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TITLE

Implementing Task-Based Approach to improve speaking skills in first year of B.G.U

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Dedication

Achieving such important research has drowned us in deeper knowledge that would not have been possible without the professional people who supported us thoroughly in each of the parts that compose this work. So, we would like to dedicate this work to every professor who kindly assisted with their high knowledge and to our dear thesis tutor, Mgs. Carmen Letamendi, who never doubted our capability to conquer big things and who was always there whenever the work needed assistance to clarify inconsistencies throughout the entire work. And finally, to our beloved children who stayed up along the entire time that the program demanded and who, instead of asking for their rightful time, were always compassionate of our sacrifice to reach this goal.

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Implementing Task-Based Approach to improve speaking skills in first year of B.G.U

ABSTRACT

As students mostly lack the foundation in communication skills due to motivation; this study looks for the effectiveness of the task-based approach (TBA) in laying a solid foundation and motivating 1st year BGU students to improve their communication skills at a high school. It aims to evaluate if TBA can improve the speaking skills of pre-intermediate English students through the application of tasks which demand collaborative, and interactive actions. A pre-test and post-test measurement design assesses oral language skills before and after the TBA intervention, focusing on fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation. Qualitative data is collected from classroom observations, student interviews, and focused groups to assess student engagement. and the effectiveness of the TBA approach. The results show that the quantitative analysis depicts significant improvements in the three areas of oral language skills measured after the TBA intervention. Qualitative data corroborates these findings in showing increased engagement, collaboration, and students' confidence in speaking English. Students reported that they were more motivated to participate in speaking activities and showed a greater willingness to communicate in the target language. Overall, this study provides strong evidence that TBA is effective in building a solid foundation at motivating pre-intermediate students to take on communication skills. This study supports the effectiveness of task-based language teaching in improving the speaking skills of A1-level students. These findings suggest that activity-based language teaching can be an alternative to traditional grammar teaching to assist language learners' communication skills and provide a strong foundation for further language development.

Keywords: communication skills, pre-intermediate level, English language learners, motivation, integration, language acquisition, compromise.

Introduction

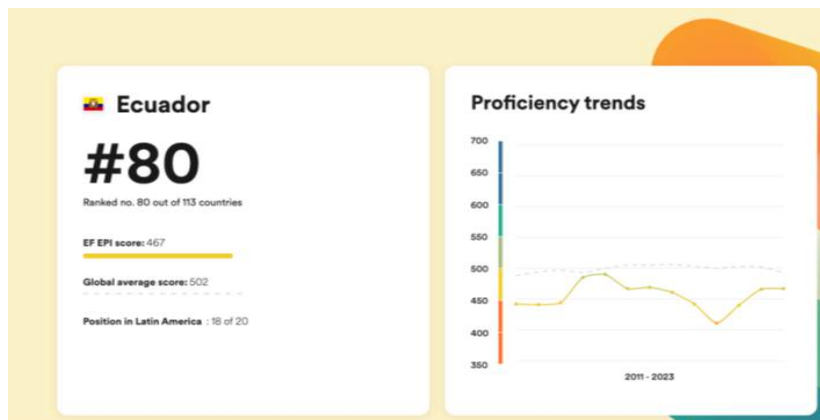
Background overview

English is the most spoken language worldwide, and it is the official language of many governments. the practical system used by hundreds of millions throughout the world to talk with one another in English. It stands as the most popular second language, with more than 430 million speakers and more than 350 million native users. English is thus a lingua franca, since it is the only common thread between many countries. (EF English Alive.)

The present research project studies two variables: speaking skills, which is the main problem that students face, and the use of a task-based approach as a means to improve students' speaking skills. Shohib (2012) suggests that mastering spoken language is crucial for students learning English, as it serves as a tool for communication that students need to enhance. In the same vein, Cole & Feng, 2015; Darmuki et al. (2017), 2017; Sarip, 2019.states state that the skills that a person must master to become fluent are listening, writing, reading, and speaking. the ability to engage in dialogs is broadly regarded as the most important characteristic of learning a second or foreign language, and success is measured by the capacity to efficiently communicate in the target language. On the other hand, as stated by Nunan.D.`s (2012) research, task-based language teaching is an approach to the design of language courses in which the point of departure is not an ordered list of linguistic items but a collection of tasks.

In the context of Ecuador's education, the English Language proficiency is lower compared with other countries. A study carried out by the agency Education First shows that Ecuador is ranked #80 among the 113 surveyed countries, and # 19 in Latin America, which means that a necessity to increase the number of English speakers in our country is fundamental to be part of this globalized world. (EF, 2023).

Figure 1. *Ranking of english index*



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According to the “Currículo de los niveles de Educación Obligatoria” (Compulsory Curriculum) (Ministerio de Educación 2016), Ecuador has changed its curriculum in order for students to be able to learn English as a second language. These changes are designed to give students solid teaching and learning for creating authentic and accurate skills. The main goal of the national curriculum and newer language teaching strategies is that students must reach B1 level when they leave high school; however, the reality is totally different from the assumption of the curriculum, and in addition to the lack of implementation of new teaching trends, strategies, methods, and tasks, it is visible that the final goal of the curriculum is not being accomplished at all.

Developing strong speaking skills is essential for acquiring a second language and effective communication. Traditional teaching methods are mainly based on grammar drills and vocabulary lists and do not provide enough activities to enhance opportunities to use the language in a real context. Furthermore, motivation is also needed to build fluency and confidence (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Taking into account the context previously stated, this study investigates the effectiveness of using a task-based approach (TBA) to improve speaking skills. This research project will be implemented in a secondary school in Loja City to provide students with a more effective way to improve their communication skills. TBA emphasizes the use of language in communication in real-life situations and suggests that students are at the center of the learning process as they complete collaborative tasks. (Skehan, 2015; Willis & Willis,

2007). Moreover, it is stated by Ellis (2009) and Skehan & Foster (1999) found that using TBA improves fluency and accuracy and elevates self-esteem and confidence. These features of the language are acquired through regular practice using the language in communicative situations, which allows students to develop their ability to express themselves accurately and effectively, and consequently, their speaking confidence also rises.

Problem justification

As stated previously, due to the lack of practical methods aimed at using the language in real-life situations, the lack of motivation of the students, and the persistent use of traditional methods, this study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of TBA to improve speaking skills as well as meet the special needs of pre-intermediate students in a high school in Loja City and provide a powerful tool for building a strong foundation in communication and developing the motivation of students.

This research will point to the analysis of how TBA use is fostering fluency, accuracy, and confidence. The purpose of this research is also to provide input into the field of EFL teaching and deliver practical techniques for supporting students in building up effective communication skills. (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Oxford & Shearin, 2014). stated that TBA increases students' motivation and participation, as well as the interaction between peers. Also, it is said that TBA activities create a more cooperative learning environment and encourage participation and risk-taking.

Integrating Task task-based Approach as a method to teach a second language, focused on real-life situations, and using a variety of techniques, such as role play, reading aloud, pronunciation patterns, pair job activities, record dialogues, memorizing words, and using them in speaking activities, will emphasize fostering speaking skills. Developing a language takes time and a lot of practice, so it is important to provide students with enough input. This leads to the "input hypothesis" theory by Krashen, which has put forward the role of comprehensible input as a compound for language acquisition. (Krashen, 1981). In addition, the sociocultural theory by Vygotsky focuses on the role of social interaction in language acquisition, which is very relevant when speaking skills are considered. (Vygotsky, 1978).

Problem Statement.

Why is it important to use methods that include interactive activities and relate to real life situations to improve speaking skills, such as task-based Based Approach?

This research is about dealing with the problem of poor speaking performance in a second language. There are usually motivational problems that students of First grade of BGU experience, which often make them feel like their progress in learning a language has stuck. Also, some conventional pedagogical methods may not always address their particular needs, particularly when it comes to the development of oral skills. In this regard, it is necessary to inquire into workable approaches, reflecting on ways and means that could ensure improvement of oral competence and re-establishing motivation among lower-level students.

Precision of the topic

In this research, the purpose is to implement a strategy for assessing Task-based approach (TBA) effectiveness in improving oral communication skills in diverse contexts. The study falls under the innovation methodologies line at Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador and its focus is limited to developing speaking skills through TBA.

Relationship between the proposal and the research lines

Language Learning and Pedagogy: The proposal for research aligns to the language acquisition and pedagogy research line, addressing the pedagogical difficulties faced by First BGU learners and exploring innovative teaching approaches directed at improving their speaking skills. In addition, the proposal is also related to motivation in language learning; moreover, the idea fits with the SLA motivation subfield.

Furthermore, the research aligns with curriculum design and educational innovation. The research project involuntarily enhances the field of curriculum design and new educational practices, which includes developing language curricula for pre-intermediate learners that are more effective. Research in the field of language education has many promising lines that help to understand how to put into practice useful approaches to improving the speaking skills of students.

The object of the research

To examine the effectiveness of Task Based Approach for improving speaking skills in first-year BGU learners at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School.

General Objective:

Implementing a task-based approach to help BGU students enhance their speaking skills based on assignments will motivate learners to use the target language in real-life contexts.

Specific Objectives:

- Identify the key elements that keep them from speaking a second language.
- Research how the classroom environment, particularly teacher-student interactions and peer dynamics, affects students' motivation and speaking skills.
- To evaluate teachers and students' perceptions of the effectiveness of a task-based approach in enhancing learners' speaking skills.

Conceptual and operational categories

Independent variable: The independent variable measures speaking skills, which are a combination of various components of spoken language, including fluency, accuracy, intonation, and communicative competence, along with the level of motivation, learning environment, and engagement of the students in speaking activities. According to Jeremy Hammer (2001, 2001, p. 269), speaking is the ability to speak fluently, which presupposes not only knowledge of language features but also the ability to process information and language at the moment of using it. David Nunan (2003, p. 44) mentions that speaking skills are productive aural and oral skills. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning, based on the above definition, it can be concluded that speaking skills can be defined as one's ability to express themselves in a certain situation and to communicate well with other people fluently.

Dependent variable: The dependent variable is the approach to be used, in this case, the task-based approach, which is mainly based on activities such as interactive activities,

authentic materials, vocabulary and pronunciation workshops, role play, reading aloud, and recording text related to real-life context.

Research approaches and methodologies to be used

For this project's research, a mixed-methods approach will be used in order to examine the effectiveness of task-based teaching (TBA) in improving communication skills. This approach integrates quantitative and qualitative data to deliver a comprehensive understanding of the problem being studied.

Quantitative data collection.

This information will be gathered from second language students of First BGU from Pio Jaramillo High School, whose objective is to conceptualize variables and assess the effectiveness of a task-based approach to improve their speaking performance. The primary data will be collected from first-year BGU students, and the secondary data from bibliographic sources, research databases, and case studies will be used to understand the effectiveness of using the task approach with pre-intermediate students.

Qualitative data collection

This information will be gathered from the observations made in class and observations made by other English teachers. A checklist, observations, and questionnaires for both teachers and students were the instruments utilized to conduct this kind of data collection.

Research instruments

The main instruments used to gather information during this research are the pre-test and post-test activities used during the intervention, which will help to measure the progress of the improvement when applying the task-based approach. These instruments evaluate the grammatical accuracy, fluency, phonology, pronunciation, cohesion, and relevance of the topic. Excel software was used to do the descriptive and inferential statistics.

To measure the performance of the students, a rubric was used in all the instruments of data collection, such as the pre-test, activities used during the implementation, and post-test, in order to evaluate their speaking performance. Additionally, a survey of their teachers

and students was conducted to obtain information about their perceptions of using a task-based approach to enhance speaking skills.

Description of the participants (students)

It is important to note that making a detailed analysis of the students helps one adapt lesson plans and implement activities that best help in overcoming some issues that many learners face when learning a second language. This research is conducted on a group of 31 students in the 1st grade of BGU. All students in this group range from 15 to 16 years old. In addition to that, all the students come from different cultural backgrounds, and some of them come from rural and urban areas. Additionally, some students have come from schools where the level of the English language is not as high as it is in the school they enroll in, and therefore most of them end up not being able to learn the second language.

The learners of First BGU have a basic knowledge of the language, but still find it hard to get fluency. They grasp and use easy English in daily conversations but struggle to understand other complex aspects of the language, including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and cohesion. Another important point is that the class hours are still another factor that deters students from learning. The English class, under study in this institution, has only three periods per week, and each period runs for forty-five minutes. As a result, students do not get enough exposure to the foreign language, which, in time, is one of the main factors in language learning.

Description of the research context (institution)

The present research is being conducted at Unidad Educativa “Pio Jaramillo Alvarado,” which is located in the province of Loja, in the Loja canton, it belongs to the San Sebastián parish. It is an educational center that belongs to Zone 7. Geographically, it is an urban educational center; its modality is in-person in the morning and evening, and it is an intensive modality for adult students, with a regular type of education and an educational level of EGB and BGU. The educational institution obtains its resources to develop its activities (sustainability) in a fiscal manner, is in the Sierra School regime, and the establishment can be reached by land. There is an approximate total of 118 teachers and 2,623 students. The AMIE code is 11H00092 the school principal is Dr. William Espinoza.

Description of the practical contributions of the proposal

Implementing a task approach to help students overcome issues about speaking skills has boosted an intense debate and raised a high level of interest for many researchers. Some investigators have focused on evaluating how practical activities used in class can help students gain confidence, motivation, and an improvement in speaking.

Importance of the proposal

In the professional ambit, the use of TBA helps students use the language in many real-life contexts and enables the application of activities with a very dynamic way of teaching languages, whereby students learn to use language skills within real-life contexts. By aligning learning objectives with practical situations, the gap between theory and practice diminishes. This methodology helps the learner acquire language proficiency by engaging themselves in tasks similar to those in real life, such as preparing for a job interview, a presentation, or project work. Moreover, TBAs develop skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication and thereby equip learners with competencies that enable them to excel in both professional and academic practice.

Methodologically, the use of TBA activities provides a systematic way to work on oral proficiency. TBAs delve learners right into the midst of real-life communicative situations, thereby ensuring focused practice in all primary components of spoken language: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. Besides, grammar is merely the skeleton of language structure and is therefore intrinsically strengthened by the process of TBAs. While learners work through tasks, they are also exposed to language in context, which better enables them to pick up grammatical patterns. The task itself will, inevitably, enrich their vocabulary since students will be faced with new lexical items. Further, the focus on meaning-making in TBAs allows learners to experience the process of pronunciation and develop an accent and intelligibility. In the final analysis, fluency is developed through repeated exposures to language use via TBAs that enable learners to express their thoughts confidently and coherently. Essentially, the TBAs offer an integrated approach toward the development of oral language by providing a playing field in which learners can exercise and refine these skills in meaningful and engaging ways.

Social interaction: task-based activities provide for a collaborative learning environment. By putting students into pair work or group work, TBAs foster important

interpersonal skills like communication, negotiation, and leadership. The development of professional competence generated through collaborative problem-solving and critical thinking is embedded in such activities, whereby students acquire the art of interacting effectively with peers, exchanging ideas, and achieving common goals. This social dimension of TBAs thus enhances linguistic competence and prepares students for further academic and professional success, where teamwork and collaboration are paramount. Many of the tasks involve pair or group work that will aid in enhancing collaborative, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills and social interaction relevant to language learning and academic success in particular.

Confidence Boost: The successful completion of a task can increase students' confidence in speaking and develop a sense of success. This will foster further study and participation in class.

Social needs: this proposal might help many educators and institutions to synchronize their practices towards international language standards suggested by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, thereby creating awareness and building competencies to handle global language needs.

Description of the contents of each chapter

The first chapter contains a literature review with information that will support the analysis of the results. The main topics considered for this literature review relate to speaking skills, fluency, accuracy, motivation, managing learning, input theory, and task approaches. In addition, it was necessary to review three case studies related to the two variables that investigated conceptual definitions, dimensions, indicators, and the theoretical framework guiding these variables.

In the second chapter, an organized description of the methodology used is presented, which pretends to address the objectives of the research. This chapter also includes an explanation of the research methodologies and the objectives stated in this proposal, as well as the conceptualization and operationalization of the primary variable categories. In the third chapter, the validation of the proposal is thoroughly analyzed. Also in this chapter, the discussion and analysis of the data obtained from the implementation of the TBA to improve speaking skills are presented.

SPSS, Excel, and Google Forms were used to process all of the data. Figures, tables, and graphics were used to better display the percentages acquired for each survey, the pretest, and the posttest, making the results stand out and much easier for readers to understand.

Finally, the conclusion and recommendations are drawn at the end of the research project, in which the researchers state the final overview of the entire research. These recommendations will assist further research proposals to be carried out more meticulously.

Chapter I

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical framework

The application of task-based teaching methods has caught the attention of language teachers and researchers. In recent years, various studies have investigated the potential benefits of task-based approaches to improving language learning, with an emphasis on speaking skills.

This literature review aims to explore the main bibliographical theories that will be relevant to the two variables of this research. Some case studies related to the topic will be considered for this study in order to examine some important findings about the use of TBA to improve oral communication, as well as a case study related to motivation, input, learning environment, and speaking competence that will help to corroborate the effectiveness of TBA to improve speaking skills.

Dependent variable: speaking skills

Jeremy Hammer (2001, p. 269)) stated that speaking skill is the ability to speak fluently and presupposes not only knowledge of language features but also the ability to process information and language at the moment of using it.

Independent variable: Task Based Approach

Task based approach is a teaching method that focuses on using tasks related to real life, instead of just learning the language in isolated components. In a task-based approach, learners engage in meaningful tasks that require the use of language in context. According to Nunan's (2012) research, task-based language teaching is an approach to the design of language courses in which the point of departure is not an ordered list of linguistic items, but a collection of tasks.

1.1 Dependent variable: speaking skills.

Research background.

The research background is the previous research done by other authors and will contribute to the problem being investigated and serve as a guide for other researchers to follow the same line of investigation, and somehow, they will help to corroborate the problem proposed.

