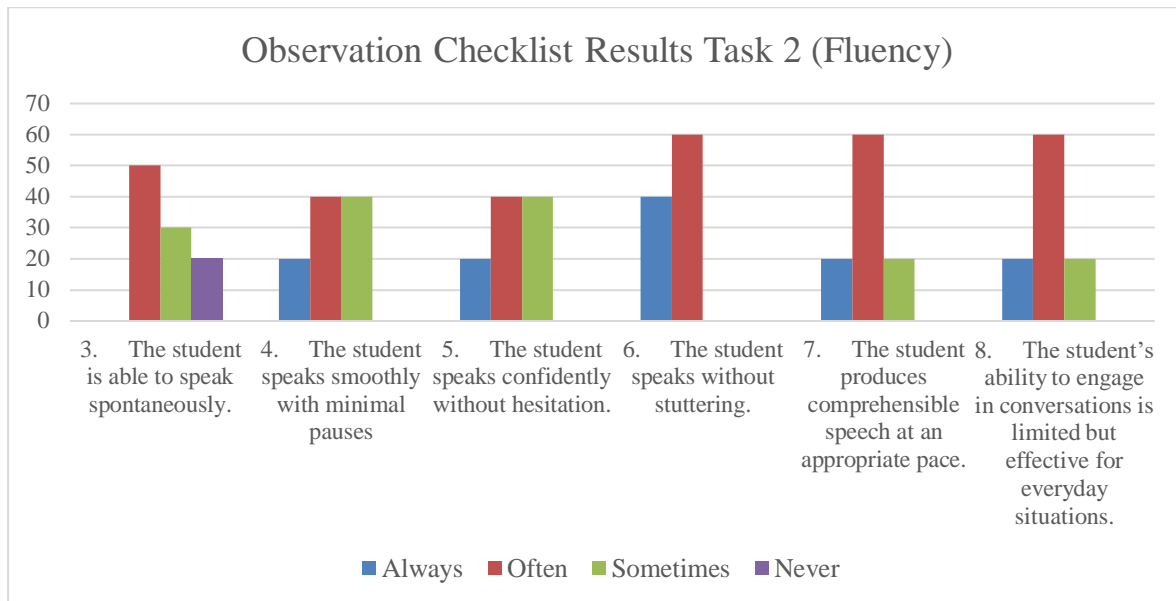
Observation Checklist Results Task 2 (Fluency)

Fluency	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)
3. The student is able to speak spontaneously.	0	50	30	20
4. The student speaks smoothly with minimal pauses	20	40	40	0
5. The student speaks confidently without hesitation.	20	40	40	0
6. The student speaks without stuttering.	40	60	0	0
7. The student produces comprehensible speech at an appropriate pace.	20	60	20	0
8. The student’s ability to engage in conversations is limited but effective for everyday situations.	20	60	20	0

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 6.

Observation Checklist Results Task 2 (Fluency)



The table and graphic above present the data collected during the realization of the second task “*Ordering a meal at a restaurant*” where students had to prepare a roleplay in groups of three acting as waiters/servers and customers. As it is shown in statement three, 50% of the students often spoke spontaneously during the task demonstration whereas 30% of them sometimes and another 20% never did. These results demonstrate that spontaneity was still a challenge for a significant number of students during the second task. This lines up with the researcher’s observation where she was able to realize that while some students performed better during the restaurant activity, around half of them still face difficulties when trying to express themselves naturally even though having rehearsed what they were supposed to say as servers or customers. This struggle may be due to their lack of confidence as well as the lack of pronunciation some of them still experience.

In the same way, in the fourth statement issues with smooth speech were distinguished as 40% of the participants only sometimes expressed themselves with few pauses, that is, most of the time they failed to speak smoothly. Conversely, 40% of the learners managed not to make too many pauses most of the time, that is, they were able to minimize pauses and another 20% achieved a completely effortless performance with very few pauses. Likewise, statement five showed that confidence levels varied among the learners’ performance since 40% of the participants managed to talk confidently without sounding hesitant only on certain occasions while another 40% frequently displayed confidence in their speech, and the remaining 20% always spoke with confidence.

These results indicate that some learners have already developed greater ease in speaking while others are still facing some challenges to achieve this. These findings reflect

the observer’s perspective when she affirmed that some learners still made numerous pauses and hesitated while speaking, disrupting the flow of their roleplay. The presence of frequent pauses likely contributed to their lack of fluency and confidence.

All the results described above reveal a mixed performance among students when it came to fluency, with a significant portion still struggling to speak with spontaneity, smoothness, and confidence when expressing themselves orally in English.

Table 8.

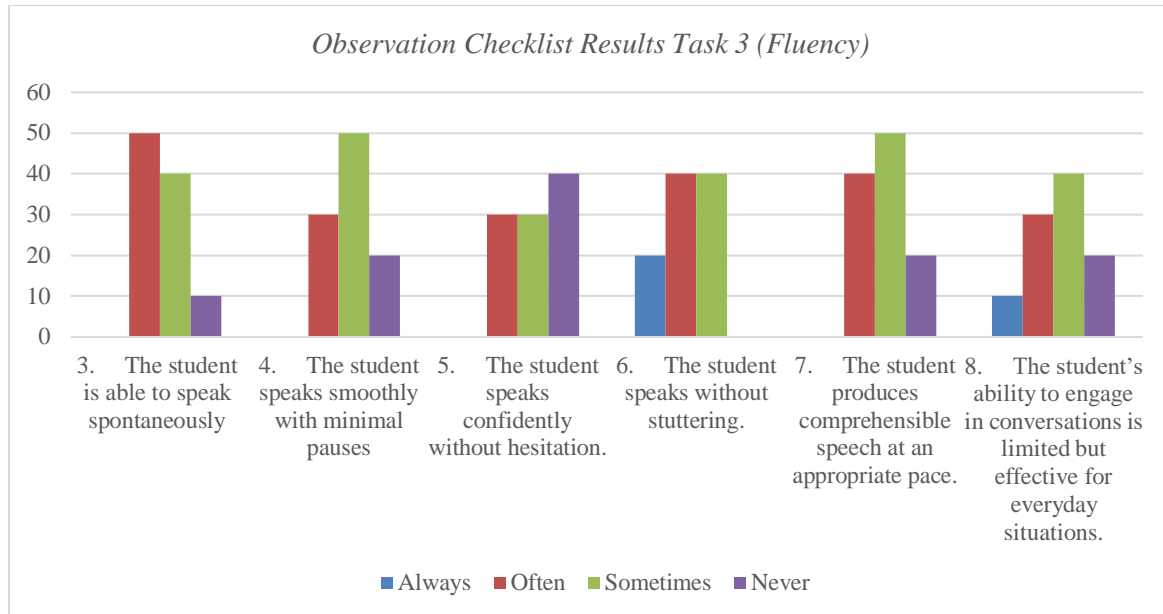
Observation Checklist Results Task 3 (Fluency)

Fluency	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)
3. The student is able to speak spontaneously.	0	50	40	10
4. The student speaks smoothly with minimal pauses	0	30	50	20
5. The student speaks confidently without hesitation.	0	30	30	40
6. The student speaks without stuttering.	20	40	40	0
7. The student produces comprehensible speech at an appropriate pace.	0	40	50	20
8. The student’s ability to engage in conversations is limited but effective for everyday situations.	10	30	40	20

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 7.

Observation Checklist Results Task 3 (Fluency)



Concerning the third task “Asking and Giving Directions”, the learners were asked to work in pairs to prepare a roleplay where one of the students had to be a foreigner or visitor asking for directions and the other, a city dweller. This task represented a greater challenge for the students since they were supposed to determine a route to a specific location and give accurate directions using a city map as a prompt. As it can be observed, in statements four and seven, during the task presentation, 50% of the students only occasionally managed to speak smoothly and comprehensibly with minimal pauses and at an appropriate pace. In addition, 20% more never achieved this which indicates that the participants constantly faced difficulties in maintaining a natural flow and a suitable speed. These results mean that the vast majority of learners struggled with consistency and clarity throughout the whole oral presentation.

Based on the observations, the researcher noted that learners faced greater difficulty with this task compared to the previous one. This challenge may be attributed to students' own acknowledgment that they lacked the ability to give directions and had no prior experience doing so, even in their first language. Consequently, the observer concluded that the task was particularly demanding due to their limited real-life exposure to similar situations. Additionally, the vocabulary required for the task posed an extra challenge, as students had to learn the pronunciation of street names, avenues, and roads. Furthermore, some learners struggled with directionality, specifically differentiating between left and right. Despite these difficulties, this task ultimately contributed to the development of their speaking fluency.

In a similar vein, when focusing on statement five results, it was found that 40% of

the learners never talked confidently during the activity, that is, they demonstrated a high level of apprehension and hesitation when speaking. Likewise, an additional 30% were only occasionally able to communicate without displaying significant hesitation. These findings suggest that most participants showed themselves unsure about their performance and they denoted a great amount of uncertainty and speech anxiety during this task. This aligns with the observations where signs of nervousness were clearly noticeable in the learners' voices. It was evident that the primary cause of their anxiety stemmed from challenges with vocabulary and pronunciation, as they had limited prior experience and insufficient time to become fully familiar with street names and directional expressions.

Moreover, it was obtained that in statement eight, 40% of the participants only sporadically exhibited the ability to engage in everyday situations like asking for and providing directions and another 20% never showed this capability. These results suggest that a lack of familiarity with the task, vocabulary challenges, and possible confidence issues may have hindered their ability to participate effectively in such conversations. This was also corroborated by the researcher who also noted a need for further preparation to better handle these types of situations, which they may acquire over time since, due to their age, they still lack the experience and need to take part in these types of situations.

Table 9.

