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TASK-BASED LEARNING TO FOSTER ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS AMONG NINTH- GRADE STUDENTS

APRENDIZAJE BASADO EN TAREAS PARA FOMENTAR LAS HABILIDADES DE COMUNICACIÓN ORAL EN ESTUDIANTES DE NOVENO GRADO

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Task-Based Learning to Foster Oral Communication Skills Among Ninth-Grade Students

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ABSTRACT

This action research aimed to improve students' oral communication skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) through the implementation of the pedagogical approach of Task-Based Learning (TBL). A qualitative framework was applied, collecting data from student interviews, classroom observations, and field notes, all focused on students' oral performance. The tools used throughout this research were based on students' interests, including board games and role-play activities that encouraged spoken interaction. The findings revealed that TBL positively impacted ninth graders' English oral communication skills through three interconnected outcomes: collaborative learning during speaking tasks, critical thinking in oral exchanges, and communicative competence enhancement. However, challenges emerged including: occasional disinterest in speaking tasks, overuse of the first language during oral activities, uneven group participation, and limited vocabulary. Consistent teacher guidance, feedback, and vocabulary support helped mitigate these issues and sustain student engagement in oral communication tasks.

Keywords: second language learning, communication skills, student engagement, active learning, experiential learning

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Aprendizaje Basado en Tareas para Fomentar las Habilidades de Comunicación Oral en Estudiantes de Noveno Grado

RESUMEN

Este proyecto de investigación-acción tuvo como objetivo mejorar las habilidades de comunicación oral en inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) de los estudiantes, mediante la implementación del enfoque pedagógico de Aprendizaje Basado en Tareas (Task-Based Learning, TBL). Se aplicó un enfoque cualitativo, recopilando datos a través de entrevistas a estudiantes, observaciones en el aula y notas de campo, todos centrados en el desempeño oral de los alumnos. Las herramientas utilizadas a lo largo de esta investigación se basaron en los intereses de los estudiantes, incluyendo juegos de mesa y actividades de simulación (role-play) que fomentaron la interacción oral. Los hallazgos revelaron que el TBL impactó positivamente en las habilidades de comunicación oral en inglés de los estudiantes de noveno grado, a través de tres resultados interrelacionados: aprendizaje colaborativo durante las tareas orales, pensamiento crítico en los intercambios orales y fortalecimiento de la competencia comunicativa. Sin embargo, surgieron algunos desafíos, entre ellos: desinterés ocasional en las tareas orales, uso excesivo de la lengua materna durante las actividades orales, participación desigual en los grupos y vocabulario limitado. La orientación constante del docente, la retroalimentación y el apoyo en vocabulario ayudaron a mitigar estos problemas y a mantener el compromiso de los estudiantes en las tareas de comunicación oral.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje de una segunda lengua, habilidades comunicativas, compromiso estudiantil, aprendizaje activo, aprendizaje experiencial

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INTRODUCTION

Task-based learning is a pedagogical approach that fosters students' English communicative competence by enabling them to acquire knowledge through completing tasks and applying what they have learned in real-world contexts. In fact, Task-Based learning has attained significant recognition within language pedagogy approaches, as it emphasizes purposeful interpersonal communication and the genuine use of language (Kositchaivat, 2025). It focuses on meaning and content rather than strict grammar instruction, and is considered a learner-centered approach that encourages interaction (Carless, 2004; Littlewood, 2004, as cited in Bunmak, 2017).

It is crucial to comprehend students' needs to outline the steps for effective learning, as this helps improve communication skills and provides tools to impact areas needing more attention. Thus, teachers can tailor lessons based on the student's language requirements once they have determined the student's level of English language competence (IRIS, 2011). This study got its starting point in a needs analysis exercise that allowed us to comprehend the students' current level of English, their communicative challenges, and learning needs. Accordingly, this study seeks to transform mechanical classroom tasks that restrict students' access to meaningful learning and disregard real-world language needs, exploring TBL and its role to enhance students in communicative competence through purposeful tasks.