Verbal communication is the most important skill in language learning, because speech is the transmission of thought and knowledge. The authors Bailey and Savage (1994) suggested that "speaking a second or foreign language is often thought of as the most difficult of the four skills." In years past, foreign language students have faced challenges with communication, yet at present, students use many virtual tools to foster this skill. Speaking skills are crucial in EFL/ESL development. Nunan, (1999), and Burkart and Sheppard, (2000) assert that the success of language learning is measured by the ability to conduct a conversation in the target language. Therefore, speaking is probably the priority of the majority of English learners. Language teaching, therefore, is important in enabling students to acquire EFL language skills and, hence, be able to converse spontaneously and naturally with native speakers. Moreover, when the proper speaking activities are taught in the classroom, speaking can increase students' general motivation and make English classes a funny and dynamic place to be. Last but not least, speaking supports other language skills.

The following study reviews changes and their implications for classroom teaching and material design by Jack C. Richards (2008), entitled: Teaching Listening and Speaking from Theory to Practice. The researcher mentioned that talking with traditional methodologies usually meant repeating after the teacher, memorizing a dialogue, or answering exercises, methodologies from the 1970s. Speaking is generally symbolized as expressing feelings to others. By speaking, humans can connect their minds in all aspects of life and interact with others, but to keep a conversation going, it is mandatory that learners have enough input.

A study conducted by Alahmadia, N. (2019) about the role of input in second language acquisition. This paper explores the role of input through an overview of four theories of SLA, and the main objective is to explore how each theory impacts (theoretically and/or practically) SLA. The author of the study concluded that input is considered to be one

of the most significant components of the process of SLA, and the author complements this point with Gass (1997) says that input is considered the main source of data for learning, and second language (L2) learning cannot happen without input alone, for learners' input is the only possible source available to build their language competence.

In addition, the theory of input, whose main representative is Steven Krashen , states that input is a relevant issue when acquiring a second language. Input constitutes every word, subject, sentence, vocabulary, phrase, grammar structure, etc., and it works as a milestone when acquiring a second language. Krashen (1985, 1989) argued that 'comprehensible input' is crucial and sufficient for effective SLA. Additionally , to develop good speaking skills , it is important to know the principal features of the skills that students must learn. These features or components of the speaking skills are fluency, accuracy, pronunciation vocabulary, intonation, and communicative competence.

1.1.1 Fluency and Accuracy:

Fluency and accuracy are closely related to each other, but that does not mean they are the same, there are some slight differences. Some experts agree that fluency is all about being able to have a natural conversation with a good speech rate without too many pauses or using too many filler words or phrases (Bøhn, 2015; Housen & Kuiken, 2009).

According to Richards (2009), the focus should be more on ongoing communication than just being competent in a language. So, in a few words, fluency means being able to use a language naturally and effectively without relying on fillers and unnecessary pauses. Along with this concept, Segalowitz (2010) breaks down fluency into three different aspects. Cognitive fluency is about the mental processes behind someone's ability to communicate. Also, utterance fluency refers to the observable characteristics of fluency, which include things like speed, breakdowns, and repairs. Lastly, perceived fluency is all about how the listener reacts to both the linguistic and nonlinguistic features of the speaker's speech.

On the other hand, accuracy, according to the Oxford dictionary, is defined as the quality or state of being correct or precise. Accuracy, quoting from the website of the British Council, teachingenglish.org.uk, It refers to a measure of how correct learners' use of the language system is, including their use of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, in other words, accuracy is related to producing correct sentences that use word patterns, grammatical structures correctly. When it comes to communicating effectively, accuracy is just as crucial

as fluency. That is why it is so important to make sure to speak with accuracy when we communicate, so that everyone understands each other and our messages come across loud and clear.

1.1.2 Phonology, intonation, and pronunciation.

Phonology.

Phonology is the scientific study of human speech sounds as they are organized systematically in connected utterances; this field of linguistics investigates the segmental and supra-segmental. Segmental phonology focuses on speech sounds, namely phonemes (vowels and consonants), whereas supra segmental phonology focuses on stress patterns, syllables, rhythm, and intonation. Many studies have been conducted on segmental phonology and other parts of the English language, but the study of intonation has gotten far less attention from linguistic and language teachers, particularly in relation to English. This imbalance could be attributed to a lack of an established theoretical basis, an inability to easily transcribe when statistical analysis is required, and a lack of consistency in the appropriate use of English stress and intonation in education (Roach 1983).

Intonation.

A distinguishing characteristic of pronunciation in every language is intonation. A word's meaning can alter based on its intonation, which is defined as the way the voice pitch fluctuates throughout a word and within a sentence. For instance, the word "record" might refer to taking video of something happening or to breaking a record set by someone else for a certain action. In a similar vein, intonation is the essential means by which a sentence in English might be interpreted as making a statement as opposed to asking a question. For example, "Where are you is safe...!" that is an assertion. Where are you? Is it safe? These two questions. Nevertheless, these lines are clearly recognized in spoken English thanks to intonation. The speaker adopts a distinct tone when a word in a sentence needs to be taken into consideration, in addition to knowing the precise meaning.

Pronunciation.

Kristina, Diah et al. (2006:1) defined pronunciation as the process or pronunciation of words, primarily one that is generally accepted or understood, Pronunciation in the senses

produces and receives speech sounds, including the understanding of meaning. So pronunciation is students' way of producing clearer language when they speak, in other words, it is the ability to communicate effectively using good pronunciation and intonation, even if they have limited vocabulary and grammar. Pronunciation is students' way of producing clearer language when they speak. It means that the student can communicate effectively when he has good pronunciation and intonation, even if she has limited vocabulary and grammar. Pronunciation is students' way of producing clearly pronounced words when they speak (Kline, 2001: 69).

1.1.3 Motivation

Motivation is one of the most important keys used by people to do activities; everything done is impulse-driven by motivation. It is undoubtedly true that motivation plays a crucial role when learning any language. What is more, student motivation is arguably the most important factor influencing academic achievement. Motivation includes the natural, passionate, social, and cognitive powers that play a role in behavior. In ordinary usage, the term "motivation" is commonly used to describe why an individual does something. It is the impulse that drives human activities. Harmer (2011), in his book *How to Teach English*, states that there are many factors that can awaken the desire to learn. The desire to achieve a goal is the basis of motivation, and if it is strong enough, it provokes the decision to do things or act according to the energy that is induced to do so. Motivations that come from the outside and that can be influenced by a series of external factors, such as the attitudes of society, family, colleagues, friends, or other external factors, any motivation that comes from the environment in which an individual develops is called extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is the motivation that generates what happens in the classroom; it can be the teacher's methods, the activities in which students participate, or their perception of their success or failure. We speak of a set of internal personal forms included in the promulgation, heading, and maintenance of conduct. Being motivated is an attitude, but motivation is not everything. School performance can be a work of inspiration but also of intellectual skills. Motivation is not the competent cause of learning. It does not provide any learning, but motivation is not everything, academic performance can be motivational work, but also mental skills. Motivation is not the competent cause of learning. It does not provide learning, but it can be a vital condition for achieving it.

A study was conducted by Ahmadi, L.-M. L. S. (2017). Analysis of factors that influence learners' English proficiency. This study aims to confirm the need to focus on the factors that influence language learners' English proficiency. Finally, the authors concluded that there are several language problems that teachers may face when helping students express their opinions during lessons. These include inhibition, lack of expertise, and low participation and use of the native language (Tuan and Mai 2015). This article showed that students who are motivated and have less anxiety can speak easily and effectively. Therefore, students need a friendly and supportive environment in which they can overcome their speaking problems. The author suggested that teachers should take into account students' interests and identify students' emotions to increase their confidence, and at the same time, teachers should be able to look for the best teaching methods to make students interested in participating in speaking activities.

1.1.4 learning environments

The learning environment plays an important role in providing resources and support for students to achieve their learning goals, especially when learners are acquiring a second language. · When the learning environment is adequate, it encourages students to learn independently and build up their own learning. Harmer (1998) stated that “the most important thing in a learning environment is to engage the students in a task by giving them plenty of information and clear instructions about the task they are going to perform. In addition, a good learning environment helps students develop their own strategies for learning and often has the following components: the classroom’s physical environment, the social system, the atmosphere, norms and values adapted for teachers and students, students learning characteristics and discipline, and their sociocultural background. Another important aspect of learning environment is to focus on the disciplinary climate because it has a strong impact on student learning in various subjects (Klieme and Rakoczy, 2003; Rakoczy et al., 2007).

Another primordial aspect of the learning environment is the learners’ characteristics. Harmer, J. (2011) gives some fundamental characteristics of students’ characteristics that will help them get better results in their academic achievement. One characteristic described is age. It is mentioned that there are different types of students, and he classified them by ages described as children, young learners, adolescents, young adults, or adults. However, Harmer also states that there are different degrees in which children develop. Besides,

Krashen et al. (1979) argue that the older learners are faster, but the young are better. Johnson and Newport (1989), in their case studies conducted with youth Chinese and Korean students, who had been first exposed to a second language either before or after puberty, found that there was a strong relationship between the early start to language learning and performance in the second language.

Learning styles are crucial for students as they respond to various stimuli, such as pictures, sounds, music, and movement. These learning styles are defined as an individual's preferred natural way to absorb, process, and retain new information and skills. Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences categorize students into four groups: visual learners, auditory learners, kinaesthetic learners, and physical actions. Student anxiety, which can be a lifelong personality trait, is another characteristic experienced by many students when learning a second language. However, not all anxiety is bad, as some tension can have positive effects and facilitate learning. Lightbown and Spada (2011) emphasize the importance of social and educational settings in which learners engage and develop their learning. Good learners possess characteristics that help them acquire the language faster than other learners.

The school environment plays a pivotal role in shaping students' experiences and outcomes. Creating an inclusive and supportive atmosphere is crucial. The school environment is an important factor in student success. Therefore, the Pio Jaramillo School community tries to create a positive school environment that can create a sense of community and belonging among students, which can improve academic performance and reduce negative behaviors. So, this institution has created a campaign for a positive environment by promoting a culture of respect, inclusivity, and collaboration among students and staff. According to Cohen et al., 2009, p. 26, "positive school climate and culture are essential components of effective schools, and can have a significant impact on student engagement, achievement, and well-being." In addition, this institution actively promotes inclusivity by fostering a welcoming and accepting atmosphere for all students, regardless of their backgrounds. Inclusive environments are conducive to academic success and personal growth.

1.1.5 Communicative competence

Communicative competence: The term was coined by Dell Hymens in 1966 as a response or reaction to Noam Chomsky's 1965 notion of "linguistic competence."

Communicative competence is the intuitive functional knowledge and control of the principles of language use. Tarvin, L. D. (2014). In this article, communicative competence is defined by Savignon as the ability to communicate in a culturally appropriate manner to make sense and execute effective and fluent social tasks through extended interactions. The authors also state that L2 speakers have to carry out those communicative tasks in extended social interactions in which they have the skills and understanding to decode and encode messages with an appropriate sociocultural intention. Hall et al. (2011.).

Furthermore, teachers of second languages and foreign languages are to teach much more than simple syntactic and lexical structures since students in L2 language classes need to be able to interact effectively with the L2 world around them in schools, in the community, and at work. Teachers, too, must now be interactive, and their associated pedagogies, provide goals that teachers can point to help their students achieve. The goals will have been achieved when an L2 speaker can understand, respond to, and initiate interactions with native speakers of the target language, so that the L2 speaker can understand the meaning, intention, and expectations of cultural interactions.

Building Communicative Competence

Oral expression is one of the most important skills in learning a foreign language, because speaking is a way of transmitting thoughts and knowledge. According to Bailey and Savage (1994), "speaking a second or foreign language is often considered the most challenging of the four skills." For decades, foreign language students struggled to communicate their ideas; however, today, students depend on a variety of virtual tools to develop this skill.

Rezida A. Fahrutdinova & Rifat R. Fahrutdinov. (2016) proposed an article about The Model of Forming Communicative Competence of Students in the Process of Teaching the English Language. The authors explain that the development of communicative competence in the context of the "Foreign Language" discipline involves the formation of language skills and abilities through the acquisition of four types of language activities: reading, speaking, writing, and listening. At the same time, for the acquisition of foreign language activity, it is necessary that apprentices be included in the intellectual activity of the foreign language. This activity is made up of the following components:

1. Constructive, projective, organizational, and communicative (Kuzmina, 1990).

2. The cognitive component includes the mastery of a knowledge system and the formation of language skills in the discipline "Foreign Language," which involves the synthesis and accumulation of new knowledge on the subject.

3. The structural component provides for the selection of information and the construction of textual material, as well as the ability to visualize this content in graphs, tables, etc.

4. The communicative component includes oral communication on specific topics, the establishment of appropriate forms of relationships and contacts, as well as the ability to extract the necessary information.

5. The organizational component involves the implementation of the act of linguistic conformity.

The authors concluded that communication skills training works show that there are a series of investigations that are dedicated to the construction of interpersonal communicative interaction: level of psychological social communication.

Consider the nature of the notion of communicative competence: learning of ethnological, social psychological norms, models, stereotypes of behavior, and the acquisition of communication techniques (Kabardova and Artsishevsky, 1989). Levitan (2001) believes it presupposes a standard training level of interaction with other participants in communication, which is necessary for the proper fulfillment of communicative functions in the context of their capacities and social status. Then the scientist defines three main characteristics of personality qualities that are necessary for adequate communication: practice that maintains the individual reserve of the verbal and non-verbal means of updating the communicative, expressive, and pragmatic functions of communication. The ability to change the means of communication in the communication process in relation to the movement of the relationship; and speech formation according to linguistic and linguistic norms (Levitan, 2001).

1.1.6 Teachers and students' perceptions about low performance in productive speaking skills.

| Speech has often been compared to writing, both considered "productive capacities", as opposed to the "receptive capacities" of reading and listening. Speaking is also closely

related to listening, as both are interconnected ways of achieving communication. Each speaker is simultaneously a listener, and each listener is at least potentially a speaker (Oprandy, 199: 153; EL Menoufy, 1997: 9).

The development of speaking skills is vital in EFL and ESL programs. Nunan (1999) and Burkart and Sheppard (200) argue that success in learning a language is measured by the ability to have a conversation in the language (target). Therefore, speaking is probably a priority for the majority of English learners (Florez, 1999). Language teaching is important because it helps students acquire EFL language skills and thus converse spontaneously and naturally with native speakers. In addition, when the correct speaking activities are taught in the classroom, speaking can increase students' overall motivation and make English classes a fun and dynamic place to be (Nunan, 1999 and Celce Murcia, 2001). In addition, speaking can support other language skills. Recent research has seen oral interaction as an important factor in shaping the learner's developing language (Gass & Varonis, 199). For example, it has been shown that language learning can support the development of reading skills (Hilferty, 2005), the development of writing (Trachsel and Severino, 200) and the development of listening comprehension (Regina, 1997).

1.2 Independent variable: Task based approach

Task-based learning provides an alternative for language teachers. In a task-based lesson, the teacher does not predetermine the language that will be studied; rather, the class revolves around the completion of a specific task, and the language studied is selected by what happens as the students accomplish it. The lesson progresses in stages: pre-tasks, main tasks, and post-tasks.

Constructivist approach; constructivism is the idea that states that learners construct knowledge rather than passively absorbing information. As humans experience the world and reflect on those experiences, they construct their own representations and incorporate new information into their pre-existing knowledge.

EFL Approaches: Teaching a language, English for Foreign Language (EFL), always relies on four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which should be used in a well-balanced manner. EFL learning refers to learning and using English as an additional language in a non-English speaking country.

1.2.1 Task-Based Language Teaching

According to Richards and Rogers, task-based learning strategies focus on communication through task completion. This approach has differentiated stages that have to be considered before being applied in classrooms. The importance of this method of teaching and learning the language does not focus on the correct and effective use of the language being taught, but on the result of the work and the steps taken to achieve the level of the job. The assignment can be anything, but it is positive for students to think about a situation in the real world.

According to Nunan's (2012) research, task-based approach is used to the design of language courses in which the point of departure is not an ordered list of linguistic items but a collection of tasks. A task-based approach is a teaching method that focuses on using tasks related to real life instead of learning the language by just learning isolated components. In Task-based approach, learners take on relevant and significant tasks that require the use of language in context. These tasks could be anything from planning a trip, solving a problem, or completing a project. In essence, to implement TBA in the classroom, it is important to consider three stages: pre-task activity, main task development, and the post-task or review.

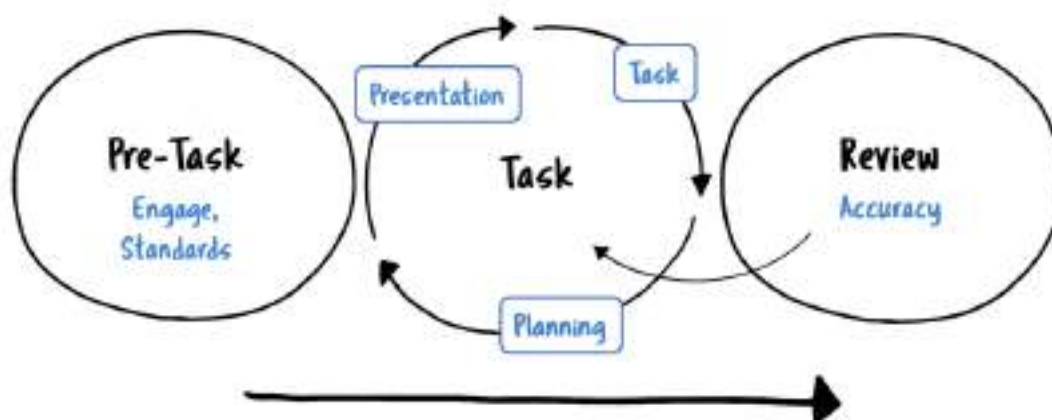
Pre-task activity: The pre-task activity is the initial phase in a task-based lesson where the teacher introduces the topic, activates learners' prior knowledge, and prepares them for the main task. This stage often includes activities such as brainstorming, vocabulary building, or discussions to set the context and create a language-rich environment for the upcoming task.