Observation Checklist Results Task 4 (Fluency)

Fluency	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)
3. The student is able to speak spontaneously.	20	30	40	10
4. The student speaks smoothly with minimal pauses	40	30	30	0
5. The student speaks confidently without hesitation.	40	30	30	0
6. The student speaks without stuttering.	60	40	0	0
7. The student produces comprehensible speech at an appropriate pace.	40	30	30	0

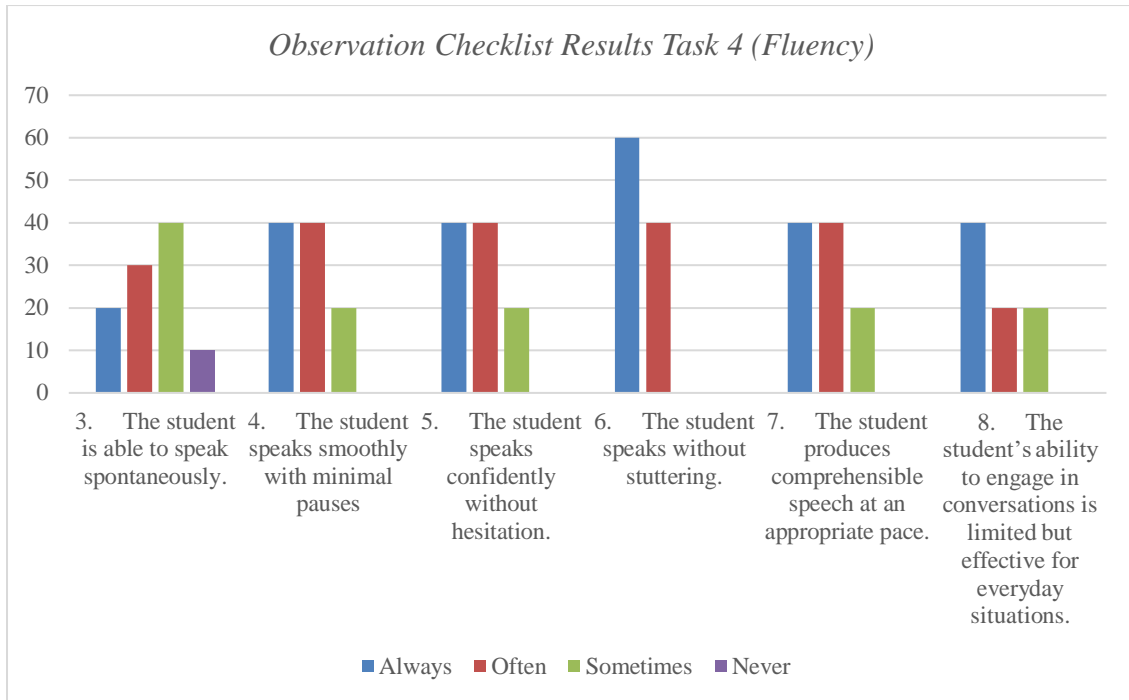
8. The student’s ability to engage in conversations is limited but effective for everyday situations.

40 40 20 0

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 8.

Observation Checklist Results Task 4 (Fluency)



In the fourth task “*Calling and leaving a message*” the students were asked to work collaboratively in groups of three to create and then act out a dialogue in which one person attempts to call another. However, instead of reaching the intended recipient, her or his receptionist answers the call and offers to take a message for them. The statistical data obtained from the checklist showed that in statement three, 40% of the participants sometimes succeeded in talking spontaneously and another 10% never did. On the other hand, 30% often and the remaining 20% always spoke naturally during the roleplay presentation.

These findings suggest that while half of the students faced challenges with naturalness, the remaining half exhibited a more advanced level of it in their speech. These data can be supported by the qualitative data where the observer established that several students exhibited spontaneity difficulties at certain points in their participation which

according to the observer can be attributed to a lack of preparation, low motivation, emotional factors such as shyness and nervousness, and peer pressure, which may have caused students to feel apprehensive during the task.

Nevertheless, Table 8 displays positive results overall collected through the checklist. For instance, in statement six, 60% of the learners always and the remaining 40% often spoke effortlessly without stuttering. These data hint that all students demonstrated a strong ability to speak fluently during the task though some of them may have occasionally exhibited minor disruptions in their speech. These findings suggest that stuttering was not a significant issue among the participants.

Moreover, as it is observed in statements four, five, and seven, 40% of the learners always spoke smoothly with a few pauses, confidently with minimal hesitation, and delivered an understandable and steady speech and another 30% often did. These statistical data imply that the majority of participants managed to speak comprehensibly, effortlessly, and confidently most of the time during the task presentation. These results reveal a significant improvement in students' ability to communicate effectively with minimal interruptions. In addition, according to the observations, most of the students demonstrated a good level of fluency while speaking however some of them lacked spontaneity since they sounded rehearsed and not as natural. Then again, the observer acknowledged that most of the students conveyed a clear and understandable message with sporadic disruptions.

Overall, task four showed a positive improvement and it can be affirmed that even though some EFL learners struggled due to external or emotional factors, others were able to effectively engage in spontaneous conversation which is probably due to better preparation and a boost in their confidence from the previous experiences.

Table 10.

Observation Checklist Results Task 5 (Fluency)

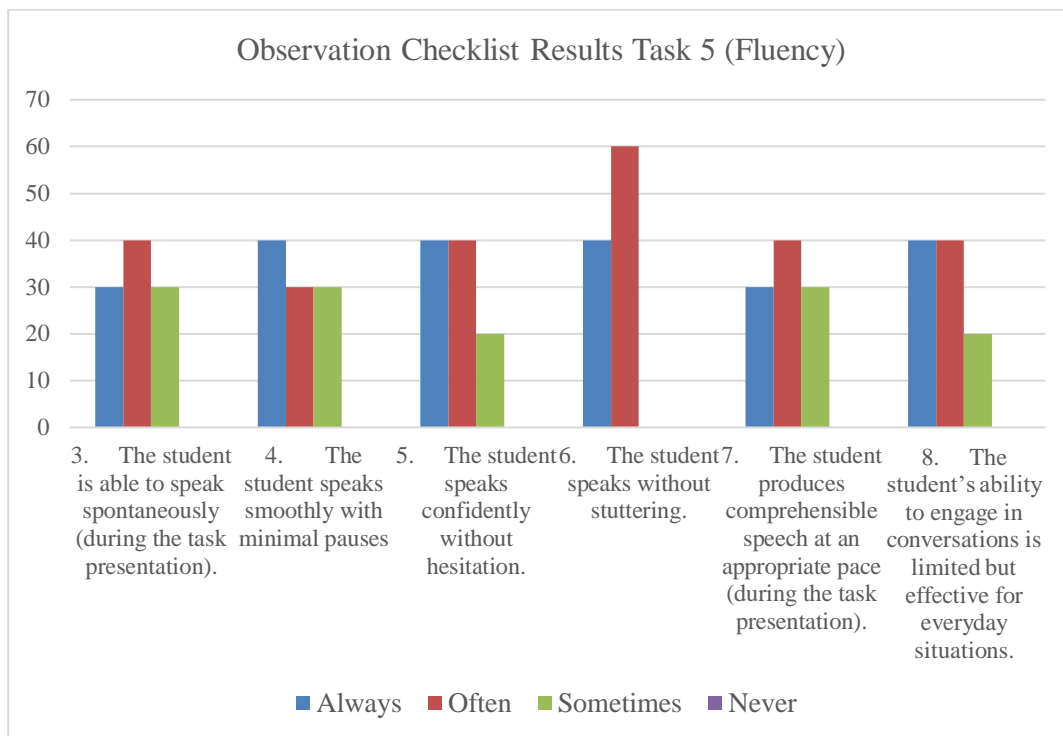
Fluency	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)
3. The student is able to speak spontaneously.	30	40	30	0
4. The student speaks smoothly with minimal pauses	40	30	30	0

5. The student speaks confidently without hesitation.	40	40	20	0
6. The student speaks without stuttering.	40	60	0	0
7. The student produces comprehensible speech at an appropriate pace.	30	40	30	0
8. The student’s ability to engage in conversations is limited but effective for everyday situations.	40	40	20	0

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 9.

Observation Checklist Results Task 5 (Fluency)



During the fifth task ‘*Asking a friend how he/she is feeling and showing sympathy*’, learners had to work in pairs and prepare a roleplay of a conversation between two friends where one of them was not feeling good (he/she had a headache, stomachache, back pain, and so on) and his/her friend had to show concern and sympathy and give advice. As it can be noted in Table 9 and Figure 9, there was little to no variation in the data compared to the

previous task results. This indicates that this activity also yielded pretty positive outcomes.

By way of illustration, in statement six, 60% of the learners experienced occasional stuttering, while the remaining 40% spoke fluently without any stammering. Moreover, in statement five, 40% of the learners always spoke self-confidently and with very few hesitations while 40% frequently talked like this. In the same way, in statement eight, it was revealed that 40% of the participants seemed to be fully ready to engage in real-life conversations with limited but effective speaking skills and another 40% proved to be ready most of the time.

Furthermore, for the remaining statements, results were quite similar to the previous task with around 70% of the students demonstrating a good mastery of fluency by expressing themselves spontaneously, making minimal pauses, and conveying clear messages most of the time. These outcomes were corroborated by the observations, where the researcher affirmed that most students completed this task satisfactorily by demonstrating mastery of the topic and fluent and clear speech. Nonetheless, these observations also highlighted that a smaller number of learners still face challenges expressing themselves orally during the task presentation.

According to the researcher’s perspective, these difficulties can be attributed to learners’ negative thoughts about their ability to speak as well as to peer pressure since some learners are commonly expected to give a poor performance and not show enthusiasm. In other words, emotional factors are the most common reason for the learners’ speaking problems during the tasks.

Table 11.