Considering this, the research study was conducted in the municipality of La Calera, Cundinamarca, in a private school where intensive English was taught. The participants were 22 EFL students from 9th grade with an intermediate to advanced level of English. The relevance of this research lies in the exploration of how TBL fosters the overall performance of students' communicative skills. The findings may help the school community strengthen the quality of English instruction by promoting more effective and communicative teaching practices. By identifying how TBL enhances students' engagement and language performance, teachers can design lessons that better respond to learners' communicative needs and encourage their participation.

This study seeks to answer the following question: How does the implementation of Task-Based learning contribute to the development of ninth graders' oral communication skills? To address this, the research aims to analyze the effectiveness of Task-Based Learning in developing students' oral communication skills in English as a Foreign Language. Specifically, it investigates the outcomes of



using authentic tasks on students' communicative competence and examines how Task-Based Learning contributes to enhancing students' motivation and participation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This theoretical framework aims to provide a sound basis for understanding the main ideas that support this study. Previous research, such as Dodd (2024), has shown how students participate actively in communicative activities and are willing to make mistakes in order to complete the communicative tasks. Therefore, this framework explores task-based learning (TBL), oral communication skills, and student motivation and engagement to understand how communicative tasks can foster oral skills among ninth-grade students at Gimnasio Campestre los arrayanes.

Task based Learning (TBL)

Task-based learning is an innovative, student-centered approach that prioritizes student's interests, and positions them as active learners who apply knowledge through meaningful tasks in authentic contexts. Consistent with this, Nunan (2004), Task-based learning contains three particular components: purpose, process, and product (*as cited in* Bunmank, 2017). In practice, implementing these components in the classroom will help the development of meaningful activities that expose students to communicative tasks in real-world contexts and promote natural interaction with others.

In addition, it allows the correct development of communicative skills by focusing on authentic communication rather than linguistic features. Students' participation becomes more active, allowing the implementation of various tasks designed to help learners overcome their fear of public speaking. Activities such as interviews, role-plays, and debates build confidence, creativity, flexibility, leadership, while generating a supportive environment where students receive constructive feedback so that they can improve their communication skills.

Some research has demonstrated that despite curricular limitations, lexical elements can be strategically introduced through authentic tasks to strengthen prior knowledge in natural language use, thereby fostering effective and authentic communication. In this regard, Skehan (1998, as cited in Azpilicueta-Martínez, 2021) proposes five TBL characteristics: (1) meaning is primary, (2) there is a communication problem to solve, (3) the task relates to real-world activities, (4) task completion takes priority over performance, and (5) assessment is outcome-based.



These principles align with this research focus, as they develop essential skills such as problem-solving and teamwork. This is reflected in activities such as debates, board games, and role-plays, which require students to collaborate in communicative tasks with tangible outcomes. For example, debates on contemporary topics may help students to provide critical opinions, while role plays simulate real-world situations. Consistent with findings of Castillo Losada et al. (2017), the use of authentic materials and tasks was perceived as appropriate, useful and engaging by the students, and also helped them by providing opportunities to use their speaking skills.

Likewise, the teacher's role is crucial in creating a safe and supportive learning environment through collaborative and cooperative activities to build communicative competence. Teachers actively facilitate discussions and support problem-solving among students. As supportive facilitators, they guide students along their academic journey, providing constructive feedback as a communicative tool, which allows students to identify and improve their errors, embracing mistakes as a natural part of learning. Evidence from Fabregat Barrios and Jodar Jurado, (2024) shows that teachers perceive themselves as facilitators rather than instructors. They also express that it is essential to create an environment where students feel to express themselves and make mistakes without fear of judgment, which promotes active participation in communicative tasks.

Oral Communication Skills

Developing students' oral skills in English is a constant challenge. To understand how to foster these skills effectively, it is important to consider both their definition and components. Hymes (1972) points out that communicative competence involves not only grammar knowledge but also the ability to use language appropriately depending on the context. Along with this, Young (2011) defines Interactional Competence (IC) as the ability to co-construct meaning in interaction with others. IC includes seven resources that participants bring to interaction: (1) Identity resources, (2) Linguistic resources, and (3) interactional resources, among others.