Main task development (cycle of tasks): The task, also known as the cycle of tasks, is the main phase in which students engage in communicative and productive activities. The tasks are challenging and relevant, and they require you to use the language for international communication. This takes many forms, including problem solving, communication, and decision-making. The work cycle includes planning, carrying out, and sometimes reporting, and students can use language effectively to achieve their goals.

Post-Task or Review: The post-action or evaluation phase occurs after the main action is finished and involves reflection and analysis of the language. Students and teachers discuss activities and share experiences and ideas about language use. This section provides an opportunity to clarify the language, correct errors, and reinforce new language elements that

emerged during the process. This helps to consolidate lessons and ensure that the language used during practice is clear.

Figure 2. *stages of TBLT*



by ABEnglishwithEase

To emphasize the importance of using the task-based approach as a practical method to help pre-intermediate students improve their speaking skills, a considerable amount of research has been done on speaking skills, input, learning environments, language exposure, and students' motivational issues. Thus, the following case studies were selected to present fundamental evidence regarding the topic.

The first case study was conducted by Zhang, Xiangyang & Hung, and Shu-Chiu. (2013). Whose research is about the viability of task-based instruction in college English teaching in large classes. This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of implementing activity-based teaching in language-intensive classrooms. Three main findings from this case study are reported: a). The experimental group may show better academic performance than the control group; b) The experimental group showed better English-speaking performance than the control group; c) Based on the data collected from personal interviews, the experimental group performed better than the control group. The control group showed solid learning.

In summary, this study found a great strength and effectiveness of the Task -based approach in large classrooms in terms of participants' performance, communication, and

learning motivation in second language acquisition such as English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

The second study was conducted by Yan, H. (2020). The impact of Tasked-Based language Teaching on English learning Motivation in High School. The principal objective of this study is to contribute to improving the quality of English learning among high school students. The authors summarize in this study that teachers should include activities in which students have plenty of opportunities to use the target language. In addition, the author suggests that TBA is a method that enhances students' communication and thinking skills by using real life examples. These activities aim to seek to help students to learn how to communicate and how to think about problems, and solve them, as well as how to deal with emergencies. The authors also mention that when students complete the tasks, many of the students feel a sense of accomplishment and understand their value. Also, students feel that learning English becomes more motivating and worth it.

The results of these studies will help teachers and authorities intensify the importance of providing students with an appropriate learning environment, address motivation issues, apply task-based language teaching, and provide students with tools to overcome the pressure of a globalized world and a demanding society. It will also suggest using practical teaching methodologies that professors can apply in language classrooms to improve speaking skills and motivation for learners of a second language.

Lastly, by developing activities that employ a task-based approach as a reliable strategy to enhance speaking abilities, this research will serve as a significant source of data for future research endeavors that may help English learners overcome learning challenges.

1.2.2 Lesson planning.

A lesson plan is a teacher's daily guide for what students need to learn, how it will be taught, and how learning will be measured. Lesson plans help teachers be more effective in the classroom by providing a detailed outline to follow during each class period. (Hummel, 2024)

After examining the definition of a lesson plan and taking into account the task-based approach to improving students' speaking abilities, three activities were carefully examined to determine which ones would best encourage students to participate in this study and

demonstrate the efficacy of TBA as one of the most pertinent ways to improve speaking abilities in the third year of BGU. The exercises that were selected to aid in the creation of tasks are centered around role-playing, reading aloud, and speech-recording.

1.2.3 Role-play.

Role-play is any speaking activity when you either put yourself into somebody else's shoes, or when you stay in your own shoes but put yourself into an imaginary situation!

Imaginary people - The joy of role-play is that students can 'become' anyone they like for a short time! The President, the Queen, a millionaire, a pop star the choice is endless! Students can also take on the opinions of someone else. 'For and Against' debates can be used and the class can be split into those who are expressing views in favor and those who are against the theme.

Imaginary situations - Functional language for a multitude of scenarios can be activated and practiced through role-play. 'At the restaurant', 'Checking in at the airport', 'Looking for lost property' are all possible role-plays. (Joe Budden, n.d.)

Role playing is a teaching strategy that allows students to participate in a subject in ways that traditional methods cannot (Piscitelli, 2020). Role-playing is an educational process in which participants engage in a specific task and acquire perceptions, behaviors, and communication patterns related to that task. These simulations allow students to explore different situations, build understanding, and apply knowledge and skills in contexts similar to real-world situations. Role playing has some positive points for instance.

- Role-playing is particularly effective for language learners as it provides a context for authentic communication. Students practice using the target language in realistic situations, improving fluency, vocabulary, and conversational skills.
- Role-playing encourages critical thinking as participants must analyze situations, make decisions, and respond to the actions of others in real-time.
- role-playing allows students to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, making abstract concepts more tangible and applicable.
- Role-playing is an active and engaging form of learning that motivates students by making the learning experience more dynamic and enjoyable.

1.2.4 Read Aloud.

It is a strategy that can be used whenever students must read “tough text.” It is an especially valuable strategy to use with English language learning because it incorporates the modeling of fluent, expressive reading of English text with techniques for clarifying vocabulary, periodic checking for understanding, and providing and activating knowledge that helps students make connections between text and personal experience.

Fluent read-aloud has been shown to increase students’ comprehension, vocabulary, and interest in reading. Read-aloud involves the teacher reading text aloud to students while adding visual support, periodic paraphrasing, and/or rewriting as the “plus” or extension to the read-aloud. The students are actively involved in the “plus” part of the lesson and so are more motivated to listen carefully as the teacher reads aloud. The use of this strategy extends the students’ understanding of the text, which is important because English learners need multiple opportunities to practice new vocabulary both orally and in writing. The read-aloud extension activities allow students to become familiar with strategies they can use independently whenever they must read difficult texts, thereby, providing them with reading comprehension instruction and practice in the process of interacting with the required content-area or literature text. (Jordan, 2014)

1.2.5 Speech Recordings.

Audio recording refers to the act of capturing spoken language, usually in the context of learning or communication. Students or speakers are recorded while speaking, engaging in a conversation or doing a language-related activity. These recordings may only contain audio or video elements. In addition, this activity has some important advantages for example:

Self-Assessment:

- Reflection on Pronunciation and overall oral delivery. Listening to their own speech helps identify areas for improvement and self-correction.

Fluency and Pace:

- Monitoring Fluency: Recording speeches enables learners to evaluate the flow and fluency of their spoken language. They can analyze the pace at which they speak and work on maintaining a natural rhythm.

Vocabulary and Grammar Usage:

- Vocabulary and Grammar Use: Assessing Language Structures: Audio recordings allow students to assess their own use of vocabulary and grammatical structures. This provides an opportunity to identify and correct errors in speech production in real time.

Confidence Building:

- Building Confidence: Regularly recording and listening to one's own speech builds confidence. Over time, learners become more comfortable expressing themselves, contributing to improved overall speaking skills.

Communication Skills:

- Enhancing Communication Skills: Recording conversations or speeches allows learners to focus on effective communication strategies, such as clarity, coherence, and the use of appropriate language in different contexts.

In traditional classrooms, it is difficult for teachers to focus on each student. Teachers point out that speaking activities involving pairs or groups should focus on fluency and not on the correctness of speech (Jaber, 2021). With the advancement of technology, voice recording devices have become the solution to these problems. Alsyouf (2021) emphasized that language acquisition technology improves students' vocabulary and skills.

1.2.6 Post-test.

It is a research approach that seeks to measure progress. Post-testing entails administering a test after the intervention or training is completed. (scispace). The constructed post-test intends to assess correct information about students' performance after the recommended activities are given and developed based on the time allotted to carry out such tasks. The estimated time to complete all of the activities prior to administering the post-test is four to five weeks, with the pretest being the first activity and the post-test being the final. The post-test was constructed with a focus on speaking tasks that require learners to interact; thus, motivation and confidence will be tested to ensure that the task-based approach provides the intended and expected results.

1.2.7 Assessment

The evaluation of language is a crucial issue in the context of teaching and learning a second language. It is vital for educators to comprehend and apply the principles of language assessment within their teaching practice. By conducting proper assessments, teachers are able to grade and categorize students and offer constructive feedback and structure their teaching methods according to the individual needs and knowledge levels of their students. According to Pierce (2002; cited in Kırmızı & Kömeç, 2016), assessment plays a pivotal role in any learning and teaching activity, enabling educators to make timely decisions based on students' progress, diagnose strengths and weaknesses, and provide specific feedback on the learning process. Assessment is integral to the instructional process as it indicates whether educational objectives are being achieved. It also directly influences decisions related to grading, placement, instructional requirements, curriculum, and the learning process as a whole.

Extensive research has been conducted on assessment, tests, and evaluation, which are fundamental components of the teaching-learning process. While these terms are interconnected, they differ in certain aspects. Assessment is generally associated with appraising, making judgments, forming opinions, or determining the value of something. On the other hand, evaluation and tests are used to gather and analyze information about program activities, characteristics, outcomes, performance, and knowledge. Additionally, the principles of language assessment used to test students must be carefully considered. These assessment procedures include authenticity, practicality, reliability, validity, and washback and are regarded as fundamental principles in foreign language teaching and learning (Brown, 2010). These principles are essential for defining the extent of students' achievements and enable educators to reflect on the effectiveness of the tests in facilitating student progress. For instance, a test can be deemed practical if it takes into account the time and effort required in its design and scoring, as well as the age and level of students (Brown, 2010, p. 26). Moreover, the second principle of a good test is reliability, which implies that the test should yield similar results when administered to the same group of students on different occasions. To ensure reliability, the test needs to contain unambiguous items or tasks for the learners and uniform rubrics for scoring and evaluation (Brown, 2010, p. 27).

Chapter II

Methodology for the investigation and Diagnosis

In the recent few decades, several education theories have been propounded, such as grammar translation and audio-lingual methods. Towards the end of the 20th century, however, Communicative Language Teaching focused on actual life communication and gave students a chance to speak the language. According to Richards and Rogers, Task-based learning strategies are based on communication by completing tasks, and Willis, 1996 adds that tasks should be at the heart of language learning activities as they provide learners with a chance to use language meaningfully and purposefully.

Conceptualization and operationalization of the main categories.

One of the famous methods of language teaching is the Task-based Approach, which deals with real and meaningful information. This work investigates the applicability of a practical method for improving the communicative skills in the framework of the first BGU at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado high school. There are five dimensions to the independent variable, and the dependent variable also contains five dimensions, with three indicators in each.

Independent variable: Task Based Approach

According to Richards and Rogers, task-based learning strategies focus on communication through task completion. This approach has differentiated stages that have to be considered before being applied in classrooms. The importance of this method of teaching and learning the language does not focus on the correct and effective use of the language being taught, but on the result of the work and the steps taken to achieve the level of the job. The assignment can be anything, but it is good for students to think about a situation in the world. According to Nunan. D.'s (2012). Task-based approach (TBA) is a teaching method that uses real-life tasks to teach language. It involves three stages: pre-task activity, task, and post-task review. The study considers eight dimensions and indicators for TBA's operationalization.

Pre-task activity: This is the first stage of a task-based lesson for the upcoming task, where the teacher presents a topic and activates the learners' preliminary knowledge of it, setting them up for the main task. It often contains activities such as brainstorming or

building vocabulary at this stage or discussions to set the context and create a language-rich environment.

Tasks (cycle of tasks): The task also known as the cycle of tasks is the core stage by which students are engaged in communicative and productive tasks. The tasks are challenging, relevant, and will throw you back into the language for real communication. It manifests in so many forms: problem-solving, communication, and decision-making. The working cycle comprises planning, the actual carrying out and sometimes even reporting, and learners can use the language effectively to achieve their aims.

Post-Task or Review: This is the phase after the main action is done, and it involves reflection and analysis of the language used. Students and teachers discuss activities, share experience and ideas about language use. The section gives an opportunity to clarify the language, correct the errors, and reinforce new language elements which emerged during the process. That is consolidating lessons and making sure the language used within practice is clear.

Dependent variable: Improving speaking skills

Hornsby (1995:20) states that speaking is to talk about something, talk about any subject matter, convey opinions about someone and with somebody and address in verbal message, express oneself or exchange words. The first dimension of the four-dimensional variable involves focusing on practical tasks that encourage students to engage in discussions and activities. These tasks should be realistic and practical, encouraging motivation and prior knowledge. The second dimension involves organizing tasks to achieve specific goals, ensuring students are engaged and motivated to perform correctly during practice. This approach helps students develop their skills and improve their overall learning experience.

Furthermore, input is very important, because if the components of the language are not established in students' minds, the success of improving speaking skills is minimal. even though TBA mainly focuses on speaking skills, does not mean neglecting grammar entirely. In fact, TBA offers an opportunity to teach grammar in context, making it more meaningful for students. So, these components will help develop the communicative competence in students which is the goal of implementing Task Based Approach in the class. To develop communicative competence this study also focuses on fluency and accuracy, intonation and pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary and finally other skills such as persuading,

negotiating, narration, and cohesion, as well as it is important to provide an excellent learning environment in class.

2.1 Research approach and design

The method chosen to carry out the present research is a mixed method that combines quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative method consists of implementing assessments to measure objective speaking skills, while the qualitative method uses surveys and interviews to obtain information about the experiences and opinions of participating students in TBA. This methodology was chosen due to its accessibility for a comprehensive understanding of the impact of TBA on both objective factors (how students perform when speaking) and subjective experiences (motivation). Quantitative data will be collected through pre- and post-tests involving speaking assessments and student self-evaluations of speaking skills. Qualitative data will be gathered through semi-structured interviews applied to both teachers and students and classroom observations to gain insights into students' perceptions, experiences, and motivations during TBL activities (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). The purpose of using these methods is because they serve to capture both measurable improvements in speaking skills and the underlying experiences and perceptions of students experiencing TBA. This dual approach ensures a comprehensive evaluation of the teaching method's impact. In addition, the instruments that will be used in this research include: Pre-test, posttest which will be designed by the teacher to measure the dimensions and indicators

Pre-tests and post-tests, these instruments, which will be teacher-designed oral tasks, will measure fluency, grammar accuracy, vocabulary use, and pronunciation at both the beginning and end of the TBA intervention.

2.2 Research questions

- How does the implementation of a task-based approach impact the improvement of speaking skills in language learners?
- What is the primary reason pupils struggle to speak in English?
- What are teachers and students' perceptions about using TBA as a method to learn a second language

2.3 Justification of the Research proposal for data collection.

This research will employ a task-based approach to investigate the effectiveness of Task Based Approach to enhance language learning and their correlation in improving English speaking fluency among young learners. The use of mixed methods in data collection is necessary for the purpose of implementing a practical approach to improve communication skills, because it allows a better understanding of the research questions.

Participants were asked about their experiences, attitudes and beliefs around task - based learning and communication skills development in a range of surveys or focus groups, both as key qualitative aspects to data collection. This helps to give us a more comprehensive overview of student learning and also provides important feedback on whether our work opportunities are working. Scores from surveys and tests can produce statistical data to support in measuring the effectiveness of TBL approach and communication skills development which are quantitative data collection methods. This can be anything from assessing a participant's improvements in speech, memory recall or increases and performance on tests. These methods-using both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques along with the knowledge they provide about possible constraints of single-method approaches are seen as relevant to investigate/interpret a phenomenon. This way we get more robust evidence, higher quality and less biased results that are further generalizable.

2.4 Delimitation of the population and the sample

The total population of the institution at Pio Jaramillo High School is around 2.200 students, therefore, in this study on implementing a task-based approach to improve speaking skills for 1st year BGU students, the population includes all 1st year students who attend regular morning classes at Pio Jaramillo High School. To gather information from a larger group of people, it's often necessary to take a smaller sample, which will be reflective of the larger group in terms of both its demographics and its overall number. Therefore, we have chosen to conduct our research beforehand , selecting a small group that belongs to BGU's first-year language students. The number of participants in this group is 31 students, whose average age is between 15 and 16 years old. It is worth mentioning that participants will be selected based on the convenience and data accessibility, their willingness to participate in the study and availability at the time of data collection. Factors such as age, gender, ethnicity

and language proficiency are also considered when selecting the sample to ensure a sample that reflects the diversity of the population.

Table 1. *sample population*

Participants	Sample	Percentage %
women	17	55%
men	14	45%
Total	31	100%

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres

Limitations related to the sample selection:

Some of the limitations associated with the proposed sampling in this study are: Based on the number of participants which are 31, it might be a small number of participants for the study; therefore, it might be underpowered to detect statistically significant effects. A larger sample size would increase the generalizability of the findings to a wider population of learners. Besides, being a convenience sample the potential for bias is very likely. Those who are available may differ in some characteristics from those not available. Finally, there is a limited Generalizability. whose effects can only generalize to some kind of population of the 15-16-year-old category. Furthermore, the task-based approach may be effective in developing different parts of the language such as pronunciation, intonation, grammar and step by step to gain fluency in younger learners.

2.5 Description of the context (institution)

This project research is going to be conducted at "Unidad Educativa Pio Jaramillo Alvarado," It is an educational institution located in the province of Loja, specifically in the Loja canton. This institution is an urban educational center with in-person classes in the morning, evening classes, and intensive modality for adults. The institution provides school levels from EGB and BGU levels of students. Therefore, this research is to be conducted in order to benefit first-year BGU. The learners of 1st BGU are aged 15 to 19, the learners are cursing the second stage of high school, and thus, they are on their way to choose their future career; therefore, it is crucial that their English skills must be developed too.

2.6 Description of the participants (students)

The present study attempts to focus on the 31 learners aged between 15 and 19 who are in their first year of BGU, and whose English skills are at a level that corresponds with A.1 pre-intermediate according to CEFR. Although they have an excellent command of basic vocabulary, complex sentence structures as well as confidence in oral communication is difficult for them to grasp. They hardly know any common words. This makes it impossible for them to engage in real-life conversations since they do not know how to communicate verbally. However, their strong areas are everyday dialogues concerning ordinary problems and simple questions. The scheme will employ specific “learn on learn” techniques towards stimulating the speaking abilities of pre-intermediate students.

