

TASK BASED LEARNING THROUGH SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM TO PROMOTE EFL LEARNERS' COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

APRENDIZAJE BASADO EN TAREAS A TRAVÉS DEL CONSTRUCTIVISMO SOCIAL PARA PROMOVER LA COMPETENCIA COMUNICATIVA EN ESTUDIANTES DE INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

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Abstract

This article follows a qualitative action research study conducted to four professionals who all excel in different fields. All of the participants that partook in this investigation were educated before the law that made English as a foreign language mandatory was implemented by the ministry of education in 1994. The aim of the study was to determine the effect task-based learning through a social constructivism approach would have on the learners' communicative competence in English. The instruments used to collect data were a semi-structured interview, video recordings, and an observational checklist. Furthermore, a triangulation method using the aforementioned instruments was implemented, allowing for the identification of several categories. The study revealed that through the implementation of meaningful tasks in a collaborative environment, the students were able to overcome initial confidence insecurities that prevented them from rarely participating in early sessions. Additionally, they were able to overcome an unfavorable attitude towards the foreign language due to the student's previous encounter with English. Overall, the participants were able to overcome the fears they had with the foreign language, which prompted them to successfully strengthen their communicative competence.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, EFL learners, Communicative competence, Task-based learning, Social constructivism, Interaction

Resumen

Este artículo sigue a un estudio de investigación-acción cualitativa realizado a cuatro profesionales que se destacan en diferentes campos profesionales. Todos los participantes que participaron en esta investigación fueron educados antes de que, la ley que hizo obligatorio el Inglés como lengua

extranjera, fuera implementada por el Ministerio de Educación en 1994. El objetivo del estudio fue determinar el efecto del aprendizaje basado en tareas a través del constructivismo social como enfoque tendría sobre la competencia comunicativa de los alumnos en Inglés. Los instrumentos utilizados para recolectar datos fueron una entrevista semiestructurada, grabaciones de video y una lista de verificación de observación. Además, se implementó un método de triangulación utilizando los instrumentos antes mencionados, permitiendo la identificación de varias categorías. El estudio reveló que a través de la implementación de tareas significativas en un ambiente colaborativo, los estudiantes pudieron superar las inseguridades de confianza iniciales que les impedían participar en las primeras sesiones. Adicionalmente, lograron superar una actitud desfavorable hacia la lengua extranjera debido al encuentro previo del alumno con el Inglés. En general, los participantes lograron superar los miedos que tenían con el idioma extranjero, lo que los impulsó a fortalecer con éxito su competencia comunicativa.

Palabras clave: Inglés como lengua extranjera, estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera, competencia comunicativa, aprendizaje basado en tareas, constructivismo social, Interacción

Résumé

Cet article fait suite à une étude de recherche-action qualitative menée auprès de quatre professionnels qui excellent tous dans différents domaines. Tous les participants qui ont participé à cette enquête ont été formés avant que la loi qui rendait l'anglais obligatoire comme langue étrangère ne soit mise en œuvre par le ministère de l'Éducation en 1994. Le but de l'étude était de déterminer l'effet de l'apprentissage par tâches à travers un constructivisme social. L'approche aurait eu sur la compétence communicative des apprenants en anglais. Les instruments utilisés pour recueillir les données étaient une entrevue semi-structurée, des enregistrements vidéo et une liste de contrôle d'observation. De plus, une méthode de triangulation utilisant les instruments précités a été mise en œuvre, permettant l'identification de plusieurs catégories. L'étude a révélé que grâce à la mise en œuvre de tâches significatives dans un environnement collaboratif, les étudiants ont pu surmonter les insécurités de confiance initiales qui les empêchaient de participer rarement aux premières sessions. De plus, ils ont pu surmonter une attitude défavorable à l'égard de la langue étrangère en raison de la précédente rencontre de l'élève avec l'anglais. Dans l'ensemble, les participants ont pu surmonter les craintes qu'ils avaient avec la langue étrangère, ce qui les a incités à renforcer avec succès leurs compétences communicatives.

Mots-clés: Anglais Langue Étrangère, Apprenants EFL, Compétence Communicative, Apprentissage par Tâches, Constructivisme Social. Interaction

Introduction

The Colombian ministry of education declared English as a foreign language a compulsory area of the curriculum in 1994. The Ministry of Education took into account the importance English had in improving work and business performance. Also, they determined the relevance the foreign language had in entertainment and cultural activities. Nevertheless, before the law was put into fruition, many institutions considered English non-essential in the curriculum. Nor was it a requirement to obtain a degree.