Therefore, face-to-face interaction among students is important, as these interactions encourage students to adjust their language to the communicative purpose, receive immediate feedback, and negotiate meaning. According to Long (1996), negotiation of meaning promotes authentic communication, as students have to seek clarification or rephrase ideas to ensure mutual understanding.



Moreover, oral communication is closely linked with cultural aspects. Dalton (2020) explains Agar's (1994) concept of “languaculture” to highlight that culture “emerges” when we communicate in another language. For this reason, when designing tasks, students should be given the opportunity to express their ideas and use language to reflect their cultural identity. Consequently, designing tasks with culturally meaningful elements that promote the negotiation of meaning in real-life situations are key factors for authentic oral production in this research.

Motivation and engagement

Harmer (2007) defined motivation as the internal drive that pushes someone to achieve something (*as cited in* Phithakmethakun & Chinokul, 2020). Similarly, in Envigado, Flórez Vargas, Rodríguez Pérez & Quintero Montoya (2022) found that Project-Based Learning combined with Task-Based Learning significantly boosted students' intrinsic motivation, promoted active engagement, and transformed negative attitudes into positive ones. Considering this, teachers should design engaging tasks and strategies that promote meaningful interaction among learners and real-world communication (Toro et al., 2019,p.112). Consequently, activities in this study were designed sequenced from simple to more complex, for gradual skill growth.

Engagement, on the other hand, is the behavioral, cognitive, and emotional manifestation of motivation in the classroom; what students do, how they think, and how they feel when participating. (Iwaniec & Khaled, 2024). In this sense, motivated students tend to show higher engagement levels. Bai et al. (2025) found a positive correlation between motivation and engagement in learning Chinese and English, suggesting that highly motivated learners participate more actively in language tasks. Engagement plays a crucial role in language acquisition, as motivation is strongly associated with their ability to communicate effectively. Task-based learning, therefore, fosters student engagement and the correct development of students' communicative skills by allowing students to construct meaning independently, and participate in meaningful, collaborative, and motivating activities that create strong connections with peers while sharing their acquired knowledge with others in different contexts.

METHODOLOGY

Ethical considerations

During the development of this research, the privacy and dignity of the minor students who participated



were protected, as well as the confidentiality and anonymity of their data. Their parents or legal guardians were informed about the research, its purpose, and the potential benefits they would gain from participating, and were asked to sign a written consent form detailing the data to be collected for the proper development of the study. Additionally, the school was informed and provided authorization to proceed with the research. Likewise, students expressed agreement, acknowledging their consistent participation.

Research design

In this context, classroom activities centered on textbook assignments affected students' oral fluency. To address this issue, task-based learning was employed as a pedagogical tool that encourages the authentic application of English in practical contexts. For this reason, the study adopted a qualitative action research design that focuses on understanding classroom phenomena through participants' perspectives and reflection, and it improves classroom execution through repetitive cycles. As Bryman (2016, p.78) states, qualitative research emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data, allowing researchers to explore participants' social realities in a depth way. This action research was applied since it promotes continuous improvement of pedagogical practices through cyclical stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection (McNiff, 2002) This approach coincides with the study's aim of improving the students' communicative competence by adapting tasks based on their specific needs.

Participants

Participants included 22 EFL ninth-grade students (12 males and 10 females), from a private school located in La Calera, in Cundinamarca, Colombia. Their ages ranged between 13 and 15 years, and their English teacher, who acted as a facilitator. The school follows an intensive English program, students typically have four English classes per week.

The group displayed varied attitudes toward English. Although several students enjoyed participating in class, others showed anxiety or hesitation when speaking in front of others. A diagnostic test was conducted to assess their English proficiency and oral communication levels. The information collected from the tests allowed us to develop tasks for communication skills purposes taking into account their previous knowledge. Although students had a solid grammatical foundation, they required greater



confidence and fluency in oral communication skills, making them ideal participants for this research.

Instruments and techniques to collect data

To track progress and change over time, we used three main data collection instruments: field notes, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. These instruments were applied during two action research cycles — at the beginning, middle, and end of the research—to document students' perceptions, challenges, and improvements in oral skills.