2.7 Research stages

There are six essential stages that made up the following investigation which have been carefully analyzed and understood to obtain the best possible results. The research stages for the topic of implementing a task-based approach to improve speaking skills for 1st year BGU students could include the following: problem delimitation, theoretical review, instrument elaboration, instrument application, data analysis, and redaction of recommendations and conclusions.

Table 2. *stages of the research*

Stage	Description	Activities	Performers
Problem delimitation	Clearly formulate the purpose and methodology of the study.	preliminary survey Case studies Interviews with a small group of people Observational survey	Researchers tutor
Theoretical review	Describe the theoretical framework	Investigate bibliographic information	researchers
Instruments elaboration	Determine the criteria needed to collect data for the study.	developed the pre -test , plan of intervention and posttest , surveys and	Researcher Experts to validate the

		interviews	instruments researchers
Instruments application	Use the tools to collect information.	Apply for pretest, plan of intervention posttest, survey and interviews	researchers
Data analysis	Create a report based on the findings to better understand the students' circumstances. The data is examined using the approach described in this step. The research findings are reviewed and presented.	Application of statistical analysis to the obtained data in order to draw conclusions.	researchers
Final report of data and Conclusions	Gather the results of the investigation. This stage the researcher must create a report outlining his results.	Elaborate a final report with the data and write conclusions and recommendations.	researchers

Elaborated by Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres

2.8 Instruments chosen from the methodology

The instruments derived from the selected methodology, that is Mixed-method approach to be used in implementing task-based approach to improve speaking skills for 1st year BGU students are:

Tests: These are pre- and post- tests which will be used to assess students' ability to perform particular tasks related to speaking skills. The tests can be used to measure participant speaking fluency, accuracy, comprehensibility and coherence.

Rubric: A rubric is a tool used in grading. It evaluates and describes specific elements and criteria of an assignment or a project. They can be utilized for a vast array of tasks and projects, which extend to research papers, group assignments, portfolios, and presentations.

Surveys: Quantitative data could be gathered on the attitudes of students to learn through activities and the effectiveness of methods to improve communication skills. It can be

measured in terms of student perspective, confidence level, and motivation to develop communication skills through surveys.

Observations: This is how information can be collected by observing people and events taking place in a determined environment. It can either be direct observation or cover observation, which means when not the object of study is observed. (Annexes 14)

2.9 Description of the instruments.

Tests. The term 'test' in ELT refers to a process of measuring learners' knowledge or skill in a specific area using oral or written procedures. It is a way to demonstrate to both students and teachers how much they have learned over a course. Tests can be used to emphasize the strong points and faults of the teaching process for the teacher to make an improvement. (ENGLISH, 2014)

Pre-test: It is a research method that measures the effectiveness of interventions or any training programs. Pretesting refers to administering a test to subjects before they underlie any form of teaching or training. Pretest designs allow for the evaluation of an intervention's impact by comparing pre-intervention scores or outcomes. (scispace)

The pre-test was created to get the most accurate data from students based on speaking development and consists of three questions with several options to pick from, as well as an item to be completed. Every question proposed here is carefully crafted to assess students' speaking abilities. The first question was aimed at evaluating phonology abilities, students must listen to the teacher and organize the words into columns based on the sounds of the word "U" in English. There are eight words to hear and place in the correct column, this question scores two, being 1 poor performance and 2 points excellent. The second question is reading aloud and reading comprehension; this allows us to better understand how learners pronounce words in the first place, as well as gain information about their understanding and interpretation. After finishing the reading, there are five statements to detect, which scores four points, where 1 is considered poor and 4 is excellent performance. In order to assess speaking abilities alone, question three requires students to write a paragraph in which they must each describe something they did on their most recent vacation and then share that experience with their classmates. It's a great way to grab their interest and take them to a more realistic setting. This question was graded in accordance with the rubric that was initially created, having a total value of four points, considered 1point poor and 4

points excellent performance; a total of 10 to 9 points is considered excellent, between 8 - 7 regular, under 6 points is considered poor performance. (Annexes 9)

Post-test. It is a research approach that seeks to measure the advance or progress. Post testing entails administering a test after the intervention or training is completed. (scispace)

The post-test was constructed to assess students' performance after the implementation plan, whose activities were given and developed based on the time allotted to carry out such tasks. The estimated time to complete all of the activities prior to administering the post-test were four weeks. The post-test was focused on speaking tasks that require learners' interaction in pairs and groups. In addition, the tasks to be completed aimed to develop social skills and enhance motivation and confidence. For this purpose, four activities were carried out, such as, role play, description of pictures, pair work dialogues, group work interaction. (Annexes 10)

2.10 Rubric.

A rubric is a scoring tool used to assess student work based on specific criteria. It outlines the different levels of achievement for a task and describes what each level looks like” (Brookhart, 2011). The main purpose of rubrics is to assess performances, and between the functions of the rubric, the following are mentioned: (Annexes 11)

- Grading essays, presentations, or other projects
- Providing feedback to students on their work
- Helping students understand what is expected of them
- Ensuring consistency in grading across different teachers or assessors.
- Diagnostic and interpretation of the rubric instrument.

This rubric has been elaborated to measure students' speaking skills, and this instrument will be used during the pre- test and post-test. Besides, this instrument has six categories, which will give an insight into the level of knowledge of the students before implementing the Task Based approach and after the intervention. The principal points covered in this rubric are the following:

Criteria: These are the specific aspects of the work that will be assessed. For instance, rubrics include general aspects of the language, such as grammar, vocabulary, listening, and micro skills like fluency and pronunciation, fluidity, and accuracy.

Levels of achievement: These are the different levels that students achieve when developing activities or tasks. For example, a rubric might have some achievement for each standard, which goes from the highest standard to the lowest standard and is evaluated according to the students' performance.

2.11 surveys.

Survey research is the practice of doing research through surveys that researchers send to survey respondents. Survey data is then statistically examined to generate significant research conclusions. (Bhaskaran, 2024)

Teachers' survey.

The teacher survey used in this project's research includes questions whose principal objective of this study is to determine teachers' perspectives on the use of task-based approaches (TBA) in language teaching and to know how familiar teachers are with the TBL method, challenges and benefits faced, overall impressions of TBA, and the level of support teachers receive in its implementation. Finally, there is an open-ended section that wraps up the survey, soliciting further ideas and reflections from the teachers on ways to implement TBA. The responses will yield important information for educators and researchers in order to enhance support for teachers and to further develop how to successfully implement TBA in language classrooms.

Students' survey.

The student's survey has been designed to inquire about and understand students' perceptions of using a task-based approach to improve their speaking skills in the target language. It is designed to be anonymous and takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. The target sample in this survey are students of all year levels (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior) who are learning English as subjects belonging to the National Curriculum 2016. The survey is structured in three sections, the first is related to general information about the interviewers, the second section considers items about whether students

are familiar with the use of task-based approaches; and whether the teacher used them in class to determine if learning English using task-based approaches has helped them improve their speaking skills. And lastly, this survey will help to determine students' perceptions of its effectiveness and impact on their speaking skills, as well as their preferences and challenges regarding this approach. Overall, this survey helps researchers and educators understand how students perceive and experience the task-based approach and its potential for improving speaking skills in language learning.

2.12 Data processing and statistical analysis

The data obtained from the pre-test and post-test was analyzed using SPSS and Microsoft Excel and spreadsheets for the associated quantitative analysis and generation of descriptive and inferential statistics." There exist three main basic types of measures: measurements of central tendency, measurements of variability-or spread, and frequency distribution, which comprise descriptive statistics." (Hayes, 2024) Inferential statistics involve the analysis of data from a sample in order to draw inferences and expand the findings to the entire population. (Salas, 2023).

2.13 Description of the pre-test

The pretest test was administered on the 29th day of February, 2024. The number of students who took the test was 30, with one missing school on that day. Among these were 17 females and 13 males. It lasted 90 minutes and two teachers were present during the test; students had no assistance in the formulation of the test from anyone, ensuring reliable results from their knowledge. The first question was directed to measure phonology abilities of the students, where 1- to 1,25 points are considered poor performance so, there is a difficulty in distinguishing sounds of the words, 1,50 points considered regular, this indicated that students have somehow a regular understanding of the sounds of words, and between 1,75 and 2 points is considered excellent performance in phonology abilities so students are able to differentiate the sounds correctly. Second question, reading aloud and reading comprehension, scored 4 points, where responses between 1 and 2 points indicated poor reading comprehension and poor ability to pronounce words correctly. Third question aimed to assess speaking skills scores 4 points, this question was evaluated using the rubric, and the scores between 3 and 4 points indicates that the students achieve the criteria, while

between 1 and 2 , there are some difficulties in use of grammar , vocabulary , pronunciation , as well as poor fluency with a lot of hesitations that difficult understanding the dialogue.

2.14 Description of the treatment phase (Intervention plan)

The intervention plan was carried out from the 7th of march until the 4th of April (two hours per class) in a total of ten classes. The main approach used here was Task Based Approach. Students were given plenty of information, grammar rules, vocabular, pronunciation, and phonology of sound which were explained in the two first weeks of the intervention, in order for students to gather enough input before practicing their speaking skills. The main topic of the class was related to using superlatives and comparatives to make short descriptions and comparisons, additionally, pair groups and group work were applied mostly.

The summary of the intervention is presented in the following table.

Table 3. *Summary of intervention plan*

<i>Month</i>			<i>Days</i>	
<i>February</i>	22 Planification of the diagnosis test	23 Explanation of the research procedure, objectives, and instruments to the authorities and students.	29 application of the diagnosis test	
<i>March</i>	7 First week of intervention grammar rulers how to use comparatives and superlatives to make descriptions and comparisons.	14 Second week, vocabulary and pronunciation Sounds of vowels and consonants. individual work complete activities using adjectives and	21 First task pair group, use adjectives to describe simple objects in the class. make sentences using comparatives and superlatives to	28 Second task group work look at the pictures and compare them using comparatives and superlatives.

		formulating comparatives and superlatives.	describe your classmates.	
<i>Abril</i>	4 Third task role play Use of prompts to do role play simulating a description of places, people and animals.	11 Application of the post text. Finalization of the research process Recognition Processing of the results		

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres

The pre - test was applied on February 29th, and it was emphasized to evaluate speaking skills and sub skills in students, such as phonology, accuracy, fluency intonation, vocabulary, grammar and reading comprehension.

The first class of the intervention was carried out on April 7th. Students were presented with the topic of the class, which was related to the module of the book they previously were studying, so the lesson plan was the continuation of the topic about adjectives, comparatives and superlatives. In this first lesson, the researchers explained the rules on how to make comparatives and how to use them in speaking, especially to make descriptions. In the second week of 14th of April, students were given useful vocabulary and plenty of practice on how to pronounce words correctly, as well as to make sentences using the new knowledge. This activity was a controlled practice where researchers gave students plenty of information, provided explanations when necessary, always revising and giving opportune help to students who were struggling in completing the task. Individual work was used; to ensure the students understood the topic, they were asked to complete some activities using gap filling, completion of words, and writing sentences. During the classes, researchers also gave feedback about students' performance. The third week on the 21st of April, the first task was applied. Students were refreshed by what they had learned the week before in order to activate the previous knowledge, so they were able to complete the task successfully. In This task students were asked to describe simple objects they found in the class using comparatives and superlatives; for example, a pencil, a pencil case, a backpack, among others. Also, they were asked to write sentences describing one of their classmates, then share

it with them in class. The second task was applied on April 28th, this task was group work. Students had to describe pictures of people and animals, and they had to make questions to other groups. It was like a competition, about which group understood the descriptions. These kinds of exercises help to activate understanding of the topic, use correct grammar structures, vocabulary related to descriptions, intonation, accuracy and fluency.

The third task was applied on April 4th, it was a role play. The purpose of this task was to evaluate how students use the new knowledge in real life situations without teachers' help, in other words they must put into practice all the knowledge acquired during the previous lessons; for example, describing places, people and animals. To complete this task, students were given some prompts as a guide, so they worked in pairs to complete the task effectively. To evaluate this task the rubric previously described was used. Finally, on 11th of April the post test was applied.

2.15 Description of the posttest

The last stage of the intervention plan culminated when the post test was applied. This Test was applied in two sections owing to the large number of students and the short time destined to English classes. To complete this task, students had to apply the knowledge acquired during the intervention plan. The posttest has activities that students have to complete individually while others are required to work in pairs.

The first question is a role play. Students were given a prompt to use them as guides to do the role play, and they have to use their own personal information. Students take on the roles of speaker A and speaker B. They have to carry out this social interaction, speaker B has to talk about their dietary restrictions and he seeks advice for lunch options while speaker A persuades him to choose some healthy options available in the canteen of the school.

The roles they perform are:

Student A is one who initiates and advises. This student initiates the conversation and gives suggestions for healthy lunch options based on B's diet needs. Student B is who asks and takes the decision. This student asks for lunch options due to dietary restrictions and decides what to eat based on the advice of A.

Throughout this activity students demonstrate their ability to interact using the target language in real life situations. The students demonstrated their ability to express themselves clearly, used appropriate gestures and facial expressions, maintained eye contact, and conveyed their qualifications effectively to secure the desired job role. This role-play was also graded using the same rubric in the same areas.

The second question aimed to evaluate pronunciation, fluency, and intonation. Students were asked to read and record the reading, afterwards they had to send it to the teacher via WhatsApp to see scores according to the rubric. Third question, students were given some objects, they had to describe using comparatives and superlatives, this question was assessed using the rubric. The main purpose of this question was to assess students' fluency, accuracy, coherency and speaking ability. Four questions, students had to listen to some statements, complete the information and they told me two details or qualities of the items you hear. For instance, to tell what is the most dangerous animal and why? What are the benefits of eating fruit? What made them feel sad? This question evaluated speaking abilities, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, interaction and social skills.

2.16 Validation of the research proposal.

Escobar-Pérez & Cuervo-Martínez [9, p. 29] define validation of content by expert judgment as an informed opinion of people with a history in the subject under discussion, regarded by others as competent experts, and who are in a position to provide information, evidence, judgments, and assessments. The expert would examine the research instrument, as well as to suggest to researchers to make some changes in format and structure of the instruments of data recollection. For this research project, the specialist PhD(a) Carmen Letamendi, teacher from the master of pedagogy of English as a Foreign Language, was requested to evaluate the pre-test, post-test, and survey questions. Her knowledge provided a useful independent view to ensure the tools measured what was desired to be measured.

2.17 Ethical considerations

The survey offered educational insights into the learning and improvement of English proficiency as a foreign language. Participants were informed that their participation was merely for educational and research purposes and thus would not attract any compensation. In addition, being the target population underage, their parents were asked to give informed consent. This transparency esteemed their academic contribution, yet it ensured that this

research's participation was a purely voluntary act with informed consent, in adherence to ethical principles. The information revealed was treated with confidence to guarantee the safety of participants.

Chapter III

Presentation and validation of the proposal.

Data analysis is the process the researcher uses to reduce data into a story and further interpret it to derive insights, as defined by LeCompte and Schensul (1999) This data analysis process helps reduce a large chunk of data into small fragments that make sense. The results of the present research project were presented according to the three research questions. First, how does the implementation of a task-based approach impact the improvement of speaking skills in language learners? Second, what is the primary reason pupils struggle to speak in English? and third What are teachers and students' perceptions about using TBA as a method to learn a second language? The purpose of this chapter is to present the data that validates our research proposal and the research questions were used to organize this data. Standard deviation, average, minimum, and maximum were examples of descriptive statistics used to validate the data too.

3.1 Validation of the proposal.

The course of gathering relevant data to validate the proposal of “Implementing a Task-Based Approach to Improve Speaking Skills in 1st BGU Students” was carried out based on an empirical observation of previous tests that were administered by teachers at the institution where the research was conducted, for which a mix method (quantitative and qualitative) was considered to obtain the most accurate data in order to determine whether this proposal is relevant for students to get immersed in the learning of English. To support and assess such a proposal, four case studies were considered to be analyzed, and after a thorough interpretation, all of them are in accordance with the objectives sought in this project proposal; hence, this mechanism entirely supports the implementation of the proposal, its applicability in the academic context, and the validity of the task-based approach to improving speaking skills in the 1st BGU students.

The ability to implement such a suggestion depending on several factors must be mentioned. Since the high school is a public institution and the majority of its students come from rural areas where their income does not allow them to use technology for learning, it was determined that using a "task-based approach" would be necessary to help the students who struggle with speaking. In addition to this, students' emotional aspects served as a catalyst for carrying out the research plan. Gaining proficiency in speaking will encourage

students to learn the language more actively, viewing it as a tool for communication rather than a topic they must pass to graduate from school. When compared to other nations, Ecuador's educational system exhibits a lower level of English language ability. A study carried out by the agency Education First shows that Ecuador is ranked #80 among the 113 surveyed countries and #19 in Latin America, which means that a necessity to increase the number of English speakers in our country is fundamental to being part of this globalized world. (EF, 2023). This lays the foundation for introducing strategies to enhance speaking abilities in Ecuadorian classrooms in line with the country's standards.

3.2 Characteristics of the proposal

3.2.1 Theoretical foundations

The methods employed in the theoretical bases set essential boundaries for language acquisition, which helped to compare and contrast the conclusion of the study proposal. The Theoretical Framework Provided by Alahmadia and Ahmadi opened a gateway for understanding the importance of motivation, Input in Communicative Competence Development, as well as helping to dissect its role in students cognitive & Social Upliftment. In this respect, these academics emphasize that a good command of vocabulary and grammatical structures are important for students to become competent speakers. Also, they emphasize the importance of providing students with a relaxed and safe learning space then motivation towards using target language confidently. According to Shu-Chiu and Yan, H. (2020), TBA considerably enhances the efficacy and strength of the task-based approach in large classrooms with regard to student performance, communication, and motivation to learn a second language, like English as a Foreign Language (EFL). In the current research, through this approach, it could be pursued whether TBA helps students acquire the skills of becoming more fluent speakers. More exactly, the authors used these structures as the departing point to show how, through the assignment of activities to first-year BGU students at Pio Jaramillo High School, assigning activities would let them improve their speaking skills. In this context, Shu-Chiu and Yan, H. (2020) whose studies have shown that TBA significantly improves the strength and efficacy of the task-based approach in big classrooms in terms of participant performance, communication, and learning motivation in second language acquisition, such as English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Using this approach, the authors may investigate the usefulness of TBA in improving students' speaking skills. Using these frameworks as a foundation, the researchers aimed to illustrate how learning a language

through tasks might improve speaking skills in first-year BGU students attending Pio Jaramillo High School.