Observation Checklist Results Task 6 (Fluency)

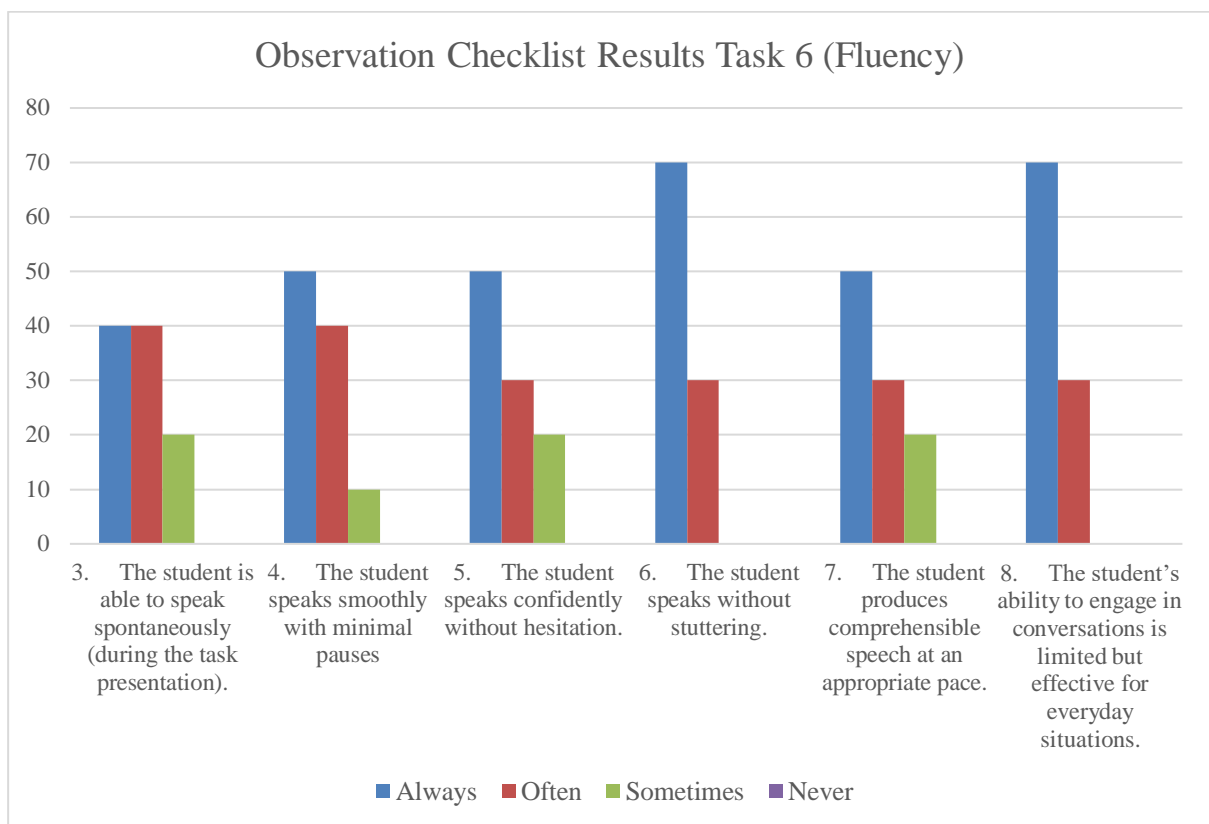
Fluency	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)
3. The student is able to speak spontaneously.	40	40	20	0
4. The student speaks smoothly with minimal pauses	50	40	10	0
5. The student speaks confidently without hesitation.	50	30	20	0
6. The student speaks without stuttering.	70	30	0	0

7. The student produces comprehensible speech at an appropriate pace.	50	30	20	0
8. The student’s ability to engage in conversations is limited but effective for everyday situations.	70	30	0	0

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 10.

Observation Checklist Results Task 6 (Fluency)



Moving on to the sixth and last task named ‘Shopping for clothes’, in this roleplay task learners were asked to work collaboratively, fist they were randomly assigned to two groups of customers (6 students) who were further divided into pairs since the setting was two friends going shopping and salespeople or shop assistants (4 students). These groups had to decide what pieces of clothing to buy, assign roles, and create their dialogues based on some examples. For this task, the learner brought some clothes and prepared and arranged the set to simulate a real shopping store.

According to the data displayed above, task 6 results yielded quite positive results.

By way of illustration, in statement six, 70% of the learners talked smoothly during the task without presenting any stuttering and the remaining 30% often spoke without disruptions and stammering. These outcomes hint at an improved level of fluency mastery and confidence since learner did not evidence hesitations or stammering in their speech. In the same way, in statement eight, 70% of the learners showed to be ready to engage in real-life conversations despite their limited language knowledge and the remaining 30% gave the impression to also be ready most of the time during their performance.

Similarly, the remaining statements the results yielded were pretty favorable since most of the participants spoke comprehensibly, confidently, smoothly, and spontaneously the majority or the whole time, and only a minimal part of students 10% to 20% sometimes showed mastery of sureness, clarity, consistency, and naturalness while expressing themselves orally during the task.

After completing the interpretation and comparison of the pre-test and post-test results as well as the observation checklist which tracked the learners' progress during the intervention, the first research question can be answered. There is a positive connection between TBI and the improvement of learners' speaking skills. The results obtained from the pre-test and post-test proved that TBI helped the participants to enhance their speaking skills including their oral fluency which was the main target of this study.

In the same way, the checklist results demonstrated a progressive enhancement in the learners' fluency across tasks, with some fluctuations primarily attributed to the complexity of the tasks and emotional factors that impacted their speaking performance. These findings reflect the ones obtained by Soria et al. (2020) who declared that employing had a good impact on the enhancement of students' speaking skills.

3.6 Research question 2: What are the participants' attitudes and perceptions regarding the use of Task-Based Instruction to enhance their speaking fluency?

In order to address the second research question, the following section presents an interpretation and analysis of the survey results, supported by relevant bibliographic sources. To facilitate the analysis of these results, the survey was divided into three main sections which go from the most general attitudes to specific ones. Initially, Table 11 presents the students' general attitudes and perceptions towards the implementation of Task-Based Instruction in the form of roleplay activities.

Table 12.

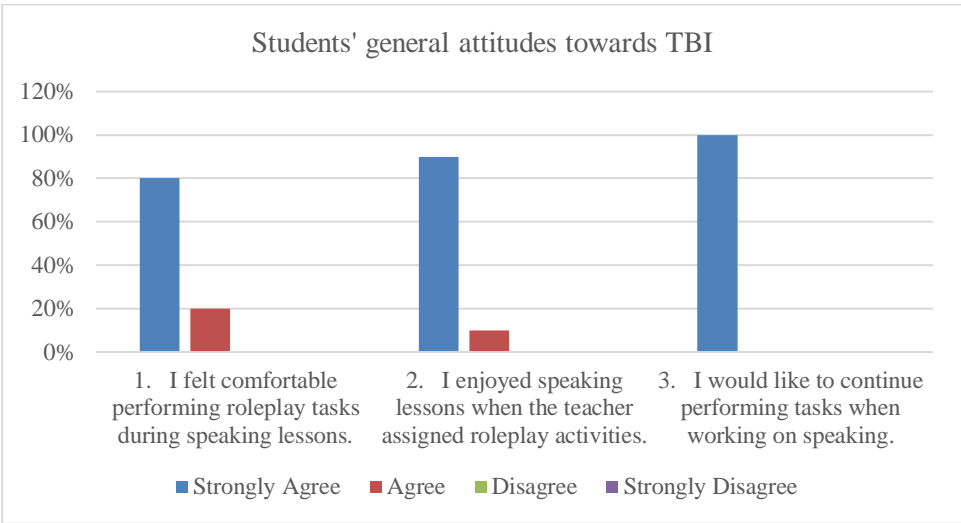
Students' general attitudes towards Task-Based Instruction Implementation

	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
1. I felt comfortable performing roleplay tasks during speaking lessons.	80	20	0	0
2. I enjoyed speaking lessons when the teacher assigned roleplay activities.	90	10	0	0
3. I would like to continue performing tasks when working on speaking.	100	0	0	0

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 11.

Students' general attitudes towards Task-Based Instruction Implementation



Regarding the students' general attitudes, it was found that when inquired about comfort level when performing the tasks, the large majority of students, that is, 80% strongly agreed and the remaining 20% agreed. These findings indicate that according to their perspectives, none of the participants experienced feelings of discomfort or reluctance toward this approach to developing speaking skills.

In a similar vein, when the participants were asked about their enjoyment, 90% of them strongly agreed that they enjoyed the speaking lessons were their performed role-play activities; in addition, the remaining 10% agreed to the same statement. These results

demonstrate a high level of engagement and motivation when employing tasks during speaking lessons.

Equally, when questioned if they would like to continue carrying out role-play tasks 100% of the EFL learners expressed willingness to keep using them in speaking lessons. This agreement in the participants’ responses suggests that they perceive this type of task as very enjoyable as well as an effective method for developing their speaking skills.

Overall, the findings of the first section revealed an overwhelmingly positive response on the part of the learners which in turn suggests that Task-Based Instruction, particularly through role-play, fosters a positive learning environment, increases student engagement, and enhances their willingness to participate in speaking activities. These results agree with the ones obtained by Prianty et al. (2022) who also found that EFL learners have positive perceptions toward task-based language teaching, especially when it is used to enhance their speaking skills since they consider that it creates a more effective classroom environment.

Table 13.

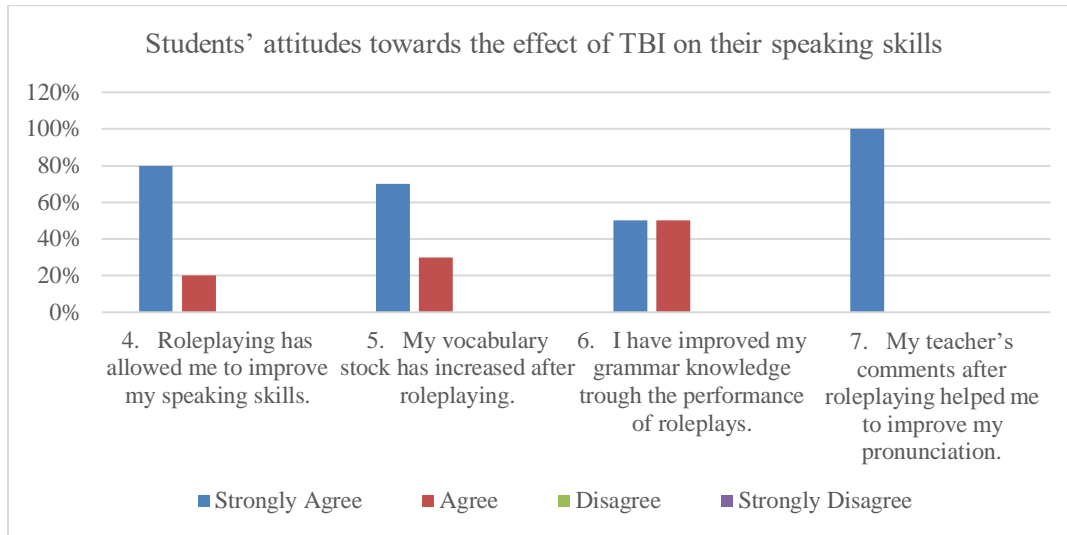
Students’ attitudes towards the effect of TBI on their speaking skills

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4. Roleplaying has allowed me to improve my speaking skills.	80%	20%	0%	0%
5. My vocabulary stock has increased after roleplaying.	70%	30%	0%	0%
6. I have improved my grammar knowledge through the performance of roleplays.	50%	50%	0%	0%
7. My teacher’s comments after roleplaying helped me to improve my pronunciation.	100%	0%	0%	0%

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 12.