This research project arises from several aspects that were evidenced through context analysis of the previous generation of students that were educated before the implementation of the 1994 law imposed by the Colombian Ministry of Education. A group of 4 professionals in different fields demonstrated an overall basic performance in the English language. However, they have shown their willingness to learn the language communicatively. Keeping this in mind, the participants have found great success doing activities related to real-life tasks because they were able to relate it to their everyday routine. Furthermore, they were capable of contributing more as a class by working in groups, where every student had an opportunity to provide their own ideas. Taking the previous information into account, this project focuses on the incorporation of task-based learning in a social constructivist environment to impact participants' communicative competence.

This paper contains four sections in which readers can find different aspects of this project. First, it contains a background overview, the statement of the problem, and the overall description of this project. Then, the literature review refers to communicative competence and task-Based Learning in a social constructivist environment, and the strategy proposed as a possible solution. After this, the conducted study methodology is shown, relevant information of the data collection is given, and the data results are presented. Finally, the conclusion of this project will be shared.

Statement of the Problem

This investigation took place in two municipalities of Colombia: Villavicencio, Meta and Chía, Cundinamarca. The analyzed group was formed by four professionals: 2 men and 2 women ranged in ages that average 50 and 60 years old, see (*Figure 1*). In terms of educational background, all the participants graduated from high school and the majority of the participants are professionals

in different fields. *Figure 2* displays the level of studies of each participant. However, during the process of acquiring these educational merits, English was not seen as a necessity. Nevertheless, the participants understood the importance of foreign language acquisition and their need to implement it in their professional environments.

Figure 1. Age of participants [Graph].

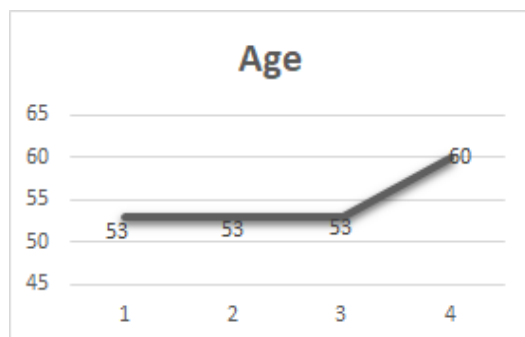
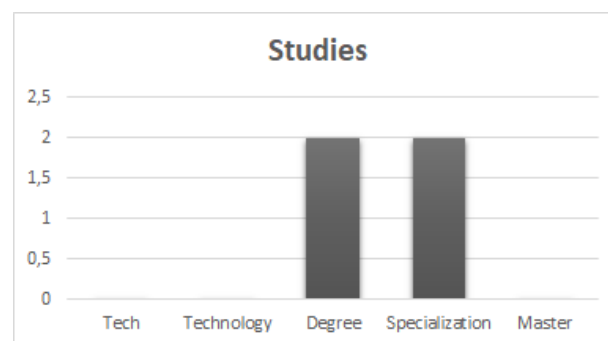


Figure 2. Participants level studies [Graph].



The main problem was identified by using three techniques that allowed us to observe the participants. First, a Semi-Structured interview was performed. Interview with all participants, mentioning their personal experiences with a foreign language. Second, the use of a Video Recording on the development of each class in detail. Third, an Observation process, which describes the interactions and events throughout the development of the students in the classes. In brief, the implementation of these techniques led us to identify the process of each participant throughout each session, as well as the outcome the approach and method had in their communicative competence.

Communicative Competence is defined as a natural process where learners perform meaningful interactions with others. However, it is necessary to acquire a previous language structure in order to deliver an intended message. This notion was found as a difficult skill to achieve in the learning process for the participants in previous attempts to learn English, due to a lack of real necessity in their social context. For that reason, communicative competence is one of the main focuses that was implemented to improve participants' EFL learning process.

In order to assist this common factor of difficulty in the EFL learners, a beneficial language learning method was sought out. Consequently, Task-Based learning was implemented, giving learners the opportunity to complete real life meaningful tasks while using the target language. Therefore, with the application of this method the participants had to use all the language resources acquired for the completion of the task rather than using just one specific language item. According to Rodriguez and Rocio (2018), the EFL interaction among learners and teachers was assisted by the implementation of

collaborative task-based learning. In their study they managed to engage the students' behavior by providing them with collaborative activities where teachers and students worked together to construct their learning process. Considering the positive feedback and benefits of task-based learning in an EFL classroom, it was essential to implement this method in the class.