3.2.2 Objectives.

To keep the research proposal on course, specific and clear objectives were set so that at the end of the research proposal, the most reliable and credible results can be obtained.

- Examine what are the main factors that prevent students from speaking a second language.
- To research what is the primary reason students struggle to speak English?
- To investigate the perceptions of the teachers and learners about the effectiveness of a task-based methodology for developing the speaking Skills.

3.3 Requirements.

To successfully conduct the proposed research, several methodological requirements have been selected with utmost care, considering each element which might ideally tally with the research objectives group.

3.3.1 Methodological requirements.

Since the present research focuses on improving speaking abilities, a mixed-method approach has been selected to be the methodology to bring out the most reliable and credible results. In essence, this approach is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

Questionnaire:

Specific questionnaires had to be provided to the students in order for the information to be collected quickly, and to see what each individual student has a problem with, which seems to prevent them from wanting to speak in English. There were two types of questionnaires. The first one included five questions and was answered through Google Forms. The entire purpose of the usage of Google Forms was to protect students' privacy so that they would feel free to express their opinions regarding challenges they go through in every English lesson. Apart from discovering students' feelings about comfort with practices

and tasks developed during the activities, the second questionnaire was designed in order to get information about how they perceive the use of the task-based approach for speaking skills improvement. It also aimed to directly ask the students whether they felt their speaking skills had improved.

1. **Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling was chosen as the most dependable and practical approach to sample the group of studied pupils. The sample was thought to have 5% of the population's margin of error and 95% of accuracy across the whole sampled population.
2. **Data Analysis:** The technological instrument that assisted in the analysis and interpretation of the statistical data gathered during the course of the study project was the statistical package for the social sciences, or SPSS software and Microsoft excel.

3.3.2 Technological requirements.

1. It was necessary to use technological tools in order to gather data from students , for instance , the use of smartphones so that students were able to send voice messages answering some question related to the topic being studied, in addition , overhead projector was used to display the content during the phase of intervention and finally they have to use , their computer or smartphones to record and answer one of the questions of the post test.
2. The internet was a necessary tool, because it allowed students and researchers to get access to the information, previous case studies, that help the authors to gather enough information to validate this research proposal.

3.4 Research question 1

How does the implementation of a task-based approach impact the improvement of speaking skills in language learners? To answer these questions, two instruments were applied; the pretest and posttest were applied at the beginning and at the end of the intervention phase.

3.4.1 Quantitative analysis of the pretest

The data of the pretest was collected from the evaluation applied to students, which was related to assess phonology, fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation and other skills such as, the use of vocabulary, grammatical structures and interaction. The researchers used a rubric with the following criteria: grammar structures, fluency, listening pronunciation and task achievement. A numerical scale that is scored from 1 for the worst performance to 4 for the best performance was also used.

Table 4. Pretest results

Estadísticos descriptivos						
	N	Mínimo	Máximo	Media	Desv. estándar	Varianza
PRE TEST	31	5,75	9,40	7,2919	1,22625	1,504
N válido (por lista)	31					

Data analysis source: SPSS

Elaborated by: **Maria Olmedo/ Oscar Torres.**

Table 5 shows the pre-test analysis results. After converting the 24 points of the established rubric to a value of 10 points for analysis, the value occurrences are 31, with the lowest score being 5,75 points and the maximum being 9,40 points. It has a standard deviation of 1.22. These findings demonstrated that a large number of learners have poor phoneme control, poor pronunciation, limited task achievement, and poor comprehension of grammar structures. Furthermore, the majority of students—roughly 50%—find it difficult to integrate concepts to create a dialogue in a way that is both productive and fluent. This is often due to hesitations, misunderstandings, and instances where students' comments have nothing to do with the questions that were posed.

3.4.2 Quantitative analysis of the posttest.

The data for the posttest was collected from the evaluation administered to students, which was also related to assessing phonology, fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and the other skills mentioned in the pretest. The same rubric was utilized to measure the outcomes, which will serve to mark the differences between the two tests.

Table 5. Post test results

Estadísticos descriptivos						
	N	Mínimo	Máximo	Media	Desv. estándar	Varianza
post test	31	7,00	10,00	8,3065	,86050	,740
N válido (por lista)	31					

Data analysis source: SPSS

Elaborated by: **Maria Olmedo/ Oscar Torres.**

According to table 6, which details the posttest analysis results, the value instances are 31, with the minimum being 7 points and the maximum being 10 points, after converting the 24 points of the defined rubric to a value of 10 points for analysis. Thus, a more thorough examination of every facet reveals that the mean value is $M=8.30$ and the standard deviation is $SD=0.86$ in the table. When the posttest results are analyzed, it is evident that the students' abilities have improved significantly overall. This, in turn, supports the research proposal that suggests using a task-based approach to help students improve their speaking abilities in the context of the conditions mentioned. All the categories on the rubric—which include grammar structure, vocabulary, fluency, listening, pronunciation, and task achievement—have shown improvements from each student. Of these, fluency and pronunciation are the most significant ones based on the posttest analysis.

To ascertain the difference between the pretest and the posttest, additional analysis was done, and the results unmistakably demonstrate improvements in the context as a whole.

Table 6. *variation in test means.*

Estadísticos descriptivos						
	N	Mínimo	Máximo	Media	Desv. estándar	Varianza
PRE TEST	31	5,75	9,40	7,2919	1,22625	1,504
post test	31	7,00	10,00	8,3065	,86050	,740
N válido (por lista)	31					

Data analysis source: SPSS

Elaborated by: **Maria Olmedo/ Oscar Torres.**

The table indicates that, with the same number of valid cases—31 in both tests—the pre-test mean is 7.29 (M=7.29) and the post-test mean is 8.30 (M=8.30), with a mean difference of -1.01 (M=-1.01).

Table 7. *paired T-Test result.*

Prueba de muestras emparejadas									
		Diferencias emparejadas				Significación			
		Media	Desv. estándar	Media de error estándar	95% de intervalo de confianza de la diferencia	t	gl	P de un factor	P de dos factores
					Inferior Superior				
Paired	PRE TEST - posttest	-1,01452	1,33349	,21950	-1,50364 -52539	-4,236	30	<,001	<,001

Data analysis source: SPSS

Elaborated by: **Maria Olmedo/ Oscar Torres.**

When comparing the two tests side by side, it is constantly determined that there is a significant difference. The mean is -1.01, the standard deviation is 1.33, and the standard error difference is 0.23950. With a confidence range of 95%, the inferior is ranked at -1.50364 and the superior at -52539. -4.236 is the T-score value. Therefore, after applying the suggested tactics, it was concluded through a final analysis of the values and taking into account the significance of each that the figures shown in the chart reflect a satisfactory improvement in speaking.

3.5 Research question 2

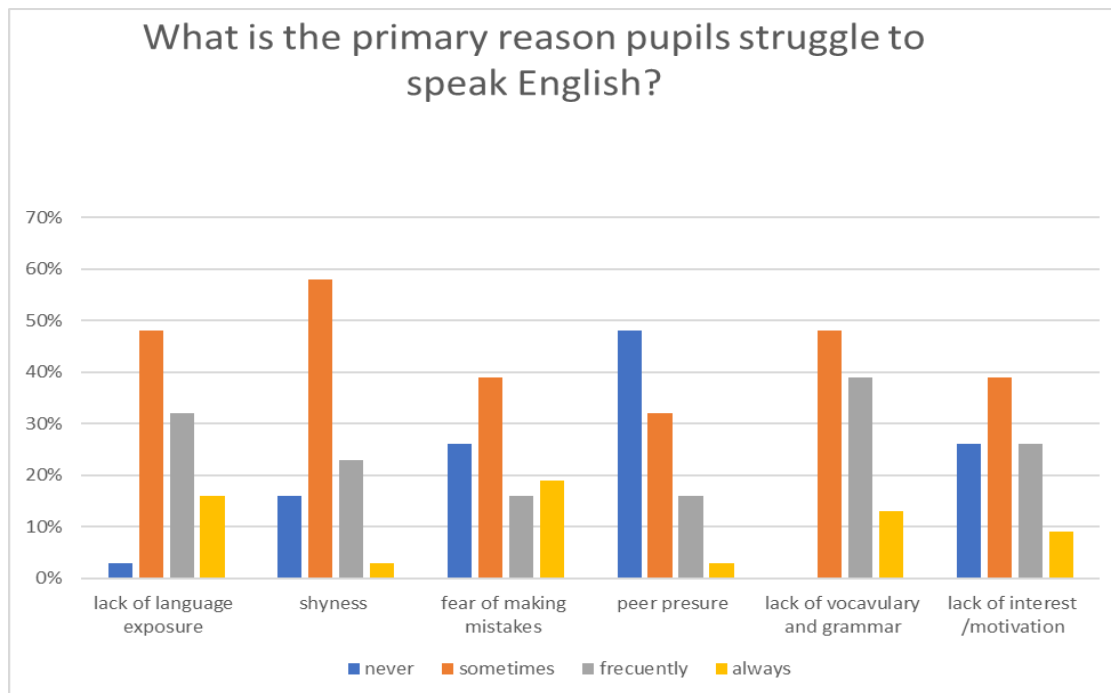
3.5.1 Quantitative results from the survey

What is the primary reason students struggle to speak English?

A questionnaire was thus administered to the students in order to provide information for this question. Directed at the center of the problems that students have experienced in attempting to express themselves in English, these questions were aimed at the discovery of the major contributing factors to students' problems in speaking the language.

Figure 3. *What are the principal reasons why students struggle to speak English.*

Analysis of the survey.



Data analysis source: Google forms

Elaborated by: **Maria Olmedo/ Oscar Torres.**

Most Common Reason for Not Speaking a Language

The statistics show that the lack of language exposure is a frequent reason for not speaking a language, as mentioned by 48% of the participants who sometimes encounter such a problem and 32% reporting this as often or always.

To address the third research question, a survey was applied to students, and the data presented in this table indicate that one of the most significant obstacles that students have to speaking English is the lack of language exposure, with 48% (15 students) of respondents indicating this as a sometimes barrier and an additional 32% (10 students) reporting it as a frequent or always barrier. Many researchers agree on the importance of having enough immersion in the target language because it offers opportunities to acquire the language easily and quickly. English learners in traditional classrooms have fewer opportunities to use the language , as the hours provided by the curriculum are the only opportunities to use the language. in this context,

Another important factor that prevents students from using the language is the lack of motivation. The data suggest that lack of interest (motivation) is a significant barrier, with 39% (12 students) of respondents indicating that it is sometimes a barrier and 26% (8 students) reporting it as frequent or always a barrier. According to Harmer (2011) in his book *How to Teach English*, there are many factors that can awaken the desire to learn. The desire to achieve a goal is the basis of motivation, and, if it is strong enough, it provokes the decision to act. Motivations that come from the outside and that can be influenced by a series of external factors, such as the attitudes of society, family, and colleagues on the issues at stake. If the students do not have enough motivation and knowledge for what and how learning a second language will help in the future , most of them will only study the language to pass the academic year . So in this context, it is important that teachers use a variety of strategies to motivate students to learn a second language. Brown (1994), in Richard and Renandya (ibid.), states that learning a second or a foreign language is a complex task. It is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, and apprehension.

According to the data, another obstacle to highlight is the fear of making mistakes, 39%, or 12 students, indicate that this is a frequent barrier that prevents them to using the language, and 16%, or 5 students, said that it is almost always a great barrier. The main factor can be that they feel pressure when they try to speak English. Leo (2013:206) says students lose their self-confidence and will never try again if they feel embarrassed, unappreciated, disappointed, frustrated, or looked down on by others or even teachers.

Additionally, the data also suggests that the lack of grammar and vocabulary is a factor that does not allow students to enhance their speaking skills. From the results , 48% (15 students) feel that sometimes the lack of grammar and vocabulary does not allow them to use the language, and 39% indicated that they frequently or usually struggle to use the language owing to the lack of knowledge in grammar and vocabulary. From the observation made, most of the students certainly felt a bit shy at the beginning, but when the teacher started asking questions and making them participate they felt more confident.

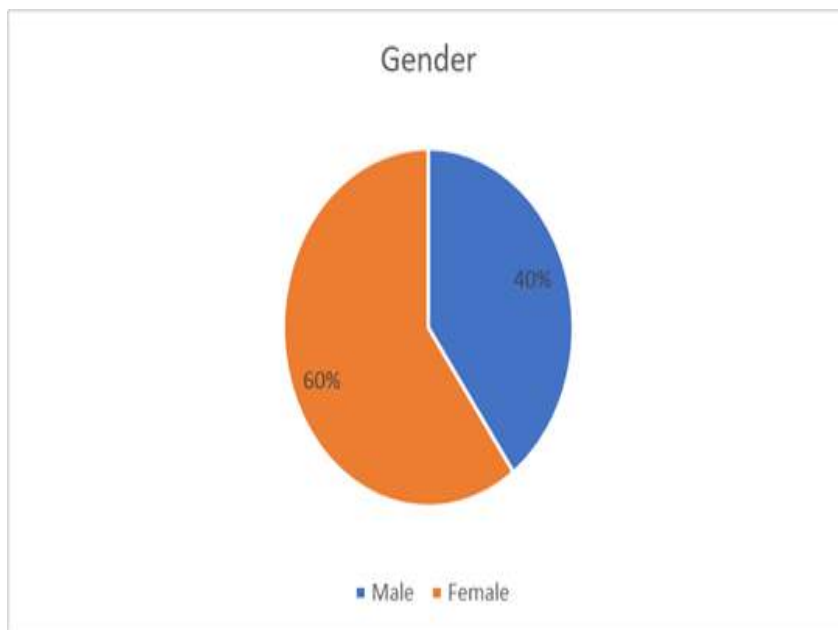
3.6 Research question 3

What are teachers and students' perceptions about using TBA as a method to learn a second language?

To answer these questions , two surveys were applied , one for teachers with eight items, which are directed to obtain information about their perceptions on how they consider the use of TBA as a method to teach English, and the second survey was applied to students to collect the information about their opinions on using TBA to improve their Speaking skills.

Variable 2 Speaking Skills

Figure 4. *Teachers' perceptions / gender*



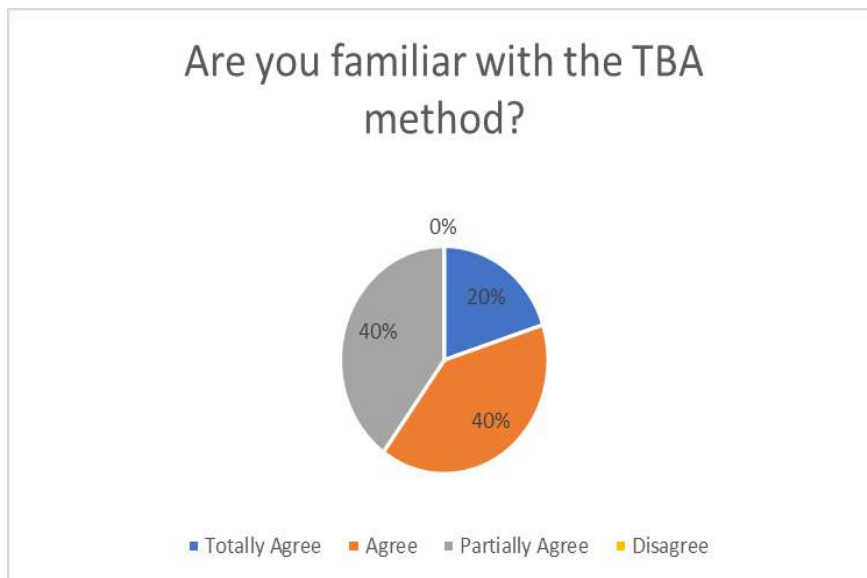
Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

From the total teachers interviewed, 60% are female and 40% are male. Teachers were asked what their perceptions were about the use of TBA as a method to teach English as a means to improve students' speaking skills.

Statement 1. Are you familiar with the TBA method?

Figure 5. *Task Based Approach familiarity as method to improve speaking skills*



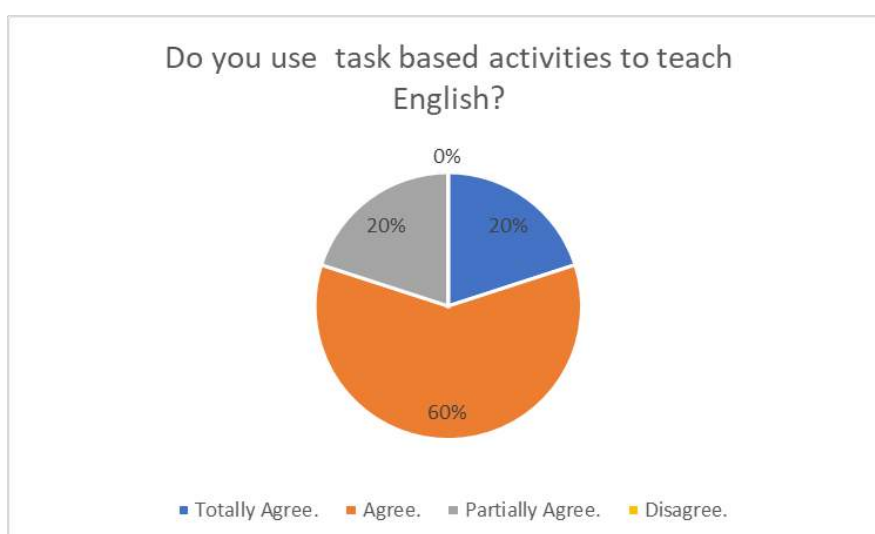
Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

Teachers were asked whether they were familiar with task -based approach, and for this item, 40% agreed and 20% totally agreed, whereas 40% of the teachers partially agreed to be familiar with this methodology. These results indicate that most teachers know about this approach.