- **Field notes:** documented classroom observations during each session, capturing spontaneous reactions, although contextual information was briefly and discreetly written down during class, the field notes were fully registered after the class was conducted, in order to avoid students feeling self-conscious (Bryman, 2012).
- **Semi-structured interviews:** provided qualitative insights into students' attitudes, challenges, and progress in oral communication.
- **Questionnaires:** included open-ended and scaled questions, helped identify students' perceptions and their learning process and confidence when speaking English. As Minero (2016) from Edutopia argues, “The surveys help students reflect, become more self-aware, and adopt agency and ownership over their learning.”

Action Research Cycles

The process included two action research cycles.

- **Cycle one - Observation and initial implementation:** This first cycle lasted eight weeks, and oral communicative tasks aligned with students' interests were introduced along with collaborative activities. Students participated in collaborative activities like debates, role-plays, and board games. Engagement and performance were monitored by observation and informal feedback.
- **Cycle two - Implementation and reflection:** Taking into account the reflections and results from the Cycle 1, the tasks were adjusted to address the observed challenges, such as uneven participation and overreliance on L1. This cycle lasted another eight weeks, emphasizing confidence building, teamwork and continuous oral practice. At the end of this cycle, final interviews and questionnaires were carried out to assess the students progress and insights.



DATA ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

To ensure validity and reliability, we employed strategies such as triangulation of instruments (interviews, questionnaires, and field notes), following Patton (2014), who stated that triangulation strengthens credibility and helps reduce researcher bias. Additionally, open, axial and selective coding based on Grounded Theory was conducted manually to analyze qualitative data (Strauss & Corbin, 2014; Cresswell & Cresswell, 2017). Through this process, codes and the findings emerged inductively from participants' responses, strengthening the internal validity of the study.

Meanwhile multiple-choice, ordinal and likert-scale questions, as well as dichotomous questions, were used primarily as complementary tools instead of rigorous tests. Although both qualitative and quantitative instruments were employed, the overall design remained that of qualitative action research, since the main focus was in improving and reflecting upon a pedagogical practice, and numerical data served only to support and contrast the qualitative findings. As Johnson (2014) explains, quantitative methods in an action research project should be used to portray what is happening in a certain situation (p. 128).

The results of the semi-structured interviews and student responses to open-ended questionnaires provided insights into students' perceptions of their learning process, including habits, challenges and preferences. These results were compared with field notes from classroom activities.

Excerpts from questionnaires gathered in the first cycle

- Cuando realizas actividades de conversación en clase, ¿cómo te sientes? (Respuesta abierta)
Plantilla de respuesta:
"Me siento ___ porque ___. Me resulta más fácil hablar cuando ___, pero me cuesta cuando ___. Creo que mejoraría si ___."
Tu respuesta:
- Pues me siento un poco incómoda porque no tengo
mucha vocabulario y no se pronunciar bien algunas
palabras.

Translation: When you do conversation activities in class, how do you feel? (Open-ended question)

Answer

Well, I feel a bit uncomfortable because I don't have much vocabulary and I can't pronounce some words properly.



- ¿Cómo describirías las actividades orales que realizaste el año pasado en inglés? (Respuesta abierta)

En general, fueron _____ porque _____. Disfruté _____, pero creo que faltó _____. Me habría gustado que _____.

Tu respuesta:

En general fueron muy poco como entretenidas y un poco aburridas, pero que podrían ser más interesantes. Pero igual pude aprender palabras y en general más inglés.

Translation: How would you describe the oral activities you did last year in English class? (Open-ended question)

Answer

In general, there were very few oral activities, they were not very entertaining and a bit boring. I think they could have been more interesting, but I was still able to learn some new words and, overall, more English.

- ¿Cómo describirías las actividades orales que realizaste el año pasado en inglés? (Respuesta abierta)

En general, fueron _____ porque _____. Disfruté _____, pero creo que faltó _____. Me habría gustado que _____.

Tu respuesta:

En general fueron aburridas y pesadas, pero las actividades eran y parecían.

Translation

How would you describe the oral activities you did last year in English class? (Open-ended question)

Answer

In general, they were boring and tedious; all the activities were very similar.