Students’ attitudes towards the effect of TBI on their speaking skills



The next section of the survey gathered the learners' opinions regarding their attitudes toward the effect of TBI on their speaking skills. According to the results, when the learners were asked if they noticed that roleplay activities, they performed during each task allowed them to enhance their speaking abilities, 80% of the students strongly agreed, and the remaining 20% agreed with statement 4. These results evidence an utterly positive response on the part of the participants about the TBI's effectiveness in enhancing their speaking skills since all of them noted a positive impact on their speaking to varying degrees.

Similarly, in statement 5, when learners were asked if they perceived an increase in their vocabulary stock, 70% of them strongly agreed and the remaining 30% agreed with this statement. These outcomes indicate that all the participants were able to notice an increase in their vocabulary repertoire to a certain degree.

Moreover, in statement 6, learners were inquired if they identified an enhancement in their grasp of grammar after the intervention employing TBI, in this item half of the learners (50%) chose Strongly Agree and the other half selected Agree. These responses maintain completely positive results since all of the learners perceived an improvement in their grammar mastery to some extent.

In statement 7, which is the last one of this section, 100% of the EFL learners strongly agreed with the assertion that their teacher's feedback after each roleplay performance helped them to enhance their English pronunciation. These findings reflect a unanimous response regarding pronunciation where all learners feel that they have improved this subskill during the realization of the roleplay tasks.

Overall, this second section has gathered exceptionally positive perceptions and

opinions regarding the enhancement of the learners’ speaking subskills (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation). These findings prove the effectiveness of the TBI approach in fostering the participants’ speaking skills since they were able to notice progress in their ability to use language accurately and fluently.

Table 14.

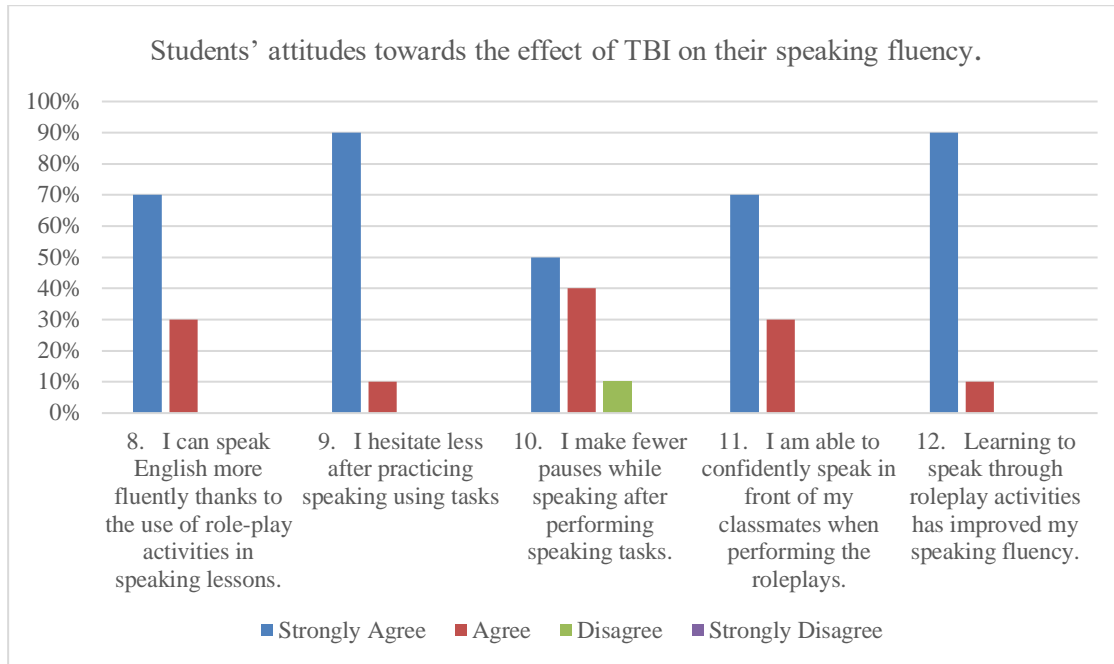
Students’ attitudes towards the effect of TBI on their speaking fluency.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. I can speak English more fluently thanks to the use of role-play activities in speaking lessons.	70%	30%	0%	0%
9. I hesitate less after practicing speaking using tasks	90%	10%	0%	0%
10. I make fewer pauses while speaking after performing speaking tasks.	50%	40%	10%	0%
11. I am able to confidently speak in front of my classmates when performing the roleplays.	70%	30%	0%	0%
12. Learning to speak through roleplay activities has improved my speaking fluency.	90%	10%	0%	0%

Elaborated by: Arias (2025)

Figure 13.

Students’ attitudes towards the effect of TBI on their speaking fluency.



In relation to the third and last section of the survey which focuses mainly on speaking fluency, it was found that in statement 8 which inquired if learners believe that they are able to speak more fluently after performing the roleplay tasks, 70% of them strongly agreed with this and the remaining 30% agreed. These percentages indicate that all learners could notice an improvement in their fluency while expressing themselves in English. In the same way, in statement 9, when the participants were asked if they noticed less hesitation after the intervention, 90% of them strongly agreed and the remaining 10% agreed. These findings imply that all the learners are affirmative that they exhibit less hesitations and have more confidence after the execution of the tasks.

Additionally, in statement 10 which inquired if learners noticed making fewer pauses while speaking English during the tasks, 50% of the students answered Strongly Agree and another 40% agreed whereas a minimum of 10%, that is, one student did not agree. These data suggest that the vast majority of students offered positive responses when asked if pauses while speaking were reduced and that their speech was smoother; however, a minimal percentage did not notice this lessening.

Continuing with statement 11, when surveyed about the increase in their confidence while speaking in front of their classmates when performing the roleplays 70% of the participants strongly agreed and the remaining 30% agreed. These statistical data indicate that all the students were able to perceive an improvement in their confidence and the lessening of hesitation during their performance either to a higher or lower degree.

Finally, regarding the twelfth and last statement within this last section, it was found

that when students were questioned whether they thought that practicing speaking through TBI has boosted their oral fluency, 90% of them answered with Strongly Agree and the remaining 10% agreed. These results clearly indicate the students' points of view regarding this approach which was quite favorable since most of them could notice their fluency advancement throughout the tasks.

After completing the analysis of the students' attitudes towards the effect of TBI on their speaking fluency, the second question can be solved. The results from the survey demonstrated that learners have a positive attitude towards the use of TBI to enhance their speaking and that they are certain that tasks did help them to progress their speaking skills in general as well as fluency in particular.

These findings are supported by Nget et al. (2020) who after applying a satisfaction questionnaire were able to obtain similar results where all the EFL learners were highly satisfied with their experiences with TBI. Similar to this study's outcomes, the author also found that learners could notice progress in their speaking proficiency as well as an increase in their confidence and motivation. According to Nget et al. (2020), learners thought that simulating real-life situations encouraged their active participation and helped them overcome speaking challenges.



CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of Task-Based Instruction (TBI) yielded positive results, demonstrating its effectiveness in enhancing learners' speaking skills, particularly their oral fluency, which was the primary focus of this study.

TBI also proved to promote a more balanced level of achievement across the group, ensuring that all learners experienced progress regardless of their initial speaking mastery levels. Consequently, these findings provide strong evidence of the positive impact of TBI on learners' speaking proficiency and overall learning outcomes.

Checklist results further reinforce the effectiveness of TBI, as they indicate a consistently positive trajectory in the participants' speaking performance throughout the intervention. The gradual improvement observed highlights the role of task complexity and repetition in refining learners' fluency and confidence in spoken English.

The participants exhibited favorable attitudes toward the use of TBI in their learning process. Their perceptions suggest that the tasks not only contributed to their overall speaking development but also played a crucial role in enhancing their fluency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are suggested for implementing this approach to enhance EFL learners' speaking skills, especially the fluency subskill.

Due to the highly positive impact that TBI proved in enhancing EFL students' speaking fluency, Ecuadorian EFL stakeholders, pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and education authorities should incorporate TBI into the Ecuadorian EFL Curriculum as one of the main approaches. TBI integration can ensure that EFL students at different proficiency levels have access to a better quality of EFL teaching that helps them to boost their speaking skills which was regarded as one of the most challenging language skills to develop for Ecuadorian learners.

In order for EFL learners to develop their speaking fluency it is essential for English instructors to design or adapt a variety of communicative tasks for different levels which will gradually increase difficulty and support students' progress. This range of tasks and intricacy levels are crucial in learners' fluency development since TBI will progressively foster learners' speaking confidence and fluency.

The present study employed a small sample size of 10 EFL students and it had a duration of 5 weeks (15 hours) therefore another important recommendation is to conduct further research on the long-term impact of TBI on speaking skills. Based on the present research findings which proved the short-term efficacy of TBI in improving speaking fluency, future research should explore the effects of TBI on other speaking subskills as well as on language retention and overall proficiency. Further longitudinal studies could support the present results and offer deeper insights into the advantages of TBI across different demographics.

EFL teachers and authorities should prioritize the students' opinions and attitudes towards the language teaching approaches they include in the curricula. In the present study, very favorable attitudes among the participants were attained. It is essential to bear their feelings and emotions in mind in order to maintain their motivation and willingness to learn English and improve their speaking skills. Employing communicative tasks can create a supportive classroom environment that minimizes anxiety and encourages risk-taking as they work actively and collaboratively.