Statement 2: Do you use Task Based Activities to teach English?

Figure 6. *TBA Activities*



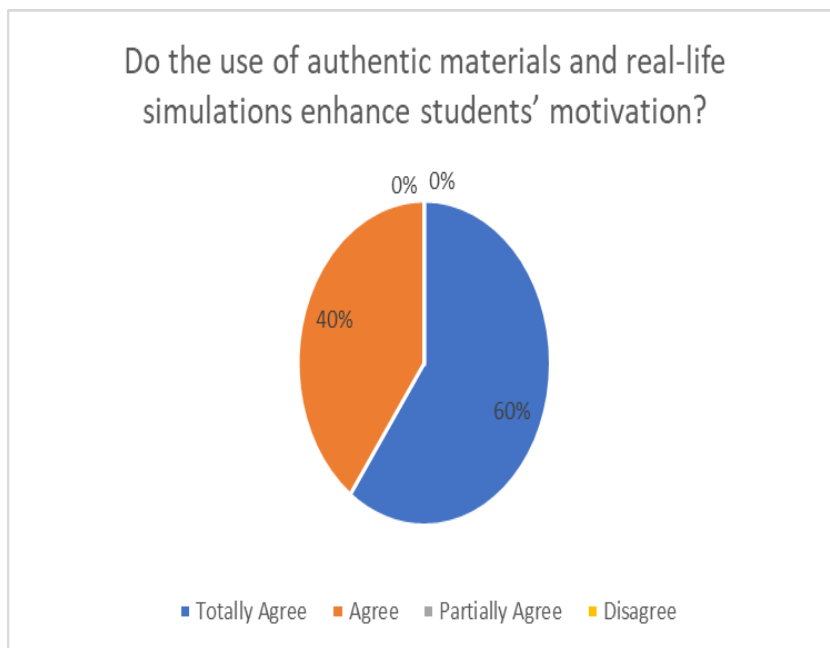
Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

According to the survey teachers were asked if they use task-based activities to teach English, 20% totally agreed that they use these activities, 60% agreed they use task-based activities to teach English, and 20% partially agreed to use task-based activities.

Statement 3. Do the use of authentic materials and real-life simulations enhance students' motivation?

Figure 7. *Material that boosts motivation in students.*



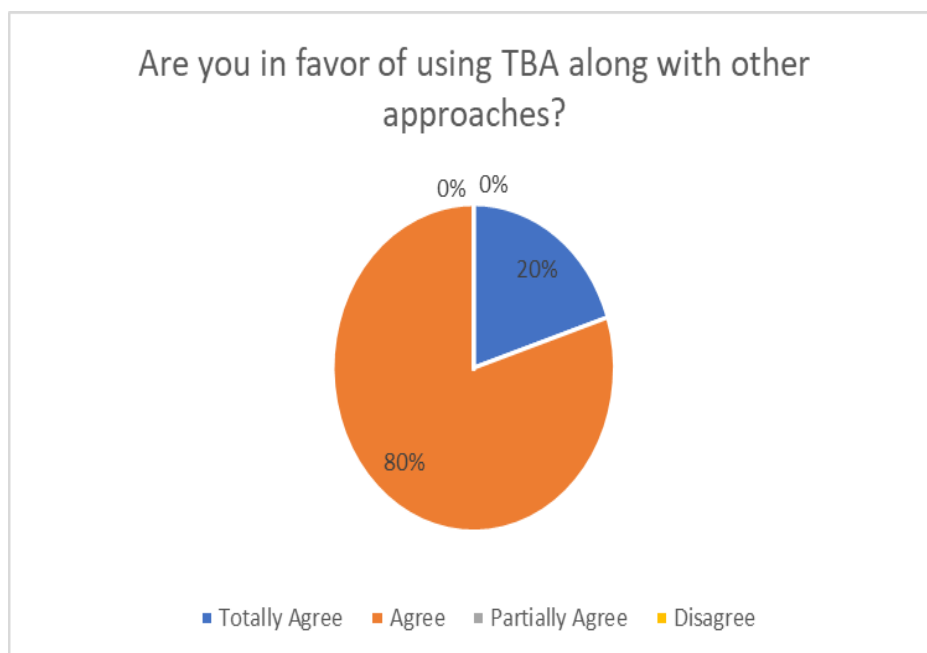
Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

The material that was used to help students improve their speaking abilities naturally has a clear appeal, as seen in the pie chart, which keeps students' intrinsic motivation high both while the tasks were being developed and when they were practicing speaking in front of their peers. As a result, the data indicates that while a sizable portion of 40% agreed with the use of tasks, the vast majority of 60% agreed completely with the use of the material in Task-based approach.

Statement 4: Are you in favor of using TBA along with other approaches?

Figure 8. *Merging approaches to enhance abilities.*



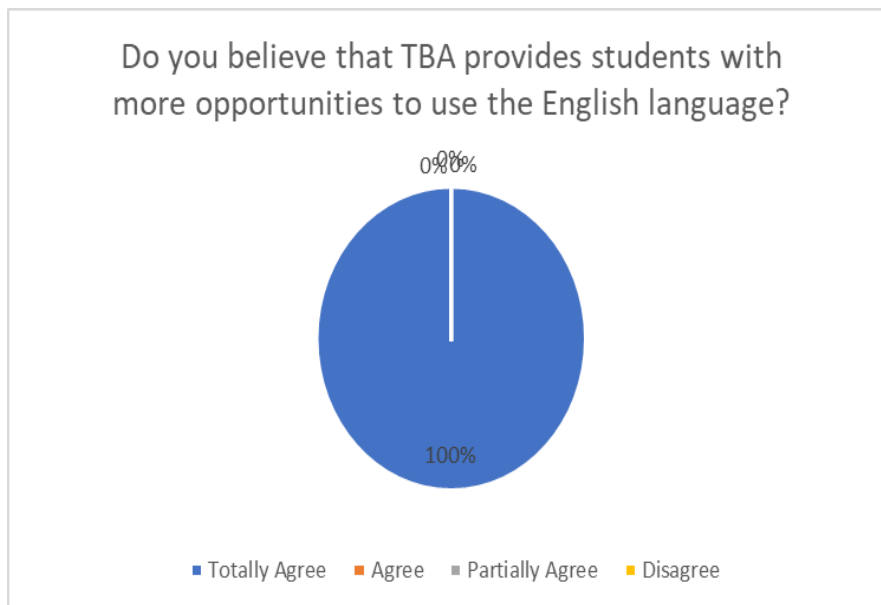
Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

Combining different approaches to help students reach their full potential and enhance their speaking abilities is generally accepted. Looking at the chart above, one can see that a larger proportion of learners agree that combining approaches can be helpful, indicating that most students find this approach appealing. However, only a small percentage of learners completely agree that combining methods is a good idea. According to the chart, 80% of students agree, and 20% completely agree.

Statement 5: Do you believe that TBA provides students with more opportunities to use the English language?

Figure 9. *Searching for speaking opportunities that best suit students' interests.*



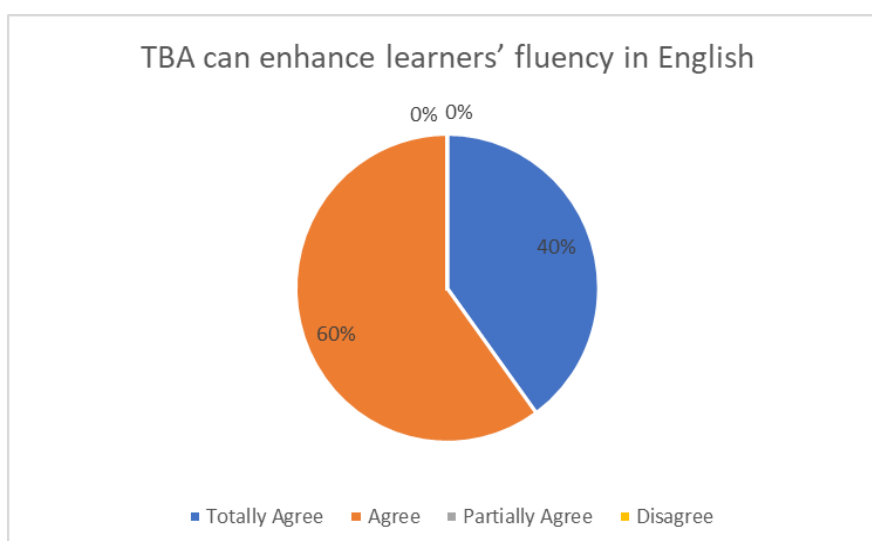
Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

When experts in the field of English instruction were consulted, they all came to the same conclusion: TBA provides the resources students need to develop their ability to speak in a natural way, as well as an environment that encourages continuous improvement in the language.

Statement 6: TBA can enhance learners' fluency in English.

Figure 10. *Observing the results of speaking fluency after TBA has been applied.*



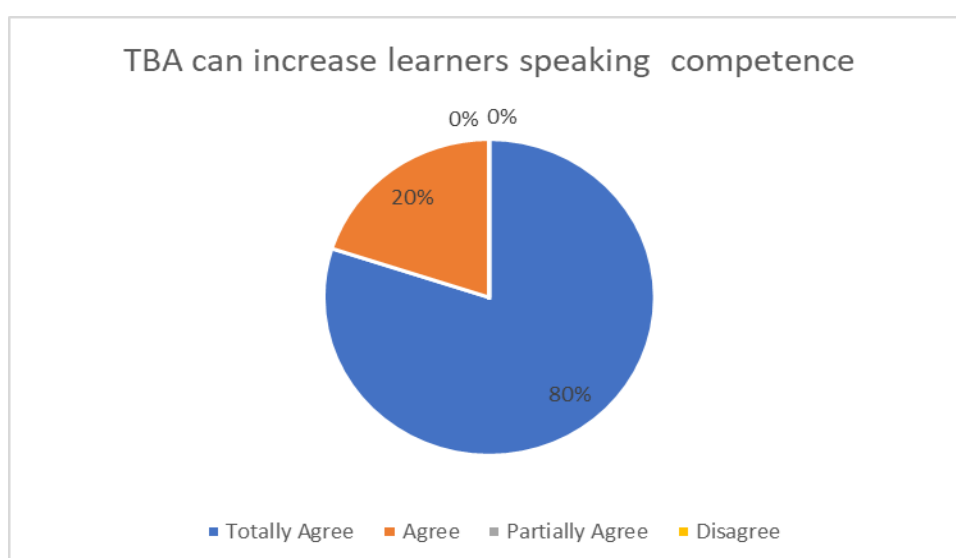
Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

The fundamental component of speaking is fluency; it not only enables students to communicate but also boosts their self-esteem as they learn to construct sentences with a distinct word flow. Every task that was suggested during the TBA intervention improved the pupils' fluency. When asked about the fluency skills that students acquired through the use of TBA, teachers expressed optimism, with 60% of them agreeing and 40% completely agreeing that this method aids in students' fluency development.

Statement 7: TBA can increase learners speaking competence

Figure 11. *Recognizing opportunities to improve communication abilities through TBA.*



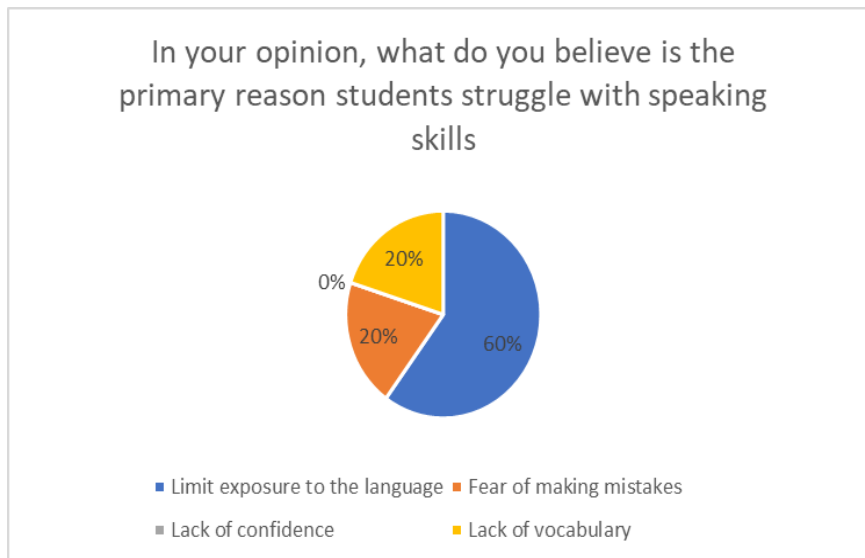
Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

Maintaining a good attitude during the learning process is found to be dependent on providing the possibilities that TBA triggers for pupils. Fewer respondents agreed, with the majority of interviews expressing complete agreement that TBA gives students plenty of opportunity to develop their speaking skills. Both groups are at ease with the assignments that use TBA. Out of the overall reading, 20% agree and 80% fully agree.

Statement 8: In your opinion, what do you believe is the primary reason students struggle with speaking skills.

Figure 12. *Searching for refrains that negatively impact learners' ability to speak continuously.*



Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

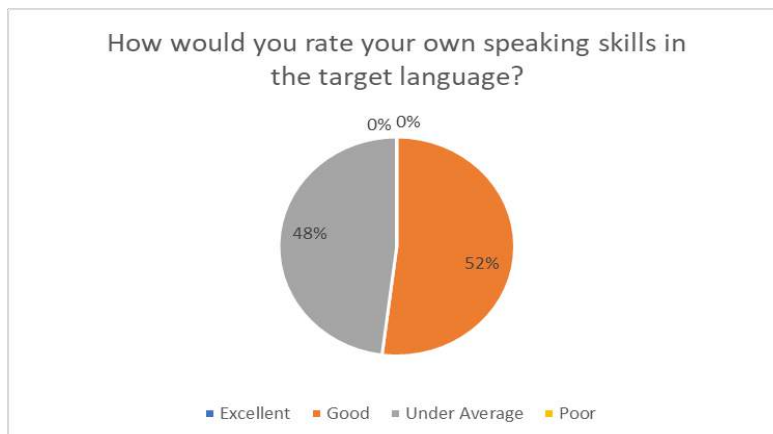
The information gathered from asking English teachers this question revealed that there are three main factors that prevent and demotivate students from speaking when they are learning the language. As a result, the table shows that limited exposure to the language has a 60% impact on students' desire to speak the language. A deficiency of vocabulary accounts for 20%, and fear of making mistakes for 20%. based on experts in the field of teaching English.

Students' perceptions.

- Following the collection and analysis of instructor perspectives on TBA, the next important stage involved learning what the students believed about TBA's role in assisting them in developing a stronger feeling of confidence and communication. Four accurate items were created by the researchers with the goal of gathering important ideas and thoughts from students during the development of the various tasks utilizing TBA as the method to improve speaking skills in first-year BGU students. These items covered the most pertinent aspects of the process of applying TBA from the perspective of the students.

Statement 1: How would you rate your own speaking skills in the target language?

Figure 13. *Ranking speaking skills after the application of TBA activities.*



Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

Following the collection and analysis of instructor perspectives on TBA, the next important stage involved learning what the students believed about TBA's role in assisting them in developing a stronger feeling of confidence and communication. Four accurate items were created by the researchers with the goal of gathering important ideas and thoughts from students during the development of the various tasks utilizing TBA as the method to improve speaking skills in first-year BGU students. These items covered the most pertinent aspects of the process of applying TBA from the perspective of the students.

Statement 2: What do you find most challenging about speaking in the target language?

Figure 14. *Recognizing obstacles and challenges when speaking.*



Source: Microsoft Excel.

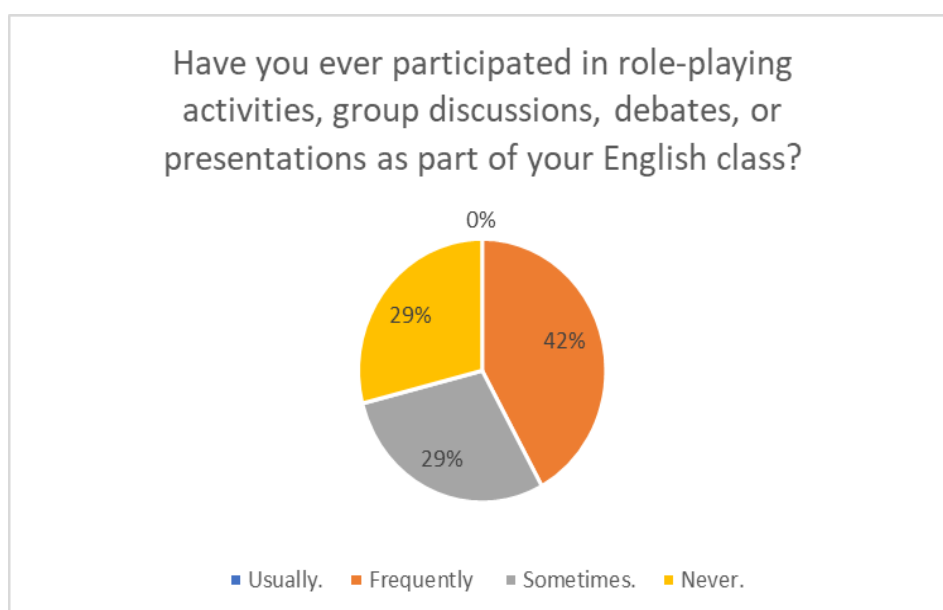
Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

Students have stated that motivation is not the primary element preventing them from wanting to talk; rather, it is the secondary factor. The majority of learners, however, think that pronunciation is the primary factor preventing them from being willing to speak confidently. Even with their progress, there is still a clear barrier preventing them from improving their speech. Therefore, according to 48% of students, pronunciation prevents them from speaking. According to 29% of respondents, confidence and motivation are the hardest things for them to get better at. Of the students, 13% lean toward the idea that grammar is a barrier to improving as a speaker. Only 10% of respondents believe that vocabulary is the most challenging component.