Social constructivism is defined as the knowledge built through social interaction along with an individual's critical thinking process, as postulated by Vygotsky (1968). It is also the main ideal for the implementation of a methodology in a real context. Therefore, to guarantee that all participants succeed as a group, we opted to continue with this collaborative strategy. Thanks to this development, learners have the opportunity to interact with their environment in an effective way, giving rise to meaningful learning through social and cultural interaction.

In summary, communicative competence is a common factor that takes a long time to acquire for EFL Learners. This is the case of the group of participants acquiring a foreign language. After analyzing the participants' communicative competence, The researchers decided that the best way to improve their performance is by implementing task-based learning activities throughout the development of the teachers' practicum in a social constructivist environment.

According to the observation done to the students, the following question was purposed

Research question

How does task-based learning through a social constructivism approach impact EFL learners' communicative competence?

Research objective

To examine the effect of task-based learning through a social constructivist approach on EFL learners' communicative competence.

Literature Review

The three main constructs that support this investigation correspond firstly to task-based learning by implementing real-life tasks in the classroom in order to expand EFL learners' foreign language acquisition. Secondly, communicative competence as a way to help expand students' capacity to use the external language in order to interact effectively. Thirdly, social constructivism in an effort to consolidate communal interaction among the students so that they can construct and formulate their foreign language learning growth as a group. As a result, with the aforementioned constructs the investigation was carried out through an action research plan.

Task-based Learning

Task-based learning derives from communicative teaching. Its objective is to make language learning more demonstrative and conversational by implementing real-life situations that will help learners feel more acquainted with the foreign language. Córdoba (2016) states that TBL was created as an attempt to break with traditional language teaching which consisted in giving students long lectures on grammatical structures, and not have them put into practice what they were learning. On the other hand, with task-based learning students must appraise all the items that they have acquired in order to complete the task at hand.

Task-based learning benefits students by helping them enhance their foreign language learning process through communication and personal experience. Ellis (2017) asserts that tasks “Are needed for beginners, who lack the resources to produce in the L2; they provide learners with the comprehensible input that helps get them started in learning an L2” (p. 4). Furthermore, Shintani (2016) confirms this statement by saying that “Whereas previously they had treated English as an object to be learned, they began to use it as a tool to communicate to achieve the outcomes of the task” (p. 11). Moreover, Rodriguez and Rocio (2018) affirmed that “tasks were designed to fulfill students’ necessities and interests, but also to promote interaction in the English classroom” (p. 4). Therefore, Task-based learning has provided beneficial outcomes to students in their foreign language learning process, by coercing the learners to use the foreign language as a tool in order to complete the tasks.

Consequently, the finality of task-based learning has varied for those who implement it. Elmahdi (2016), explains that “TBLT identified the main role of the student as central who accomplish the task. In fact, through this process, the learner plays a number of specific roles such as group participant, monitor, risk-taker and innovator, strategy user, goal-setter and self-evaluator” (p. 303). On the other hand, Córdoba (2016) states that “Task-based language teaching provides opportunities to experience spoken, reading, listening, and written language through meaningful class assignments that involve learners in practical and functional use of L2” (p. 2). Nevertheless, Task-based learning has proved to be an effective method to implement during the foreign language acquisition process which is why it was applied in our investigation.

Communicative Competence

Communicative Competence is an individual process, which requires background knowledge in the EFL to produce an effective communicative message. Nordquist (2020) mentioned Dell Hymes (1971-1972), by expressing that communication skills are a natural process in which children acquire experience and knowledge through real and meaningful interactions with others, being able to recognize their shortcomings and strengths in the use of language, promoting an active participation in them by

creating an optimal language code for both verbal and written communication in a social and cultural setting. This notion is considered as the ability to communicate with others in an oral or written way. Overall, communicative competence is an adequate construct to promote a real interaction among the participant adults to learn a foreign language.

On the other hand, Chomsky, cited by Thabit (2018) established competence as “the ideal speaker-listener knowledge of his language” (p. 3). Claiming that the main focus of communicative competence is based on grammatical and linguistic theory by mentioning “to characterize the abstract abilities of the speaker-listener, in which enable the person to produce a grammatically correct sentence” (p. 3). Hymes addresses Chomsky’s ideal by postulating that any person cannot perform in a real situation knowing only grammatical competence. Savignon (cited by Pawar and Thabit, 2018) supports Hymes point of view by defining communicative competence as “the ability to function in a truly communicative setting” (p. 8). Hymes concluded that the language structure and the socio-cultural environment are necessary to acquire a communicative skill and not just center on only one.