Finally, a member-checking process was conducted to confirm the accuracy of students' perspectives and reinforced data consistency. This strategy is recognized for enhancing credibility and ensuring that participants' voices are authentically represented in qualitative research (Birt et al., 2016). The integration of these procedures enabled us to obtain trustworthy and comprehensive insights into students' learning experiences.

Table 1. Emerging Categories and Supporting Evidence from Field Notes, Questionnaires , and Interviews

Categories	Field notes transcription	Questionnaires	Interviews
Collaborative Learning as a Source of Participation and Motivation	“They found a way to express their ideas by giving examples or receiving support from one of the groups’ members”.	“Sometimes I get help from my partner who understands English better.”	"The team I chose was made up of my friends and they were all very excited about the activity and we split up into two groups, one city for one side and the other for the other, looking for the clues."
Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills	“they responded in a thoughtful manner, attempting to provide complete and well-argued responses.” “Teachers asked follow-up questions based on the main question to guide them toward an	“I would like them to give us more time to think about the answer we want to give.” “However, I believe that very few activities of this type are done during the year, and it is preferred to opt for	“My stereotype was about men not crying which I think is very false, totally false as we are all in general men and women are human and crying is a totally human way of expressing ourselves.”

Table 2. Codes for identifying data sources

	answer”	less interactive activities.”	
Communicative Competence Enhancement	“One member of each group was in charge of orally describing the movie” “ Students were to ask closed questions to their teammate in order to gather more	“However, I think I would like the corrections to be more detailed and in real time.” “Very good, I really enjoy having conversations in	“I prepare by watching videos on the subject and learning new vocabulary to express myself better.” "I have explained English to my friends. First I



clues about the film.“	English as I feel it helps me to improve things like my pronunciation.”	translate directly into Spanish and then rephrase with the same words to reinforce understanding."
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The following table presents the codes used to identify each data source. The instruments labeled with the number “1” correspond to those applied during the first cycle, except for the field notes, which were collected in each class

Cycle	C1, C2
Interviews	IN1, IN2
Questionnaires	SV1, SV2
Field notes	FN1, FN2, FN3, FN4, FN5, FN6.

Note. prepared by the authors

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study reveal significant interconnection among three paramount aspects: oral communication skills enhancement, TBL (Task-Based Learning), and group engagement and participation for tasks achievement. Ninth graders bring with them previous learning experiences, academic background, and personal traits that strengthen communicative skills in the second language. Participants in this context reveal strong dedication for building meaning as tasks' main characteristics (Skehan, 1998, cited in Azpilicueta, 2020). The results suggest that task-based learning contributes to the improvement of oral English communication skills as students cultivate oral real-world interactions to convey their ideas and standpoints. Therefore, in this section there are three outcomes that were identified during analysis: firstly collaborative learning as a source of participation and motivation, secondly critical thinking as a pathway to oral communication development and oral communication skills enhancement through communicative tasks.

Collaborative Learning as a source of participation and motivation

Collaborative learning refers to an educational approach and philosophy of interaction that stimulates meaningful participation and sustained motivation. It was evident during cycles 1 and 2 that learners



demonstrated motivation by actively assuming their individual roles. They contributed meaningfully to the development of the task by supporting each other and leveraging their group members' strengths. Furthermore, through their participation they showed awareness of their role. For instance, students demonstrated their motivation to collaboratively accomplish the learning goals by creating an atmosphere of caring and friendship. Also students demonstrated cooperative accomplishment, motivation and engagement of learning goals during the stereotypes story building task, where one story about common stereotypes was divided into seven parts. The clues for each spot were understood, students exhibited high motivation to actively participate, quickly moving to each area to collect the story part. When all the story parts were gathered, a group discussion was held to express thoughts and opinions. Thus, eagerness to work in groups to accomplish a goal is evident in the extract below.