Each responder was told to express themselves uniquely while discussing the things that, at the moment of speaking, they found most difficult or hard.

Statement 3 : Have you ever participated in role-playing activities, group discussions, debates, or presentations as part of your English class?

Figure 15. *Locating English-language learning exercises for pupils.*



Source: Microsoft Excel.

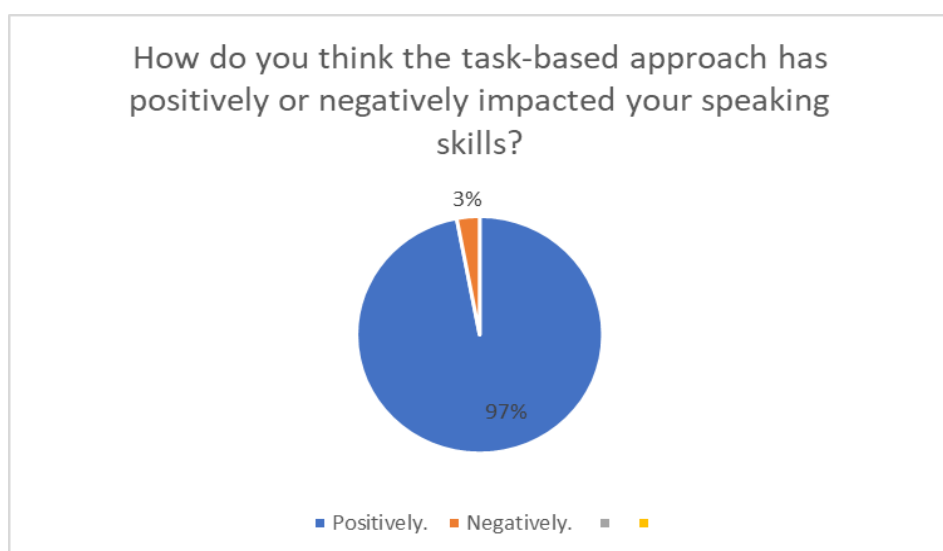
Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

It is evident from the research that the majority of the students participated in role-playing, group discussions, debates, and even presentations. However, they also stated that these activities were more frequently introduced to them during the research phase, indicating that these kinds of activities are not typically used as learning materials during the regular

school year. The following is evident from the percentages that were thrown: 42% of students affirm that they have regularly engaged in these kinds of activities. 29% said they occasionally engage in these kinds of activities. The values for the never and usually percentages are both 0. Consequently, as a cost for future professional development, TBA needs to be seen as one of the fundamental strategies for raising awareness regarding the usage of English in schools.

Statement 4 : How do you think the task-based approach has positively or negatively impacted your speaking skills?

Figure 16. *Influence of motivation*



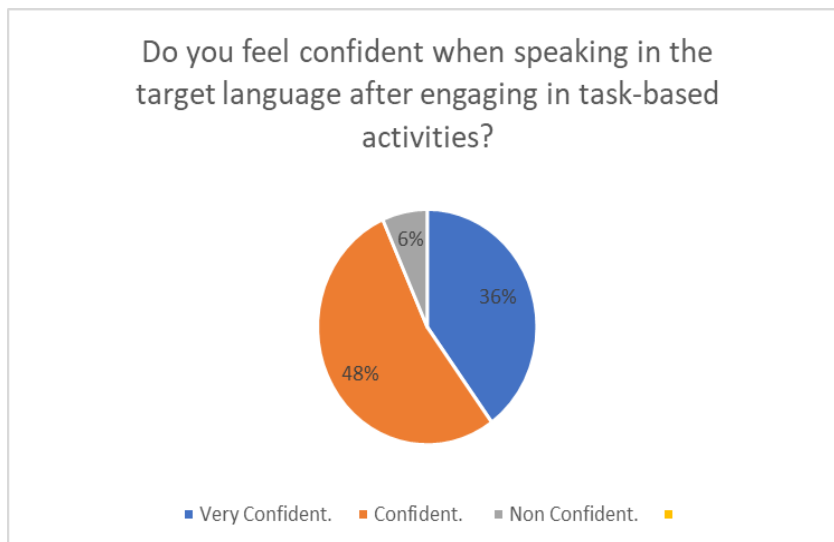
Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

The purpose of this inquiry was to determine how TBA activities affected the first-year BGU students. Thirty of the thirty-one students who indicated that the impact was positive for learning English, and only one out of the thirty-one who stated that the impact was negative, agreed that after developing the activities in which their abilities to speak were tested, they felt motivated. 97% of respondents agreed that the impact was beneficial, while only 3% disagreed, considering the impact as negative, as can be seen in the pie above. It is clear from this question that students are comfortable with the suggested activities that were created with TBA as the teaching methodology.

Statement 5 : Do you feel confident when speaking in the target language after engaging in task-based activities?

Figure 17. *Confidence with the completion of TBA tasks.*



Source: Microsoft Excel.

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

Finding out the degree of confidence students ultimately had when speaking was crucial once the research was completed. Being confident enough to engage in activities enhances learning in every way, according to the astounding results. Of the thirty-one participants in the study, just one did not feel comfortable speaking English in class, and the other thirty felt somewhere between very confident and confident. The data shows that 26% of respondents were very confident, 48% were confident, and just 6% were not confident enough to attempt English in class. The findings suggest that including TBA exercises in every class given strengthened students' confidence and motivation to study English.

3.7 Limitations of the research.

Speaking skills are often assessed subjectively, which can lead to inconsistencies. Objective measures or multiple raters can mitigate this issue but may still present challenges.

One major barrier to learning English is the little amount of time allotted for instruction and learning. It was observed during the research period that students are taught English for three periods a week, lasting forty-five minutes each. After that, five minutes are taken away each time a teacher needs to change classrooms, and finally, the periods allotted to this practice are split off from one another, leaving no time for more frequent rehearsal and practice of particular tasks.

One further constraint was that not all parents or legal guardians agreed to participate in the research; concerns surfaced when they were asked to do so. Some parents even argued that their children should not be the subject of any kind of investigation and opposed the study altogether.

The age gap between first-year BGU students—who should be between the ages of fifteen and sixteen—was a concerning feature. In this class, some students range in age from fifteen to nineteen, which made it challenging to find activities that were similar. Additionally, creating the activities took more time for the researchers, necessitating an extension of the planned research period.

Conclusions.

The Task Based Approach (TBA) is a method that enhances students' speaking skills by providing them with real-life situations to practice their language skills. This research project used TBA to enhance students' speaking skills, focusing on pronunciation, accuracy, fluency, intonation, and interaction.

The initial descriptive analysis revealed how much the intervention improved the students' speaking skills. The valid data was 31 cases and the difference between the means of the pre- test ($M = 7,29$, $SD = 1,22$) and post test ($M = 8.30$, $SD = ,86$) According to the data presented between the two tests at the end of intervention there was an increase of the 13.90% , this percentages indicated that using TBA along with real life activities , certainly improved students' speaking skills in all their ambits, for instance , pronunciation , intonation and fluency , were some of the features that students achieve to improve , in addition sub skills such as grammar , vocabulary and interaction , also have better performance.

The second descriptive analysis reveals that students face barriers when speaking in English, including lack of exposure, motivation, and vocabulary. Public schools may not provide enough time for students to use the language outside the classroom, and the number of students in a classroom can affect their learning experience. Factors like technology accessibility and previous teaching experiences may also influence the findings. Despite limitations, these findings are important for future studies and highlight the complexity of educational research.

The third research question analysis revealed that many students have positive perceptions of learning English through real-life activities, despite the challenges of lack of exposure. These findings contribute to the discussion on the efficiency of using TBA in English teaching and learning, and provide valuable insights into improving not only speaking skills but also sub-skills such as grammar, vocabulary, and interaction, therefore, the application of TBA in first-year BGU students at "Pio Jaramillo Alvarado" high school has helped them overcome their fear of speaking by promoting English as a mean of interpersonal communication.

Recommendations

After a careful analysis of the research findings, several considerations should be made for future proposals that seek to apply the task-based method as a dependable strategy for assisting students in overcoming their speech anxiety.

Research time is an essential component of any effort to overcome obstacles more quickly and establish or negate the applicability of a certain proposition to a class of students. The first suggestion for further study would be to take the amount of time needed to complete the work into account. It would be advantageous to put together practices and assignments that directly assist learners, the more time spent performing activities to improve learners' speaking skills, would provide better and more accurate results.

Based on the research's encouraging findings, a second recommendation would be to add more tasks that require students to participate in role-playing in order to further elicit emotional engagement and a desire to speak the language naturally. As a result, people would be less stressed when speaking in class, which would guarantee that everyone takes pleasure in their time learning English organically and freely.

Students' self-esteem suffered after the researchers disapproved of mispronunciation. Since it takes time to learn a language, tolerance and patience must be cultivated daily throughout the research phase and beyond. Following the research's conclusion, a third recommendation is that, while students are working independently on their assessment portion, they should be left alone. Additionally, when students are working on the assignments, they should always be immediately corrected when they pronounce words incorrectly. It is important to make all corrections in a way that is enjoyable and subtle so that students are motivated to practice more on this assignment.

Finally, the researchers should adhere to their plan once research has been proposed and elaborated. Every aspect that was initially listed as something that needed to be considered should be applied consistently throughout the research period. Any changes made during the process will have an impact on the results, which puts the project's main goal at jeopardy. All activities carried out during this project were adhered to strictly; if other activities had shown promise for producing superior results, the research's direction would have to be altered. This is the primary justification for this project's legitimacy and originality.

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Annexes 2. Research Plan.

TITLE OF THE PROPOSAL: Implementing Task-Based Approach to improve speaking skills in first year of B.G.U

AUTHOR 1: Oscar Carmelino Torres Berru

AUTHOR 2: María Genoveva Olmedo Carrión

RESEARCH CONTEXT: “Pio Jaramillo Alvarado” Loja, Loja, Ecuador

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

Many civilizations use the English language for communication, and many countries have made it their official tongue. In many Spanish-speaking nations, English is taught and learned at high schools, institutions, and academies. Students must learn effective English to work efficiently or better. In the words of Fema (2013), "a person is functionally literate when he has acquired knowledge and skills in reading and writing that enable him to participate effectively in all activities that often have to do with literacy in their subculture". The four core English language abilities are speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Furthermore, English proficiency is very low in many Spanish-speaking nations. According to a recent study by Education First (2020a), Ecuador has the lowest English language competency among the 19 Latin American nations surveyed. Ecuador actually dropped from No. 81 in 2019 to No. 93 in 2020 in the yearly ranking of 100 nations and regions (Education First, 2019; Education First, 2020b).

A significant amount of research has been done on speaking skills, input, learning environments, language exposure, emotional issues, student demotivation, and peer pressure in order to highlight the significance of using practical methods to help pre-intermediate students improve their speaking skills. As a result, two case studies were chosen to provide important information about the subject.

The pre-intermediate stage represents the change from fundamental language comprehension to effective communication. During this phase, speaking ability is crucial. Traditional methods of instruction, however, are not always suitable for pre-intermediate students since they do not address their unique needs. Students at this level usually ask for more practical, real-world language applications to help close the theory-practice gap

(Hedge, 2000). If this educational challenge is disregarded, it can lead to a lack of speaking ability, which would impede the entire process of language acquisition.

Problem Statement.

The analysis of the factors that contribute to subpar second-language speaking performance is the main issue this study attempts to solve. Learners at the pre-intermediate level frequently struggle with motivation because they feel as though their language acquisition is stagnating. Additionally, the traditional pedagogical methods might not fully meet their unique needs, especially in the area of speaking abilities development. Therefore, there is a critical need to research and apply workable strategies that not only improve speaking ability but also reignite motivation in pre-intermediate language learners.

The topic and the problem related to the research lines of the University.

Research object.

To examine the effectiveness of Task Based Approach for improving speaking skills in first-year BGU learners at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School.

General objective

The general objective of this research is to enhance the speaking skills and motivation of pre-intermediate language learners through the implementation of practical teaching methodologies.

Specific objectives:

- To evaluate the impact of practical teaching methodologies on the speaking skills of pre-intermediate students.
- To assess the correlation between motivation and the improvement of speaking skills in pre-intermediate learners.
- To identify the most effective practical methods for building strong foundations in speaking skills and fostering motivation among pre-intermediate language students.

Hypothesis (Research questions)

- How does the implementation of a task-based approach impact the improvement of speaking skills in language learners?

- What is the primary reason pupils struggle to speak in English?
- What are teachers and students' perceptions about using TBA as a method to learn a second language

Justification

This research will employ a task-based approach to investigate the effectiveness of Task Based Approach to enhance language learning and their correlation in improving English speaking fluency among young learners. The use of mixed methods in data collection is necessary for the purpose of implementing a practical approach to improve communication skills, because it allows a better understanding of the research questions.

Participants were asked about their experiences, attitudes and beliefs around task - based learning and communication skills development in a range of surveys or focus groups, both as key qualitative aspects to data collection. This helps to give us a more comprehensive overview of student learning and also provides important feedback on whether our work opportunities are working. Scores from surveys and tests can produce statistical data to support in measuring the effectiveness of TBL approach and communication skills development which are quantitative data collection methods. This can be anything from assessing a participant's improvements in speech, memory recall or increases and performance on tests. These methods-using both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques along with the knowledge they provide about possible constraints of single-method approaches are seen as relevant to investigate/interpret a phenomena. This way we get more robust evidence, higher quality and less biased results that are further generalizable.

Methods

The research will employ a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data will be collected through pre and post-tests to measure the improvement in speaking skills, as well as through surveys and questionnaires to gauge students' motivation. Qualitative data will be obtained through interviews to gain in-depth insights into students' experiences and perceptions.

Universe and sample

The total population of the institution at Pio Jaramillo High School is around 2.200 students, therefore, in this study on implementing a task-based approach to improve speaking skills for 1st year BGU students, the population includes all 1st year students who attend regular morning classes at Pio Jaramillo High School. To gather information from a larger group of people, it's often necessary to take a smaller sample, which will be reflective of the larger group in terms of both its demographics and its overall number. Therefore, we have chosen to conduct our research beforehand, selecting a small group that belongs to BGU's first-year language students. The number of participants in this group is 31 students, whose average age is between 15 and 16 years old. It is worth mentioning that participants will be selected based on the convenience and data accessibility, their willingness to participate in the study and availability at the time of data collection. Factors such as age, gender, ethnicity and language proficiency are also considered when selecting the sample to ensure a sample that reflects the diversity of the population.

Research variables (independent and dependent).

- **Independent Variable:** The independent variable in this research is the implementation of practical teaching methodologies, including interactive activities, authentic materials, vocabulary and pronunciation workshops, feedback mechanisms, and cultural immersion activities.
- **Dependent Variables:**
 1. Speaking Skills: The proficiency of pre-intermediate students in speaking and oral communication.
 2. Motivation: The level of motivation and engagement displayed by pre-intermediate learners in their language learning journey.

Importance of the research

This research has a significant importance for the following reasons.

- **Professional Perspective:** From a professional standpoint, the idea is critical since it provides educators with creative strategies to improve their teaching methods and better respond to the special needs of pre-intermediate students.
- **Methodological Perspective:** It helps to develop successful language teaching

approaches that may be used in a variety of educational settings, thus enriching the area of language pedagogy.

- Technological Perspective: While technology is not the primary emphasis of this proposal, the approaches it supports can be combined with technological tools to improve language acquisition even further.
- Social Need Perspective: The proposal addresses a pressing social need by assisting pre-intermediate language learners in overcoming motivational barriers, fostering higher linguistic competence and intercultural dialogue, both of which are becoming increasingly important in our globalised world. It contributes to the development of more confident and competent communicators in a multicultural environment.

Annexes 7. Diagnostic Data.

HUTCHINSON AND WATERS (1987) NEEDS ANALYSIS MODEL (LEARNING-CENTRED APPROACH)

The needs analysis (NA) process often involves gathering information to have the necessary foundation to develop a course that meets the needs of a particular group of learners. Richards and Platt (1992) stated that NA is "the process of determining the needs by which a group of students acquires a language and ordering those needs according to their priorities." Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identifies two types of needs: Target needs and Learning needs.