REFERENCES

- Abdulrahman, N., & Abdaldfi, I. (2020). Investigating the difficulties of speaking skills encountered by Sudanese EFL undergraduates. *EUROPEAN ACADEMIC RESEARCH*, 3(8), 4865–4877. www.euacademic.org
- Acosta, H., Cajas, D., & Minchala, E. (2019). *Promoting engaged teaching and developing active learning: Effective strategies project team*. Editorial UNAE.
- Adiantika, H. N., & Purnomo, H. (2018). The implementation of task-based instruction in EFL teaching speaking skill. *Indonesian EFL Journal*, 4(2), 12–22. <https://doi.org/10.25134/ieflj.v4i2.1371>
- Afifah, N., & Devana, T. (2020). Speaking Skill through Task Based Learning in English Foreign Language Classroom. *Jo-ELT (Journal of English Language Teaching) Fakultas Pendidikan Bahasa & Seni Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris IKIP*, 7(2), 135. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jo-elt.v7i2.3109>
- Ahmed, Z. A. D.-A. (2017). Difficulties encountered by EFL students in learning pronunciation: A Case study of Sudanese higher secondary schools. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 7(4), 75–82. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v7n4p75>
- Akramy, S. A., Daqiq, B., & Orfan, S. N. (2024). Attitudes of EFL learners towards communicative language teaching. *American Journal of Education and Learning*, 9(1), 22–37. <https://doi.org/10.55284/ajel.v9i1.1026>
- Aleksandrzak, M. (2011). Problems and challenges in teaching and learning speaking at advanced level. *Glottodidactica. An International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 37, 37–48. <https://doi.org/10.14746/gl.2011.37.3>
- Alharthi, T. (2020). Investigating the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and EFL speaking performance. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 10(1), 37–46. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v10n1p37>
- Alofi, R. A., & Almalki, M. S. (2022). Conceptualizing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the EFL context: Ethnographic Experiences of CELTA and Non-CELTA holders. *English Language Teaching*, 15(5), 14–31. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n5p14>
- Al-Tamimi, N. M. O., Abudllah, N. K. M., & Bin-Hady, W. R. A. (2020). Teaching speaking skill to EFL college students through task-based approach: Problems and improvement. *British Journal of English Linguistics*, 8(2), 113–130. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4116-113X>

- Anggini, S. D., & Arjulayana. (2021). Analysis student's speaking performance as an academic speaker's practice. *Globish (An English-Indonesian Journal for English, Education and Culture)*, 10(1), 58–63.
<https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.31000/globish.v7i2>
- Arias, J. L. (2012). Guía para elaborar la operacionalización de variables. *Revista Espacio I+D Innovación Más Desarrollo*, X(28), 42–56.
<https://doi.org/10.31644/IMASD.28.2021.a02>
- Arini, M., & Wahyudin, A. Y. (2022). Students' perception on questioning technique in improving speaking skill ability at English education study program. *Journal of Arts and Education*, 2(1), 57–67.
- Bakar, N. A., Latiff, H., & Hamat, A. (2013). Enhancing ESL Learners Speaking Skills through Asynchronous Online Discussion Forum. *Asian Social Science*, 9(9).
<https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v9n9p224>
- Bhandari, L. P. (2020). Task-Based Language Teaching: A Current EFL Approach. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 11(1), 1–5.
<https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.all.v.11n.1p.1>
- Bhandari, P. (2022, June 22). *Scribbr*. Operationalization | A Guide with Examples, Pros & Cons. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/operationalization/>
- Brown, H. D. (2006). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th Editio). Pearson Education. http://angol.uni-miskolc.hu/wp-content/media/2016/10/Principles_of_language_learning.pdf
- Casteel, A., & Bridier, N. (2021). Describing Populations and Samples in Doctoral Student Research. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 16, 339–362.
<https://doi.org/10.28945/4766>
- Chand, G. B. (2021). Challenges faced by bachelor level students while speaking English. *IJELTAL (Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)*, 6(1), 45–60. <https://doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v6i1.853>
- Corwin, S. (2022, October 31). *Europass Teacher Academy*. Introduction to Task-Based Learning (TBL). <https://www.teacheracademy.eu/blog/task-based-learning/>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Daar, G. F. (2019). *Problems of english language Learning in context (Based on some studies in Manggarai)*.

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://osf.io/vudxy/download&ved=2ahUKEwic9fuQ_aWIAxXMTTABHeo6BMwQFnoECBIQAQ&usg=AOvVaw2yWbKOJOaDQ5kIEPVq8AgD

- Das, R. K. (2023). *Elements of Spoken Language Useful for Developing Speaking Skills* (Vol. 8, Issue 8). www.ijnrd.org
- Dorathy, A., & Mahalakshmi, S. N. (2016). Task-based language teaching: A powerful approach for maximizing learning and teaching in L2 acquisition. *Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*, 6(7), 1822–1832.
<https://doi.org/10.5958/2249-7315.2016.00546.3>
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2020). In defence of a modular curriculum for tasks. *ELT Journal*, 74(2), 185–194. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccaa015>
- Espinosa, L. F., & Soto, S. T. (2015). *Curriculum development and its impact on EFL education in Ecuador* (1st ed.). Ediciones utmach.
- Farhat, S., & Hussein, A. (2021). Pronunciation problems encountered by EFL learners: An empirical study. *Arab World English Journal*, 12(4), 194–212.
<https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol12no4.14>
- Fatehi Rad, N., Rahnama, M., & Bagheri, H. (2016). Developing EFL learners' speaking ability, accuracy, and fluency. *ELT Voices - International Journal for Teachers of English*, 6(1), 1–7. <http://www.eltvoices.in>
- Fattah, S. A. EL. (2006). *The effectiveness of a task-based instruction program in developing the English language speaking skills of secondary stage students* [Ain Shams University]. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED523922.pdf>
- Gonzalez, P. F., Ochoa, C. A., Cabrera, P. A., Castillo, L. M., Quinonez, A. L., Solano, L. M., Espinosa, F. O., Ulehlova, E., & Arias, M. O. (2015). EFL teaching in the Amazon Region of Ecuador: A focus on activities and resources for teaching listening and speaking skills. *English Language Teaching*, 8(8), 94–103.
<https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n8p94>
- Güneş, Ç., & Sarıgöz, H. (2021). Speaking struggles of young EFL learners. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 13(2), 1267–1308.
- Harmer, J. (2015). *The practice of English language teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Harris, D. (1974). *Testing English as a Second Language*. McGraw Hill Book Company.
- Hossain, M. I. (2015). *Teaching productive skills to the students: A secondary level*



- scenario* [In partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English]. BRAC University.
- Hyginus, V., & Eze, U. (2023). Qualitative Research. *International Digital Organization for Scientific Research IDOSR JOURNAL OF COMPUTER AND APPLIED SCIENCES*, 8(1), 20–35. www.idosr.org
- Johnson, R. B., & Teddlie, C. (2021). *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in Social and Behavioral Sciences*. SAGE Publications. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365368935>
- Kashinathan, S., & Abdul, A. (2021). ESL Learners' Challenges in Speaking English in Malaysian Classroom. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v10-i2/10355>
- Khan, R., Radzuan, N., Shahbaz, M., Ibrahim, A., & Mustafa, G. (2018). The role of vocabulary knowledge in speaking development of Saudi EFL learners. *Arab World English Journal*, 9(1), 406–418. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no1.28>
- Kumar, T. (2020). Approaches in teaching writing skills with Creative Writing: A TESOL study for Indian learners. *TESOL International Journal*, 15(5), 78–98. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1329510.pdf>
- Lara, A. C., Guaranga, J. M., Iguasnia, M. J., & Inca, J. J. (2022). Communicative activities to enhance oral production in the EFL classroom. *Ciencia Digital*, 6(1), 6–26. <https://doi.org/10.33262/cienciadigital.v6i1.1952>
- Lopez, J. I., Becerra, A. P., & Ramirez-Avila, M. R. (2021). EFL Speaking Fluency through Authentic Oral Production. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.18196/ftl.v6i1.10175>
- Majeed, A., & Memon, N. (2022). Task-based language teaching: an efficacious and innovative approach to develop speaking skills and fluency of ESL students. *PJER*, 5(2), 150–165.
- Martínez-Mesa, J., González-Chica, D. A., Duquia, R. P., Bonamigo, R. R., & Bastos, J. L. (2016). Sampling: how to select participants in my research study? *Anais Brasileiros de Dermatologia*, 91(3), 326–330. <https://doi.org/10.1590/abd1806-4841.20165254>
- Masuram, J., & Sripada, P. N. (2020). Developing spoken fluency through task-based teaching. *Procedia Computer Science*, 172, 623–630. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2020.05.080>
- Natasia, G., & Angelianawati, L. (2022). Students' perception of using storytelling

- technique to improve speaking performance at SMPN 143 Jakarta Utara. *JET (Journal of English Teaching)*, 8(2), 282–292. <https://doi.org/10.33541/jet.v8i2.4063>
- Newman, S. J., Gibson, S. T., Cajas, D., & Acosta, H. (2023). *English language education in Ecuador: Assessing opportunities for teaching and learning in a developing nation* (1st ed.). USFQ PRESS. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7426-5840>
- Nget, S., Pansri, O., & Poohongthong, C. (2020). The effect of Task-Based Instruction in improving the English speaking skills of ninth-graders. *Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network Journal*, 13(2), 208–224. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1258630.pdf>
- Nita, A., Rozimela, Y., & Ratmanida. (2020). The use of Task-Based learning to enhance speaking skill of senior high school students. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 463, 161–165. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200819.030>
- Normawati, A., Nugrahaeni, D. A., Kusuma Hadi Manggolo, N. S., & Susanto, A. I. F. (2023). EFL learners' difficulties in speaking English. *English Language and Education Spectrum*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.53416/electrum.v1i1.116>
- Normawati, A., Nugrahaeni, D. A., Sahid, N., Manggolo, K. H., Ika, A., & Susanto, F. (2023). EFL learners' difficulties in speaking English. *ELECTRUM*, 1(1), 1–9. https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://unkartur.ac.id/journal/index.php/electrum/article/download/116/132&ved=2ahUKEwiNp47s_qWIAxXkSDABHZDFL7EQFnoECBQQAQ&usq=AOvVaw2pcr3QZae5LvHkmAy8fns3
- Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-Based Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667336>
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533–544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Pandey, S. R. (2023). Reading: An active language learning skill. *Pragyaratna*, 5(1), 99–107.
- Phuong, N. H. (2025). Enhancing Fluency in Speaking through Task-Based Teaching and Learning. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 3(8), 2307–2326.