At the beginning, the students paid close attention to the instructions, excitedly forming their groups with the people they wanted and assigning roles to each group member to rapidly collect the story parts. When they arrived at the classroom, they assembled the story, and then each group read it in front of the class, sharing their perceptions based on their personal experiences. (C1 - FN5)

I found it very cool because, even though there are bonds among classmates and we often stick with the same people, I feel we all helped each other with speaking, reading, and listening, but especially speaking, which was the focus of the activities. We could develop our English vocabulary more by playing and in a dynamic way. At the end I expressed my idea of "men don't cry" stereotype the best I could. (C2 - IN2)

I believe we worked very well as a team since we're very close. We divided the clues among ourselves so that, in the end, we could find them all and solve the text. I think I could have spoken a bit more, but I expressed my thoughts on the topic correctly, in my opinion, as I discussed various subjects. (C2 - IN2)

Notwithstanding, a significant challenge was perceptible while executing the task. Exhaustion hinder the task performance causing disinterest for the other groups contributions. Thereby, ongoing support was thus paramount for sustaining students' motivation and participation throughout the task.

By that time groups were reading the story and sharing their opinions; other groups showed no interest in their contribution; I think it was because they had arrived exhausted. (C1 - FN5).



Indeed, as Peters et al. (2020) highlights, tasks developed in groups underscore a collective dedication to promote key competences such as collaboration, creativity, issue resolution, and critical thinking. Truly, transitioning from conventional teaching-led methods to strategies that focus on cooperative learning, foster teamwork and collective knowledge building. Therefore, in this research, collaborative learning promoted teamwork, motivation, and meaningful peer interaction, thereby fostering 9th graders' development of oral communication skills.

Critical Thinking as a Pathway to Oral Communication Development

Critical thinking refers to the ability to introspectively ask questions about one's own beliefs by analyzing and considering consequences. Ennis (1985) defined it as “reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do” (p.45). In this research, critical thinking was most evident during cycles 1 and 2, when learners faced real-life challenges and demonstrated careful information gathering before taking a position. This process directly contributed to the development of students' oral communication skills, as their ability to analyze information and justify their viewpoints allowed them to express ideas more clearly and confidently during oral tasks.

One example was the Parchis task. The color of the space and the piece's movement determined which question they had to answer, on topics such as the social impact of reggaeton music, streaming platforms, homework and the animal market. In these activities, the development of their oral communication skills was evident as students developed oral arguments supported by the constructivist approach that served as a bridge between critical thinking and oral communication skills.

Critical thinking was also fostered through a constructivist approach. In these activities, each participant had to decide independently, debate classmates' opinions, interpret scenarios, and analyze the groups involved and their possible impacts. Although some scenarios were closely related to current trends, students evaluated sources of information to educate themselves and take a position.

When they did have to answer, they responded in a thoughtful manner, attempting to provide complete and well-argued responses. (C1 -FN1)

I believe all my responses were generated with a strong sense of social awareness.

My family has always emphasized critical thinking, and we've always had well-formed and well-articulated opinions. Overall, I can express my arguments well. (C2 - IN2)



I think I applied a lot of critical thinking in that activity even though I wasn't very familiar with the topic. I think I contributed a lot to the activity, and my classmates probably noticed that. So, I would say it wasn't entirely fluent because I struggled with the topic and got confused about what was right or wrong, but I believe my idea was coherent. (C2 - IN2)

At the same time it was also evident that some students played strategically with two pieces to avoid landing onto a space marked with a question. Therefore, constant guidance was of great importance to assure the communicative objective. However, after some time, I noticed that the students were avoiding landing on spaces with a colored dot by moving the other piece instead. This allowed them to cleverly advance their strategies without answering any questions. (C1 -FN1)

Above all, students were capable of applying critical thinking methods for formulating thought processes (Arisoy & Aybek, 2021, p. 99) that require deconstructing individual thoughts patterns, grounded in reasoning and evidence before reaching conclusions. Such reflective and analytical practices strengthened their oral communication skills, as they learned to articulate their ideas more coherently and support their viewpoints with logical arguments.

Oral Communication Skills Enhancement Through Communicative Tasks

Communicative competence relates to a language tool for communication, understanding and interpretation of reality (Mayo & Barrioluengo, 2017). It is paramount to highlight this observation since over the course of cycles 1 and 2, students were exposed to real world communicative tasks through which there was an oral fluency progression that required both oral articulation and comprehension of verbal input (Moss & Ross-Feldman, 2003).