TARGET NEEDS		
According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) target needs are mainly related to ' <i>what the learner needs to do in the target situation</i> '. To answer this statement, practitioners should gather information about the learners' necessities, lacks and wants.		
Necessities	Lacks	Wants
They are the academic or occupational requirements of the target situation. What students need to know to function effectively in the target situation (Robinson, 1991).	They have to do with what students ignore or cannot do in English (Robinson, 1991).	These are the personal expectations of the students and hopes towards acquiring English. What they would like to get from the language course. These needs are very personal (Robinson, 1991).
GENERAL QUESTIONS	ANSWERS	WHAT PROCEDURES OR INSTRUMENTS DID YOU USE TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?
		Observation guides, interviews, questionnaires, online surveys, checklists, consulting to experts, a diagnostic test
Why is the English language needed here?	All public, private, trustee, and municipal institutions will be required to teach English beginning in the second grade of Basic General Education and continuing until the third year of Baccalaureate. (Educación, n.d.) This is a first year of BGU, and students take English as a subject matter that forms part of the curriculum. Based on this, the core reason the language is needed is for study and promotion. Students thrive in every class to gain more knowledge of the use of the language, which can grant them a pass for the next school year and help them be promoted.	Syllabus / Curriculum /Ministry of Education
How will the English language be used?	Level A1 Scale: General linguistic range Descriptors: Possess a low range of simple expressions about general personal details and necessities for a concrete type. Can employ some basic structures in one-clause phrases, with some aspects omitted or reduced. (Europe, 2024) Students in this classroom appear to have a	CEFR descriptors guidelines

	good understanding of grammar, as seen by the test results. However, the speaking level is yet to launch, and no one is confident enough to pronounce the most basic phrase, "How are you doing?" English will be used in discourses, conversations, and small group discussions.	
What will the content areas be?	General English, Learners can display a knowledge of diverse cultures' integrity by sharing their experiences and participating in class activities and discussions in an empathy and respect-based manner. (Educación, educacion.gob.ec, 2021-2022) In entire agreement, we ensure that the content area is for general English, which means understanding of everyday activities without a focus on a certain field. Furthermore, the students' level is undergraduate; they have not yet completed their final year of high school. Students' level of speaking lies on A1.	Syllabus, curriculum, documents from the Ministry of Education. (CURRÍCULO PRIORIZADO NIVEL DE BACHILLERATO GENERAL UNIFICADO)
Who will the learner use the language with?	General English: To promote students' drive to continue studying, instill a passion of language learning in them at a young age through engaging and enjoyable learning experiences. Engage with socio-cultural aspects of their own and other countries in a thoughtful and inquiring manner, maturely and openly experiencing other cultures and languages while remaining grounded in their own national and cultural identities. (Educación, educacion.gob.ec, 2021-2022) By creating activities that will enrich the emotions to speak during the different tasks and throughout the interaction with peers and teacher at school, students will awake their self-interest for the language.	Documents from the MOF Curriculum & syllabus
Where will the English language be used?	GE: A1: Can grasp ordinary statements targeted at satisfying simple concrete wants, provided directly to him/her in clear, unhurried, and repeated speech by a sympathetic speaker. Can grasp questions and instructions given to him or her attentively and slowly, and follow brief, straightforward orders. (Europe, 2024) Discover and employ alternative ways of saying things in social and classroom interactions. (Educación, educacion.gob.ec, 2021-2022) We have primarily considered the use of the language at school, where students and teachers will engage in conversations to hone their speaking skills. Workshops will be implemented throughout the program to encourage students to speak widely in English lessons.	Descriptors of the level CEFRL A2 Syllabus & curriculum
When will the English language be used?	GE: School year 2023-2024, speaking activities will be using throughout the months of February to June, 2024, since this is aimed to be applied	MOF

	until the present school year of the Sierra Regimen. (Educación, educacion.gob.ec, 2021-2022) The use of the language is a feature that cannot be delayed for any reason; we hope to utilize the language from the beginning of a class. Phrases will be employed as soon as teachers enter the classroom and ask, "How is everyone doing?" with the hopes of eliciting different replies immediately.	
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LEARNING NEEDS

Learning needs is the gap between the learner's current level of knowledge and skills, and the level of knowledge and skills required to perform a task or a set of tasks. This framework focuses on numerous factors such as who the learners are, their socio-cultural background, learning background, age, gender, prior knowledge of specialized content, prior knowledge of English, attitudes towards English, attitudes towards cultures of the English-speaking world. Hutchinson and Waters suggested asking the following questions to analyze learning needs:

GENERAL QUESTIONS	SPECIFIC QUESTIONS	ANSWERS	WHAT PROCEDURES OR INSTRUMENTS DID YOU USE TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS? Observation guides, interviews, questionnaires, online surveys, checklists, consulting to experts, a diagnostic test
Why are the learners taking the course?	Compulsory or optional? Apparent need or not? Are status, money, and promotion involved? What do students think they will be able to do when they acquire the knowledge? What would be the attitude of the students towards the course? Do they really want to improve their English ?	According to the national curriculum, English is a compulsory subject that students must take in order to progress to the next level. So, this subject cannot be left unattended in school; this is the primary reason why students must study English in school. Students believe that by the end of the school program they will be able to get registered to higher education institutions, "Universities". There is a small group of students who thrive for improvement regardless of the needs to advance to higher education.	DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY CHECKLIST FIELDNOTES
How do the learners learn?	What is their learning background? What is their concept of learning and teaching? What methodology will be attractive to them?	CLIL APPROACH: learners have different methods to capture the language skills, through the use of CLIL, students have shown a low interest for the language, yet there are some positive outcomes in the end. CLT APPROACH: This is a technique created primarily to	Syllabus, curriculum Observation Listening Doing Seeing

		increase speaking skills; students are eager to construct sentences and repeat them aloud with the teacher's assistance; this is one approach that the majority of students enjoy using while practicing English speaking. TASK BASED LEARNING APPROACH: As with the CLT, this technique is widely received by students; they learn a lot by using tasks to increase their knowledge and speaking skills; and this approach always encourages students to actively learn at their own pace.	
What resources are available?	Number of teachers with an international certification? The attitude of teachers towards this group? Knowledge and attitude of teachers towards the content of the subject? Knowledge and attitude of teachers towards the resources for the subject? Opportunities for activities outside of class?	The main source students have to learn is the teacher, I have an international certification which grants me with a vast knowledge to impart lessons. There is always a positive attitude in every class despite of some tiring days. The content is always adaptable to the capability of students with the aim of promoting encouragement and motivation. There is a wide range of activities using technology, that is the plus that brings teachers' attitudes lively. There are nor many resources outside the classrooms, which is a pity.	Syllabus, curriculum Computers. Self-resources.
Who are the learners?	Age/Sex/Nationality? What do they already know about English? What knowledge do they have of the matter? What are their interests? What teaching styles are they used to? What is their attitude towards English? What is their attitude towards the cultures of the English-speaking world?	They age range between 15 and 16 years. There are 14 women and 15 men, they are all Ecuadorians. They can understand and use basic English for everyday communication, but they struggle with more advanced language features such as pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Furthermore, it is vital to note that the length of time pupils spend in class is one aspect that keeps them from learning. English classes at this university are limited to three weekly periods of forty-five minutes	Surveys Questionnaires

		each. As a result, children do not acquire enough exposure to the foreign language, which over time is one of the most important components in language learning.	
Where will the course take place?	Are the surroundings pleasant, dull, noisy, cold?	The course will be deployed in a public school of the city of Loja. It is a safe place, though is it quite noisy because of the traffic. The weather in Loja is always overcast, so and there is not heating nor air conditioning, students have to get accustomed to the elements.	Syllabus curriculum
When will the course take place?	Time of day? Every day once a week? Full-time, part-time? Concurrent with need or pre-need?	It will be in the morning schedule. Activities will be carried out three times a week for three weeks. We hope to match the needs of students based on the survey used in the needs analysis.	January, 25 th , 2024
Note: Hutchinson and Waters (1987) also recommend the use of multiple methods of data collection – such as interviews, observation, and informal consultations with sponsors, learners and others involved – to deal with the complexity of target needs.			

Elaborated: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres

Annexes 9. Pretest.

PRE – TEST					
INFORMATIVE DATA					
Reserarchers	Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres	Subject	English	Class	1st BGU C
Student´s name		Section	Afternoon	Date	
				Quantitative Score	/10
ACTIVITIES:					
ORAL COMMUNICATION: IEFL. 5.6.1 Learners can deal with practical, everyday communication demands in familiar social and academic contexts, including following directions in class activities and identifying main ideas in other curricular subjects when given sufficient support. CC					
QUESTION 1. PHONOLOGY LISTEN THE SOUNDS AND PUT THE WORDS IN THE CORRECT COLUMN.					3:00 P
COOK DO FOOT FRUIT MOON PULL PUSH YOU					
/u/		/u:/			
Example: book					
READ ALAUD: Learners can find specific in- formation and identify the main points in simple, straightforward texts on subjects of personal interest or familiar academic topics. REF. IEFL. 5.10.1. CC					
QUESTION 2: PRONUNCIATION, ENTONATION AND FLUENCY: READ ALOUD, CHOOSE THE CORRECT ANSWER AND RECORD THE TEXT					3.00 P
A BIG SURPRISE					
It was October 28, 2000. It was my birthday. I was six years old. I got up and went to the kitchen. My mother was making breakfast. My brother was drinking milk. My sister was sending a message on her cellular phone. They didn't say "Happy Birthday." They forgot it was my birthday. I was very unhappy.					
After school, I went home. I opened the front door. There were no lights on. Then I opened the kitchen door.					
"Happy Birthday," everybody shouted. It was a surprise party. All my friends were at my house. My family was also there. They gave me presents, and we had a party. It was great. My family didn't forget my birthday. They wanted to give me a big surprise. It was the best day of my life					
<i>Example: he got up and His mother was making breakfast...</i>					

a) while his brother was sending a message. b) while his brother was drinking milk. The boy was very unhappy because... a) he thought his family forgot it was his birthday. b) he was going to school. There were no lights on in the house because a) it was a surprise party. b) there was nobody in the house. At the party there were... a) family. b) friends and family. The day... a) was bad in the beginning and great in the end. b) was great in the beginning and in the end.	
SPEAKING: I.EFL.5.13.1 Learners can produce emails, blogs and other written texts using an effective voice and a variety of appropriate writing styles and conventions. CC	
QUESTION 3: COMPLETE THE PARAGRAPH ABOUT YOUR LAST SUMMER VACATIONS THEN SHARE WITH YOUR CLASSMATES. 0. Example: Hello my name is Luna, and in my last summer vacation I went to Mexico with The following prompts will be useful · Start with greetings and introduce yourself: "Hello! My name is [Your Name]." · Describe your vacation in short, simple sentences: "I went to [Place] on vacation." (Optional: Add "with [Family/Friends]" if they want.) · Focus on one activity you enjoyed: "I liked [Activity] because [Reason]." (Use simple verbs like "swim," "eat," "see.") · Optional: Briefly add one thing that was a little challenging: "But the weather was sometimes [Hot/Cold/Rainy]."	3.00 P

Elaborated: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres

Annexes 10. Posttest.

POST – TEST					
INFORMATIVE DATA					
Teacher	MARIA OLMEDO OSCAR TORRES	Subject	ENGLISH	Class	1st BGU
Student's name		Section	MORNING	Date	
				Quantitative Score	/10
Assessment of achievement: Instructions: 1. Read carefully the questions. 2. Use blue or black pen. 3. Don't use liquid paper. 4. Listen and read the instructions carefully.					
ACTIVITIES:					
ORAL COMMUNICATION					
QUESTION 1. Interact the following conversation: Role-play: A: Hi, how are you doing today? B: Hello, I am doing alright! A: What will you have for lunch today at school? B: Well, I don't know yet, I have to follow a certain diet! A: Really! Why do you have to do that? B: I am not feeling well lately, so my doctor told me that I have to eat healthier! A: So, what do you have to eat? B: I have to consume fewer carbs and more protein and vitamins! The food here is poor in nutrients. A: I think fruit and vegetables are the best options, and there is plenty of that at the canteen. B: Really! Fruit is better than having rice, and vegetables are much better than sweets, so I will try that. A: There is also fish, which is better than red meat and much cheaper, you can try that as well! B: That is exactly what I am going to do. Thanks for the advice! What are you going to have? A: Well, I am not on a diet, so I will go for red meat and potatoes, it is more delicious than salad! B: Yes, it is. Well, we have a plan for lunch; let's go have lunch.					2.5 points

Question 2. Read the following passage:

There are many animals living in the Amazon jungle; there are jaguars, alligators, snakes, and many others. One of the most dangerous animals is the jaguar. This animal is carnivorous, which means its diet is based on meat of any kind. Among their prey, there are alligators, boars, and rodents. A jaguar is taller than any other feline living in the jungle, and they are stronger than alligators. As a result, this animal is the

2.5

Question 3. Talk to your partner about the objects you are holding on your hands.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
School supplies • Books • Notebooks • Pencil • Eraser • Folder	Technology items • Computer • Smartphone • Speaker • Pen drive	Images of animals • elephant • rabbit • cat • dog • giraffe

2.5

Light – small – big – flexible – heavy – expensive – useful – long – short – cheap – modern – fast – slow – tall – aggressive – thick – thin – beautiful – strong – weak.

Question 4. Listen and complete the missing information; then, read each statement.

1. There is a whale, and it is _____ a dolphin.
2. Pineapples are _____ than oranges.
3. My bag is _____ than yours.
4. An elephant is _____ than a mouse.
5. I was sad because I got _____ grade on the test.
6. This T.V. is _____ one in the shop
7. Winter is _____ season.
8. The alligator _____ than the giraffe
9. Giraffes are _____ animals in the world
10. Elephants are _____ than buffalos.

- The lowest
- The tallest
- Bigger
- The most expensive
- Heavier
- The coldest
- Sweeter
- Is more aggressive
- Bigger than
- Stronger

2.5

Elaborated: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

Annexes 11. Rubric for speaking.

Category	4 (Score)	3 (Score)	2 (Score)	1 (Score)
Grammar Structure	Grammar used effectively from class studies	Minor difficulties in using studied grammar	Grammatical errors cause minor difficulties or one major breakdown	Grammatical errors severely interrupt communication
Vocabulary	Correct usage of vocabulary from class	Good range of vocabulary with few errors	Basic vocabulary with some errors and limited variety	Limited vocabulary with frequent errors impacting understanding
Fluency	Acted as a facilitator, aiding conversation flow	Some minor difficulties maintaining the conversation	Speech is somewhat disjointed, with noticeable pauses	Frequent hesitations and lack of coherence
Listening	Responds appropriately to questions, acknowledges statements, and incorporates them into the discussion	Responds to most questions, acknowledges most statements, and incorporates many into the conversation	Fails to answer some questions appropriately OR fails to acknowledge some statements	Doesn't understand or ignores most questions and statements
Pronunciation	Clear pronunciation with inflection and expressions enhancing communication	No serious problems, but improved pronunciation, inflection, and/or non-verbal communication could enhance efficiency	Communication problems due to unclear pronunciation and/or lack of inflection and/or expression	Difficult to hear, and pronunciation, inflection, and/or expression confuse communication
Task Achievement	Completely fulfils the task requirements with creativity and additional insights	Mostly fulfils the task requirements with some creativity	Adequately fulfils the task requirements	Partially fulfils the task requirements

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres

Annexes 12. Teacher's survey.

Objective: The objective of the survey is to gather information on teachers' perceptions of using Task-Based Approach (TBA) in their classes. Specifically, the survey aims to gather data on the extent to which teachers have integrated TBA in their teaching, the benefits and challenges they have encountered, their overall impression of TBA, and the level of support they received in implementing TBA. The findings of the survey will inform the development of strategies to support teachers in implementing TBA effectively in their teaching practice.

Quantitative survey: 1 = not agree 5 = totally agree

Teachers' survey	1	2	3	4	5
I am familiar with the theories of TBL.					
I am familiar with the practice and methodologies of TBL					
I believe that tasks should have a primary focus on meaning					
TBL should make use of authentic material					
The use of authentic materials enhances students' interest/motivation for Learning					
Teamwork is essential for successful implementation of TBL					
I favor a mixture of TBL approach with other teaching approaches					
TBL provides students with more opportunities to use English					
TBL can increase learners' motivation to learn.					
TBL can transform the learning process to be more meaningful					
TBL can improve learners' communicative competency					
TBL can enhance learners' fluency in English					
TBL can improve learners' accuracy in English.					
TBL can enhance the interactions among students in class					
TBL can increase the opportunities for learners to					

use English for communication.					
TBL pursues the development of integrated skills in the classroom					
TBA has a clearly defined outcome.					
How would you rate the overall speaking skills of your students?	Very Poor	Poor	Below Average	Good Average	Excellent
In your opinion, what do you believe is the primary reason students struggle with speaking skills?	Lack of vocabulary	Lack of confidence/ motivation	Fear of making mistakes	Limited exposure to the language	Other
Have you implemented a task-based approach in your language teaching for improving speaking skills?	Yes	No	Not sure	If yes, what specific task-based activities have you found most effective in supporting language learners?	
					
How do you address the individual needs and learning styles of your students when implementing a task-based approach?					
How do you assess the success or effectiveness of the task-based approach in improving your students' speaking skills?					

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres

Annexes 13. Students' survey.

We are conducting a research study to understand your perceptions of using a task-based approach to improve your speaking skills. This survey is completely anonymous and your responses will be kept confidential. It should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. Your honest feedback will help us improve this method for future students.

Instructions:

Please read each question carefully and select the answer that best reflects your opinion or experience.

Section 1: Background Information	What is your year of study?	Freshmen, Sophomore Junior Seniors			
Section 2: Task-Based Approach	2.1 How familiar are you with the concept of a task-based approach in language learning?	Never	Rarely	Frequently,	Always
	2.2 How often do your teachers use a task-based approach in your English class?	Never	Rarely	Frequently	Always
	2.3 How would you rate your own speaking skills in the target language?	Poor	Below Average	Good	Excellent
	2.4 What do you find most challenging about speaking in the target language?	Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Grammar	Confidence and motivation
	2.5 Have you ever participated in role-playing activities, group discussions, debates, or presentations as part of your English class?	Not sure	No	Yes	Absolutely yes
Section 3: Perceptions of Task-	3.1 can you share an example of a task you found	No enjoyable	Not engaging	Enjoyable	Engaging

Based Approach for speaking Skills	particularly?	What made it so?"	
	3.2 How do you think the task-based approach has positively or negatively impacted your speaking skills?		
	3.3 On a scale from 1 to 10, how confident do you feel when speaking in the target language after engaging in task-based activities?	1 being not confident at all	10 being very confident

Elaborated by: Maria Olmedo & Oscar Torres.

Annexes 14. Observation instrument.

Observation Sheet for English Class	
Date:	
Observer:	
Class Details:	
- Teacher's Name:	
- Grade/Level:	
- Topic/Unit:	
- Duration of the Class:	
- Class Size:	
I. Lesson Objectives:	
- Are the lesson objectives clearly stated?	
- Do the objectives align with the overall curriculum?	
II. Teaching Strategies:	
- Introduction:	
- How effectively do the teacher introduce the lesson?	
- is there a clear connection to previous lessons or real-world experiences?	
- Engagement:	
- How engaged are the students throughout the lesson?	
- Do the teacher use varied and effective instructional strategies?	
- Instructional Materials:	
- Are the materials appropriate and well-prepared?	
- How effectively are technology and visual aids integrated?	
III. Classroom Management:	
- Behavioural Expectations:	
- Are expectations for student behaviour clear?	
- How well are these expectations enforced?	
- Student Participation:	
- What percentage of students actively participate?	
- Are there strategies employed to encourage participation?	
IV. Assessment and Feedback:	
- Formative Assessment:	
- How do the teacher check for understanding during the lesson?	
- Are formative assessments used effectively?	
- Feedback:	
- How constructive and timely is the teacher's feedback?	