<https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i8.5728>

- Prianty, T., Ngadiso, N., & Wijayanto, A. (2022). Task-Based Language Teaching: Perceptions and Implementation in Teaching Speaking. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 14(1), 99–108. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i1.1203>
- Quezada-Sarmiento, P. A., Zuniga, A., Toro, V., Camacho, G., Pinza, E., Benitez, C., Vargas, A., Paredes, M., & Morocho, E. (2017, July 11). Teachers' factors that influence the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools in the context of e-Education and society. *Iberian Conference on Information Systems and Technologies, CISTI*. <https://doi.org/10.23919/CISTI.2017.7975819>
- Rahmatillah, K. (2019). Communicative language teaching (CLT) through role play and task-based instruction. *Script Journal: Journal of Linguistics and English Teaching*, 4(2), 161–177. <https://doi.org/10.24903/sj.v4i2.339>
- Rajendran, T., & Yunus, M. M. (2021). Chatterpix Kids: A Potential Mobile App for Helping Primary ESL Pupils Improve Their Speaking Fluency. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 20(4), 18–42. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.4.2>
- Regis, A., & Agwuocha, U. A. (2024). Chapter Four: Listening Skills. In *The Use of English and Communication Skills for Tertiary Institution* (pp. 77–100). Celbez Printing and Publishing Company. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378178653_Listening_Skills
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (2nd editio). Cambridge University Press. https://www.academia.edu/9863136/Approaches_and_Methods_in_Language_Teaching_Approaches_and_Methods_in_Language_Teaching_Second_Edition
- Rodríguez, M., & Rodríguez, J. (2010). Task-based language learning: Old approach, new Style. A new lesson to learn. *PROFILE*, 12(2), 165–178. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262427435_Task-Based_Language_Learning_Old_Approach_New_Style_A_New_Lesson_to_Learn
- Rosado, L. X., & Vaca, M. (2023). Methods, techniques, and strategies to motivate students of English as a foreign language to improve the speaking skill. *Kronos – The Language Teaching Journal*, 4(1), 54–70. <https://doi.org/10.29166/kronos.v4i1.4259>

- Sae-ong, U. (2010). *The used of task-based learning and group work incorporating to develop English speaking ability*. [Shrinakhrinwirot University].
[http://thesis.swu.ac.th/swuthesis/Tea_Eng_For_Lan\(M.A.\)/Uraiwan_S.pdf](http://thesis.swu.ac.th/swuthesis/Tea_Eng_For_Lan(M.A.)/Uraiwan_S.pdf)
- Safitri, W. (2018). Task Based Instruction in teaching speaking skill in EFL classroom. *VELES Voices of English Language Education Society*, 2(2), 120–126.
<https://doi.org/10.29408/veles.v2i2.864>
- Said, S. D., Bin, A. J., & Yusof, S. M. (2018). Theme-Based instruction method in English reading comprehension: Using Makassar local culture-based curriculum contents. *2nd International Conference on Statistics, Mathematics, Teaching, and Research*, 1028, 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1028/1/012098>
- Sarwono, J. (2022). *Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Method Research Methodology*. Amazon.com, Inc. .
- Soria-Guerrero, B., Barriga-Fray, L., Barriga-Fray, J., & Yáñez-Valle, V. (2020). Task-based learning approach to enhance oral production in university settings. *Revista Científica Dominio de Las Ciencias*, 6(2), 554–586.
<https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.23857/dc.v6i2.1184>
- Sreekumar, D. (2023, August 28). *Paperpal*. What Is Research Methodology? Definition, Types, and Examples. <https://paperpal.com/blog/academic-writing-guides/what-is-research-methodology>
- Sreena, S., & Ilankumaran, M. (2018). Developing productive skills through receptive skills: A cognitive approach. *International Journal of Engineering & Technology*, 7(4.36), 669. <https://doi.org/10.14419/ijet.v7i4.36.24220>
- Suseno, E. (2023). Developing pronunciation skills through application to enhance speaking ability: Systematic literature review. *Innovare Journal of Social Sciences*, 11(5), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.22159/ijss.2023.v11i5.48662>
- Tilwani, S. A., Abdulameer, T., Alghazali, H., & Patra, I. (2022). The Effects of TED Talks as an Instructional Tool on Developing EFL Learners’ Speaking Accuracy and Fluency: Attitude in Focus. *Computer-Assisted Language Learning Electronic Journal (CALL-EJ)*, 23(2), 93–107.
- Van den Branden, K. (Ed.). (2006). *Task based language education. From theory to practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Willis, J. (1996). *A Framework for Task-Based Learning*. Longman.
- Yildiz, Y. (2020). Task-Based language teaching: An approach in the spotlight to propel



language learning forward. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.23918/ijsses.v7i1p72>

Zrekat, Y., & Al-Sohbani, Y. (2022). Arab EFL University learners' perceptions of the factors hindering them to speak English fluently. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 18(1), 775–790. <https://doi.org/10.52462/jlls.219>



Appendix 2. Pre-project

1. Brief analysis and description of the situation that justifies the presentation of this proposal

Acosta et al. (2019) and Hossain (2015) language learners consider the productive skill of speaking as the most important and difficult since they require spontaneous language production, that is, fluency. As a matter of fact, speaking is one of the language skills that language learners consider the most challenging, especially the fluency component (Rahmatillah, 2019). Consequently, researchers in the EFL field have started to investigate methods to enhance learners' oral fluency. Recently, scholars have suggested various alternatives such as incorporating innovative language teaching approaches like Task-based Instruction (TBI).

According to Richards and Renandya (2002), TBI involves using tasks to promote meaningful communication among learners. They argue that well-designed instructional tasks can lead to effective language learning. Similar studies conducted in various EFL contexts globally have explored the effectiveness of TBI on enhancing speaking skills and they have yielded positive results (Afifah & Devana, 2020; Masuram & Sripada, 2020; Nget et al., 2020). Nevertheless, there is still a need to conduct more research specifically focused on exploring the efficacy of TBI in the development of oral fluency. For this reason, the present study aims to build on relevant information to this line of research by applying TBI to enhance A2-level EFL learners' speaking fluency.

2. Statement of the problem to be investigated

It has been determined that this research seeks to provide an answer to the following question: How would the implementation of Task-Based Instruction improve the English-speaking fluency of A2-level students attending an English Academy?

3. Justification of the research

After conducting empirical research through direct observation and a needs analysis in a group of ten A2-level EFL students, it was found that oral fluency is one of the aspects that causes the most difficulty. As a matter of fact, language learners commonly consider speaking as one of the most important language skills because it allows them to express themselves easily in the target language. Yet, as mentioned above, this skill, and especially the fluency component is also considered the most challenging one. Consequently, after performing a needs analysis, the researcher was able to detect several weaknesses when it came to producing the language, especially, orally, which led to the conclusion that these learners need to improve their

productive skills.

The researcher witnessed that the students presented major problems when attempting to express themselves orally without pauses and hesitations; therefore, fluency was identified as the speaking aspect that needs to be addressed. According to Quezada et al. (2017) and Soria et al. (2020), one of the main causes of oral fluency difficulties is the use of inadequate language teaching methods and approaches. Therefore, the necessity to find innovative ways to improve this language component has been pinpointed. An effective alternative is to integrate current language teaching methods such as Task-Based Language Teaching also called Task-Based Instruction which consists of assigning learners meaningful tasks that boost their active participation, cooperation, and engagement as well as interaction and communication (Corwin, 2022). By employing this language teaching approach, it is sought to overcome the lack of speaking fluency faced by A2 EFL students from a private English Academy located in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador.

4. Description of the relationship between the proposal and the research lines of the university

The present study entitled 'Implementation of Task-Based Instruction to Improve English Speaking Fluency in A2-level students' seeks to clarify the pedagogical and didactic understanding of language teaching approaches and methods by exploring the effectiveness of TBI in enhancing EFL learners' speaking fluency. This research proposal is framed within the pedagogy, didactics, and management of education general research line established by Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador. Moreover, this research aims to provide significant insights for the EFL teaching and learning field and all those who make up the educational community including teachers, educational authorities, and curriculum designers by finding ways of enhancing EFL teaching practices by assessing a language teaching approach. Hence, the topic aligns with the specific research lines of research, evaluation, and application of educational models and pedagogical innovations established as well by Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador.

5. Object of the research

The object of the present study is the improvement of A2 learners' speaking fluency by applying the Task-based Instruction approach. By focusing on this object, the present research



seeks to provide valuable insights for all educational entities that are looking for innovative and effective ways to enhance EFL learners' speaking fluency.

6. General objective

To determine the effectiveness of Task-Based Instruction to enhance the speaking fluency of A2-level learners from an English Academy located in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador.

7. Specific objectives

- ✓ To diagnose the participants' main language difficulties before the intervention through classroom observation and analysis of existing documents, previous coursework, and performance records.
- ✓ To apply TBI to improve participants' speaking fluency using a checklist to track their progress.
- ✓ To assess the effectiveness of TBI in enhancing the participants' speaking fluency by applying a pretest and posttest.
- ✓ To discover the participants' attitudes and perceptions towards TBI to improve their speaking fluency.

8. Description of the variables of the study

Independent variable: Task-Based Language Instruction (TBI)

TBI came to light in the 70s and refers to the implementation of tasks in order to foster meaningful communications among EFL learners (Majeed & Memon, 2022; Richards & Renandya, 2002). According to Richards and Renandya (2002), TBI hinges on the idea that carefully crafted instructional tasks lead to effective language learning. In other words, this approach assures that engaging EFL learners in interactive or communicative tasks will enable them to advance their grammar as well as communicative competences. In this regard, it is also important to define the term 'communicative task' which Masuram and Sripada (2020) describe as the exchange of meanings. Task-based instruction offers opportunities for EFL learners to test their own abilities and motivates them to keep improving their speaking fluency (Soria et al., 2020). In addition, this language teaching approach enables EFL learners to be involved in meaning-focused tasks that allow them to interact in the target language resembling real-life situations which in turn helps them to improve their language skills (Masuram & Sripada, 2020).

Dependent variable: Speaking fluency

According to Kashinathan and Aziz (2021), speaking is a productive skill that enables people to engage in meaningful verbal communication in order to share information, interact, and connect with others. Additionally, this term is closely related to oral communication which involves speaking and listening skills. Knowing how to communicate orally is fundamental for many aspects of our lives. Speaking is also referred to as a macro skill which means that it is made up of several important micro-skills that contribute to an effective production of spoken language. The speaking components are mainly pronunciation, accuracy (grammar), vocabulary, fluency, coherence and cohesion, and nonverbal communication among others (Arini & Wahyudin, 2022; Brown, 2006).

Accordingly, in order to fulfill the present study's objectives, the present research focuses on the component of fluency. As reported by Fatehi et al. (2016), fluency can be defined as a speaker's ability to express his or her thoughts naturally and without hesitation. In other words, this author describes fluency as the production of speech in a spontaneous and comprehensible way. Similarly, Rajendran and Yunus (2021) define fluency as the students' ability to speak English using facilitation skills such as fillers, lexical phrases, and compensation skills e.g., self-correction, rephrasing, or repeating to manage fast-paced communication.

9. Description of the research approaches, methods, and data collection

The present study uses a mixed research method which implies that in order to achieve the research purpose quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to identify the level of improvement in the participants' speaking fluency and gain a deeper understanding of their perceptions and attitudes regarding TBI. For this research, an intervention is going to take place in a classroom setting, where a group of 10 teenage students at the A2 level will receive task-based instruction over 5 weeks. During this intervention, the speaking tasks will be video recorded in order to collect the evidence and fill out the instruments to examine their progress. The research instruments designed to gather the data consist of pre and post-tests and their corresponding rubrics applied before and after the intervention, a checklist to track learners' speaking fluency progress in each task, and a survey aiming at discovering the students' perceptions towards the implementation of TBI in speaking lessons.