During the development of one of the communicative tasks, students played dominoes. Learners provided evidence of language production by answering open questions, based on the number of the piece played, regarding earlier generations. An example of the questions is: what did past generations think about gender roles?. Students manifested confidence in speaking, expressing ideas based on current society. Jointly, by exchanging information, students enriched linguistic skills, breaking down barriers to convey thoughts meaningfully.

The class was prepared to give students enough time to think about the context of the question and their response. Students answered struggling with vocabulary, nevertheless, they found a way to express their



ideas by giving examples or receiving support from one of the groups' members. (C1 -FN4)

My experiences with the activities were very meaningful because I'm a very shy person, and through them, I've become less shy. Besides learning, you can socialize with people in a different and unique way. Each interaction has been special, and through games, you remember each one and the topics we discussed. I feel implementing them is fundamental because, without them, my interaction with the class and others would be more complicated, and I wouldn't like to express myself in English. (C2 - IN2)

The students showed interest, taking the time to respond and organizing their ideas to clearly share their points of view. It was evident that they were not only answering the questions but also engaging in debates within their groups. (C1-FN2)

Another meaningful communicative task took place when 9th graders played a game called Jenga, answering questions like: have you ever sent a message to the wrong person? Students conveyed a significant progression in terms of accuracy and fluency, making an effort to expand their answers by narrating their experiences with humour and intrigue. Additionally they demonstrated relevant acquisition of language by using the grammar explanation and contextualizing it based on their own experiences.

I really felt very good and comfortable because, after a clear explanation, we moved on to practice. We managed good vocabulary and a good way to practice among ourselves and lose our shyness. I feel I've evolved a lot in this process because the help you've provided has been very important; you've helped each of us progress and given us many additional supports that we value. (C2 - IN2)

I felt quite good; I had an idea of what I wanted to express, although at times I lacked certain words. I could think of them in Spanish but couldn't complete the thought in English. Still, I found ways to make myself understood. (C2 - IN2)

Notwithstanding, important challenges arose during the aforementioned tasks. On the one hand, tasks were designed to be developed in groups, thus the use of the first language at certain points was evident, hindering the communicative purpose of the task. On the other hand, occasionally the group's commitment was a key to the development of the task, interfering with the oral objective and the class dynamic.



Therefore, constant control of the groups will maintain the dynamic nature of the task which is the use of real communication to carry out a task to foster meaningful learning Toro et al. (2018).

CONCLUSION

This article aimed to analyze how the implementation of task-based learning (TBL) affects ninth-graders' oral communication and to examine its influence on student motivation. These findings revealed a seamless development of students' oral communication skills and strong connections between communicative tasks, collaborative learning, and students' motivation, leading to evident progress in oral performance.

Moving away from traditional tasks, the results indicate that real-world communicative tasks served as a means for fostering the development of oral communication skills. Activities such as role plays, debates, and games that simulated real-life situations where students had to negotiate meaning and adapt language to the different context encouraged fluency, confidence, and vocabulary expansion.

As for motivation and participation, students were exposed to real-world activities where taking responsibility for their role and teamwork was constantly and key to reaching a solution in the task, a collaborative atmosphere was created where enthusiasm and a desire to complete the activities while developing the activities .

Regarding oral communication development, the integration of critical thinking within TBL activities was crucial as students were encouraged to analyze real-life situations, and express opinions using English as medium of communication. These cognitive processes allow students to not only memorize grammar structures and vocabulary, but also prompt them to be focused on reasoning, justify and express their view clearly and confidently.

Overall, this study provides insights into how didactic classroom interaction in an English class can support the development of authentic communication, offering strategies that help teachers to design more dynamic and engaging experiences. Nevertheless, some challenges emerged, including students using their first language during group activities and a few participants being less involved than others. For future research and classroom practice, it is suggested to analyze the role of TBL in cooperation with artistic activities where culture plays a central role to explore its impact on core skills, Additionally, investigate how cognitive skills are developed differently than in a monolingual setting. Teachers are



encouraged to continue using real-world tasks to promote greater interaction and language practice.

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