10. Description of the beneficiaries and their main characteristics

The primary beneficiaries of this research are the 10 A2-level EFL learners who at the end of the intervention will have improved their speaking fluency as well as their overall

language proficiency and confidence in using spoken English. In addition, educators can also benefit from gaining insights into the effectiveness of the TBI method which can inspire them to design more engaging and effective lesson plans that efficiently cover their students' needs. Moreover, educational institutions in Ecuador and all around the world can benefit from implementing proven teaching strategies, leading to better language learning outcomes. Furthermore, curriculum developers can consider the present study findings to incorporate TBI elements that have been proven effective in the design of the materials and curricula. Finally, this study can also contribute to the academic field by providing new data and insights, which can inform further research and theory development.

11. Description of the research context

This research takes place at Lingua Franca Academy located in Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador. This private educational establishment welcomes around 180 students of all ages, from 3 years old onwards, of which approximately 100 are teenagers. Class sizes are a maximum of 10 students. In addition, the institution has 7 English teachers specialized in different age groups and language proficiency levels. This educational establishment operates in the morning, afternoon, and evening, that is, the groups attend English classes on different schedules. The group that will undergo the intervention is a sample population selected by convenience sampling. The participants are 10 teenage learners taking level A2, seven of them are female and three are male with ages ranging from 15 to 17 years old. Most learners are from the city of Pinas, El Oro, Ecuador (where the educational establishment is located) while a small number are from surrounding cantons.

12. Description of the practical contributions of the proposal

The outcomes of this research are expected to enhance language teaching practices by providing evidence of the benefits of Task-Based Instruction (TBI). This will encourage EFL teachers to adopt more effective strategies and language teaching methods to increase engagement and efficiency in their lessons. Additionally, the research demonstrates the positive impact of TBI on speaking fluency, promoting a change towards more student-centered learning environments where learners are required to engage in meaningful tasks. In the same way, enhanced speaking fluency can boost the learners' confidence and motivation, fostering a more positive attitude toward language learning. Finally, improving speaking skills can offer long-term academic and career benefits, as proficiency in English is often essential for further

Appendix 7. Operationalization Matrix

OPERATIONALIZATION MATRIX				
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	DIMENSIONS	INDICATORS	SCALES
Task-Based Instruction	<p>TBI refers to the implementation of tasks in order to foster meaningful communications among EFL learners (Majeed & Memon, 2022; Richards & Renandya, 2002). According to Richards and Renandya (2002), the TBI approach assures that engaging EFL learners in interactive or communicative tasks will enable them to advance their grammar as well as communicative competences.</p>	Pre-task	Learner preparation for the task.	Nominal: TBI stages and Type of tasks
			Topic introduction	
			Use of authentic materials	
			Prior knowledge Activation	
			Provide instructions and guidelines.	
			Alignment with task goals	
		Task cycle	Type of task	
			Engage learners in meaningful use of the target language	
			Encourage communication and problem-solving skills	
			Encourage collaboration and interaction	
		Language Focus and Feedback	Reflect on the language used during the task	
			Analyze and practice specific language forms	
			Use of feedback to improve speaking fluency	

		Learner Perceptions	Students' perspectives on task difficulty, relevance, and effectiveness	Rating scale: Strongly Agree – Agree – Disagree – Strongly Disagree
Speaking fluency	As reported by Fatehi et al. (2016) fluency can be defined as a speaker's ability to express his or her thoughts naturally and without hesitation. In other words, this author describes fluency as the production of speech in a spontaneous and comprehensible way.	Accuracy	Commits less or no grammatical errors during spoken tasks	Excellent Good Average Fair Poor / Always Often Sometimes Never
		Pronunciation and Clarity	Speaks clearly and intelligibly / makes little or no pronunciation mistakes.	
		Speed and Hesitation	Produces good speech at an appropriate pace with few or no pauses and hesitations.	
		Vocabulary	Demonstrates a wide range of vocabulary knowledge during the tasks	
		Coherence	Logical flow and use of linking words	



Appendix 8. Certificate of validation of instruments by experts

INSTRUMENTS CONTENT VALIDATION DOSSIER THROUGH EXPERTS' JUDGEMENTS



COVER LETTER

MSc: Johnny Segundo Campoverde López

Subject: Instrument Content Validation through Expert Judgment.

It is with great pleasure that I contact you to express my regards and to inform you that being a student of the **Master's program in Pedagogy of English as a Foreign Language** at UBE, cohort X, I am required to validate the instruments with which I will collect the data needed to develop my research to obtain the Master's degree.

This research proposal is under the title: **'Implementation of Task-Based Instruction to Improve English Speaking Fluency in A2-Level Students'** and as it is essential to obtain the approval of specialized professors to implement the tools as mentioned earlier, I considered it convenient to call upon you, given your renowned experience in educational issues and educational research.

The validation dossier, which is sent to you, contains:

- Cover letter.
- Operationalization matrix of the variables (dimensions, indicators, items, levels or ranges).
- Instrument(s) to be validated.

Expressing our feelings of respect and consideration, I bid you farewell, but not before thanking you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely yours,



Signature

Complete name: Anabel de Jesús Arias Cevallos

I.D.: 0706448701



Appendix 9. Didact plan for the intervention

Didactic plan

Duration: 5 weeks (15 hours)

Week: 1		Teacher's name: Lic. Anabel Arias C.	Level: A2
Lesson Type: Task-based Instruction (TBI)	Lessons: 1 - 2 - 3	Date: 30/04/2024 to 2/05/2024	Lesson length: 60 min. each lesson Total: 180 min.
Objective: By the end of the intervention using TBI approach, students will be able to speak more fluently in English.			
Materials: Voice recorder Rubric Whiteboard and markers Speaking cards Student's book Checklist Survey TV / Projector			
Activities	Intention	Description	Timing
LESSON 1: Explanation of the instruments to be applied during the research and intervention (pre-test, post-test, rubric, checklist, and the survey).	Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher explains the research objectives and the instruments to the participants. - Teacher explains the methodology that is going to be used during the subsequent lessons (Task-based Instruction) and that 	60 min.

Pre-test application		<p>they are going to focus on enhancing speaking fluency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Previous knowledge activation - Task explanation - Teacher divides the class into pairs and assigns A and B roles. - Student As and Student Bs read their speaking cards. (<i>Appendix 1: Pre-test</i>) - Students prepare themselves to carry out the activity. - Students then roleplay the conversation. - Teacher monitors but doesn't interrupt fluency. - Teacher records the activity to later assess their speaking fluency with a rubric. (<i>Appendix 3: Rubric for Pre-test and Post-test</i>). 	
LESSON 2:		Task #1	60 min.



<p>Warm- Up</p> <p>.</p> <p>Pre-task (Introduction to the topic and task - Activation of previous knowledge)</p>	<p>Intervention / TBI implementation</p>	<p>Topic: Making plans with a friend. (roleplay)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher activates previous knowledge - Teacher presents expressions and vocabulary related to the topic of the speaking lesson. - Teacher presents some sample conversations (video or audio) - Students perform vocabulary and listening activities. - Teacher explains the task. - Teacher divides the class into pairs and assign A and B roles. - Teacher hands out the speaking cards for students to start the task cycle. 	
<p>LESSON 3:</p> <p>Task cycle (Planning and then performing a roleplay)</p>	<p>Intervention / TBI implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students plan the tasks (e.g., prepare a dialogue and rehearse a conversation / roleplay) - Teacher monitors the tasks cycle. 	<p>60 min.</p>



Post-task (Language focus and feedback)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students carry present or report the tasks in front of their classmates and teacher. - Teacher assess students' speaking performance using a checklist (<i>Appendix 4: Checklist</i>) - Students provide peer feedback. - Teacher provides feedback focusing on the speaking aspects where the students presented the most problems (e.g., pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary, content, etc.) 	
--	--	--	--

Week: 2

Lesson Type: TBI	Lessons: 4 - 5 - 6	Date: 7/05/2024 to 9/05/2024	Lesson length: 60 min. each lesson Total: 180 min.
Activities	Intention	Procedure	
LESSON 4: Warm- Up	Intervention / TBI implementation	Task 2 Topic: Ordering a meal in a restaurant (roleplay) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher activates previous knowledge 	60 min.



<p>Pre-task (Introduction to the topic and task - Activation of previous knowledge,)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher presents expressions and vocabulary related to the topic of the speaking lesson. - Teacher presents some sample conversations (video or audio) - Students perform vocabulary and listening activities. - Teacher explains the task. - Teacher divides the class into pairs and assign A and B roles. - Teacher hands out the speaking cards for students to start the task cycle. 	
<p>LESSON 5: Task cycle (Planning and then performing a roleplay) Post-task (Language focus and feedback)</p>	<p>Intervention / TBI implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students plan the tasks (e.g., prepare a dialogue and rehearse a conversation / roleplay) - Teacher monitors the tasks cycle. - Students carry present or report the tasks in front of their classmates and teacher. 	<p>60 min.</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher assess students' speaking performance using a checklist (<i>Appendix 4: Checklist</i>) - Students provide peer feedback. <p>Teacher provides feedback focusing on the speaking aspects where the students presented the most problems (e.g., pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary, content, etc.)</p>	
<p>LESSON 6:</p> <p>Warm- Up</p> <p>Pre-task (Introduction to the topic and task - Activation of previous knowledge,)</p>	<p>Intervention / TBI implementation</p>	<p>Task 3</p> <p>Topic: Asking for and giving directions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher activates previous knowledge - Teacher presents expressions and vocabulary related to the topic of the speaking lesson. - Teacher presents some sample conversations (video or audio) - Students perform vocabulary and listening activities. - Teacher explains the task. 	<p>60 min.</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher divides the class into pairs and assign A and B roles. - Teacher hands out the speaking cards for students to start the task cycle. 	
Week: 3			
Lesson Type: TBI	Lessons: 7- 8- 9	Date: 7/05/2024 to 9/05/2024	Lesson length: 60 min. each lesson Total: 180 min.
Activities	Intention		
LESSON 7: Task cycle (Planning and then performing a roleplay) Post-task (Language focus and feedback)	Intervention / TBI implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students plan the tasks (e.g., prepare a dialogue and rehearse a conversation / roleplay) - Teacher monitors the tasks cycle. - Students carry present or report the tasks in front of their classmates and teacher. - Teacher assess students' speaking performance using a checklist (<i>Appendix 4: Checklist</i>) - Students provide peer feedback. - Teacher provides feedback focusing on 	60 min.

		<p>the speaking aspects where the students presented the most problems (e.g., pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary, content, etc.)</p>	
<p>LESSON 8:</p> <p>Warm- Up</p> <p>Pre-task (Introduction to the topic and task - Activation of previous knowledge,)</p>	<p>Intervention / TBI implementation</p>	<p>Task 4</p> <p>Topic: Calling someone and leaving a message / Having a conversation on the phone. (roleplay)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher activates previous knowledge - Teacher presents expressions and vocabulary related to the topic of the speaking lesson. - Teacher presents some sample conversations (video or audio) - Students perform vocabulary and listening activities. - Teacher explains the task. - Teacher divides the class into groups of three and assigns A, B, and C roles. 	<p>60 min.</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher hands out the speaking cards for students to start the task cycle. 	
<p>LESSON 9:</p> <p>Task cycle (Planning and then performing a roleplay)</p> <p>Post-task (Language focus and feedback)</p>	<p>Intervention / TBI implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students plan the tasks (e.g., prepare a dialogue and rehearse a conversation / roleplay) - Teacher monitors the tasks cycle. - Students carry present or report the tasks in front of their classmates and teacher. - Teacher assess students' speaking performance using a checklist (<i>Appendix 4: Checklist</i>) - Students provide peer feedback. - Teacher provides feedback focusing on the speaking aspects where the students presented the most problems (e.g., pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary, content, etc.) 	<p>60 min.</p>

Week: 4

Lesson Type: TBI	Lessons: 10 – 11 -12	Date: 7/05/2024 to 9/05/2024	Lesson length: 60 min. each lesson Total: 180 min.
Activities	Intention		Timing
LESSON 10: Warm- Up Pre-task (Introduction to the topic and task - Activation of previous knowledge,)	Intervention / TBI implementation	Task 5 Topic: Asking a friend how he/she is feeling, showing sympathy. (roleplay) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher activates previous knowledge - Teacher presents expressions and vocabulary related to the topic of the speaking lesson. - Teacher present some sample conversations (video or audio) - Students perform vocabulary and listening activities. - Teacher explains the task. - Teacher divides the class into pairs and assign A and B roles. - Teacher hands out the speaking cards for students to start the task cycle. 	60 min.



<p>LESSON 11:</p> <p>Task cycle (Planning and then performing a roleplay)</p> <p>Post-task (Language focus and feedback)</p>	<p>Intervention / TBI implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students plan the tasks (e.g., prepare a dialogue and rehearse a conversation / roleplay) - Teacher monitors the tasks cycle. - Students carry present or report the tasks in front of their classmates and teacher. - Teacher assess students' speaking performance using a checklist (<i>Appendix 4: Checklist</i>) - Students provide peer feedback. - Teacher provides feedback focusing on the speaking aspects where the students presented the most problems (e.g., pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary, content, etc.) 	<p>60 min.</p>
<p>LESSON 12:</p> <p>Warm- Up</p>	<p>Intervention / TBI implementation</p>	<p>Task 6</p> <p>Topic: Shopping for clothes (roleplay)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher activates previous knowledge 	<p>60 min.</p>

<p>Pre-task (Introduction to the topic and task - Activation of previous knowledge,)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher presents expressions and vocabulary related to the topic of the speaking lesson. - Teacher present some sample conversations (video or audio) - Students perform vocabulary and listening activities. - Teacher explains the task. - Teacher divides the class into pairs and assign A and B roles. - Teacher hands out the speaking cards for students to start the task cycle. 	
--	--	---	--

Week: 5

<p>Lesson Type: TBI</p>	<p>Lessons: 13 – 14 -15</p>	<p>Date: 7/05/2024 to 9/05/2024</p>	<p>Lesson length: 60 min. each lesson Total: 180 min.</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<p>Intention</p>		
<p>LESSON 13: Task cycle (Planning and then performing a roleplay)</p>	<p>Intervention / TBI implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students plan the tasks (e.g., prepare a dialogue and rehearse a conversation / roleplay) - Teacher monitors the tasks cycle. 	<p>60 min.</p>



<p>Post-task (Language focus and feedback)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students carry present or report the tasks in front of their classmates and teacher. - Teacher assess students' speaking performance using a checklist (<i>Appendix 4: Checklist</i>) - Students provide peer feedback. - Teacher provides feedback focusing on the speaking aspects where the students presented the most problems (e.g., pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary, content, etc.) 	
<p>LESSON 14: Post-test application</p>	<p>Data collection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Task explanation - Teacher divides the class into pairs and assign A and B roles. - Student Bs read the speaking card and Student As read their speaking card. <i>(Appendix 1: Post-test)</i> 	<p>60 min.</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students prepare themselves to carry out the activity. - Students then roleplay the conversation. - Teacher monitors but doesn't interrupt fluency. - Teacher records the activity to later assess their speaking fluency with a rubric. (<i>Appendix 3: Rubric for Pre-test and Post-test</i>). 	
<p>LESSON 15:</p> <p>Survey</p>	Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher and students reflect on the previous speaking lessons using Task-based Instruction focused on enhancing learners' fluency. - Teacher explains that learners are going to fill out a survey to know their honest perceptions towards using TBI in speaking lessons. - Teacher explains the five parameters and clarifies each question. - Students fill out the form. 	60 min.



		- Teacher thanks the students for their cooperation.	
--	--	--	--



Appendix 10. Pre-test

Student A:

Read your card. Think about what you want to say. Then start the conversation with Student B.

You want to ask about beginner guitar lessons.

Talk to the receptionist at the music school.

- Say what you would like to do.
- Ask when the first lesson is.
- Ask where the lesson is.
- Sign up for lessons.

Student B

Read your card. Think about what you want to say. Listen to Student A and reply.

You're a receptionist at a music school. Here is some information about beginner guitar lessons:

- Time: 6:30 p.m. next Thursday
- Place: Room 2
- To sign a student up, you need the student's full name.



Appendix 11. Post-test

Student A:

Read your card. Listen to Student B and reply.

You're a receptionist in a language school. Here's some information about an English course:

- Time: 6:20 p.m. next Tuesday
- Place: Room 12
- To sign a student up, you need the student's name.

Student B

Read your card. Think about what you want to say. Then start the conversation with Student A.

You want to ask about English classes. Talk to the receptionist at the language school.

- Say what you would like to do.
- Ask when the first class is.
- Ask where the class is.
- Sign up for the class.



Appendix 12. Rubric for Pre and Post-tests

Student #	LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT					SCORE
CRITERIA	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	FAIR	POOR	
FLUENCY	10-9 points Produces very good speech at an appropriate pace. No hesitations.	8-7 points Produces a good speech at an appropriate pace. Limited hesitations.	6-5 points Produces average speech with pauses and hesitations.	4-3 points Reveals difficulties in producing a speech: repetitive pauses, hesitations and	2-1 points Produces average speech with pauses and hesitations.	
VOCABULARY	10-9 points Reveals an excellent vocabulary knowledge.	8-7 points Reveals a good vocabulary knowledge.	6-5 points Reveals an average vocabulary knowledge.	4-3 points Reveals a lack of vocabulary knowledge.	2-1 points Reveals a strong lack of vocabulary knowledge.	
LANGUAGE USAGE (grammar and syntax)	10-9 points Uses very good sentence structure/syntax.	8-7 points Uses good sentence structure/syntax.	6-5 points Uses average sentence structure/syntax.	4-3 points Uses incorrect sentence structure/syntax.	2-1 points Poor sentence structure/syntax.	
PRONUNCIATION	10-9 points Speaks clearly and makes no pronunciation mistakes.	8-7 points Speaks clearly almost all of the time and makes occasional pronunciation mistakes.	6-5 points The clarity of speech is sufficient and several words are pronounced incorrectly.	4-3 points Not very clear. Often whispers and pronounces words incorrectly.	2-1 points Unclear speech. Whispers and bad pronunciation.	
Comments:			Qualitative Assessment:		Total score	/40
					Percentage	%

Appendix 13. Observation Checklist

Topic:	Task #		Level:			
Student #						
Categories	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never	Comments/ Observations	
Pronunciation and Clarity						
1. The student is able to produce easy-to-understand speech (during the task presentation).						
2. The student is able to speak clearly about the topic of the task.						
Fluency						
3. The student is able to speak spontaneously (during the task presentation).						
4. The student does not make a lot of pauses while speaking (during the task presentation).						
5. The student does not sound hesitant while speaking (during the task presentation).						
6. The student does not stutter while speaking (during the task presentation).						
7. The student produces comprehensible speech at an appropriate pace (during the task presentation).						
8. The student's ability to engage in conversations is limited but effective for everyday situations.						
Grammar and Vocabulary						
9. The student is able to use correct grammar structures (during the task presentation).						
10. The student is able to use the vocabulary he/she has learned recently (during the task presentation).						



Appendix 14. Survey

Read each question carefully and put a (✓) according to your perception.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Student's general attitudes towards TBI implementation.				
1. I felt comfortable performing roleplay tasks during speaking lessons.				
2. I enjoyed speaking lessons when the teacher assigned roleplay activities.				
3. I would like to continue performing tasks when working on speaking.				
Students' attitudes towards the effect of TBI on their speaking skills				
4. Roleplaying has allowed me to improve my speaking skills.				
5. My vocabulary stock has increased after roleplaying.				
6. I have improved my grammar knowledge trough the performance of roleplays.				
7. My teacher's comments after roleplaying helped me to improve my pronunciation.				
Students' attitudes towards the effect of TBI on their speaking fluency.				
8. I can speak English more fluently thanks to the use of role-play activities in speaking lessons.				
9. I hesitate less after practicing speaking using tasks				



10. I make fewer pauses while speaking after performing speaking tasks.				
11. I am able to confidently speak in front of my classmates when performing the roleplays.				
12. Learning to speak through roleplay activities has improved my speaking fluency.				

Note. Adapted from “The effects of task-based language teaching on efl learners’ speaking performance”, by Ngoc, N. T. 2023, *Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 5(3), p. 124–126



Appendix 15. Intervention and Data Collection Evidence

Link with all the evidences (audio recording of students speaking performance and all the data collected from the different instruments):

[Data collected and Evidences Thesis UBE Anabel Arias Cevallos](#)