Canale and Swain (cited by Bryan, 2019) said that communicative competence is a system of language skills, in which interaction and communication are necessary for real life. Thus, it is linked to an individual's knowledge about the use of language and it’s divided into three aspects, which are; a) Grammatical knowledge, b) Language interaction in social environments and contexts and c) The Combinations of communicative expressions to develop speeches. Bryan (2019), also mentioned several theoreticians such as; Skehan (1995-1998); and Bachman and Palmer (1996), who affirmed that communicative competence is a natural and dynamic process. Therefore, grammatical and sociolinguistic competence transform the communicative competence as an essential purpose to acquire EFL.

Social Constructivism

In the field of postmodern pedagogy, Piaget and Vygotsky brought into the scenario Cognitive constructivism where the main focus has to do with the individual and how the reality is built (cited in Ferreiro, 2016). For Piaget, knowledge was a construct made only by the individual without the context taking part in the process. Then, Vygotsky provided relevance to the reality of the student in the learning procedure. In addition to this construct, Chiluiza (2017) affirmed that social constructivism learning depends on the students and can give them great satisfaction, individually and as part of a class community.

Social constructivism is defined as the knowledge built through social interaction along with a personal critical thinking process (Chiluiza, 2017, p. 44). In this way, the model provides a pedagogical tool for this project that looks for a positive impact on the instruction of EFL on the institution. The use of language and culture is the base in which humans are capable of experiencing, communicating, and

understanding reality. In essence, the knowledge acquired is not simply constructed, it is knowledge co-constructed due to a collaborative process such as learning. In this way, learning is the result of socio-cultural contexts; ideas constructed from experience, having a personal meaning for the student where the duality allows to understand what occurs in society.

For this construct, Agudelo (2012) supported how reality is constructed through human activity, and the properties of the world according to the members of society. Then, collaborative learning should be seen as a process of peer interaction mediated by the teacher as part of the social constructivism approach. For this reason, González (2012) stipulates that knowledge is developed through two main factors such as internal (cognitive) and external (biological and socio-cultural), as well as Matajira (2019), who proposed that humans must construct their own knowledge in order to understand the context and their reality. Therefore, social constructivism is endorsing knowledge built based on collective work, the pedagogical approach basis of this project.

Research Design

Type of study

This project is based on a qualitative case study approach which provides the possibility to explore and observe a certain phenomenon in a specific context with different data sources. The implementation of task-based learning teaching as methodology and social constructivism as the approach to conduct the study pretended to provide an insight regarding the phenomenon of interruption of previous attempts to learn English as a foreign language acknowledged in the participants. In addition, qualitative research allows us to determine how individuals interact in unpredictable scenarios. Merriam (2019) affirms “The world, or reality, is not the fixed, single agreed upon, or measurable phenomenon that is assumed to be in positivist, quantitative research” (p. 3). Therefore, this study aims at observing the impact of the implementation of Task-Based learning through social constructivism to promote EFL learners’ communicative competence.

Context and Population

This investigation took place simultaneously in two separate municipalities in Colombia. First, Villavicencio which is located in the Meta department; and Chía, which is situated in the department of Cundinamarca. The classes were carried out in Villavicencio, which is where 2 of the students were stationed. However, in order to instruct the other two participants located in Chía, we used a virtual platform that allowed them to connect simultaneously with the participants from Villavicencio. The study group that was analyzed consisted of 2 men and 2 women. All of them ranging between the ages of 50

and 60 years old. Furthermore, all participants are high school graduates and stand out in their respective fields.

Nevertheless, their education was conducted before the Ministry of Education considered foreign language acquisition as a necessity in schools and universities. As a result, they have little to no experience with the English language. However, they all are aware of the influence that English has in today's society for which they wanted to start implementing it in their corresponding professions as a way for personal growth. Therefore, it was their willingness to learn English that attracted us to this population, and it is why we decided to carry out the investigation with this group of adults.

Ethical Considerations

Participants were informed of this research project, the finality, and dynamic of the investigation. Furthermore, we exposed to them the several data collection instruments that were going to be incorporated in all sessions. Additionally, we informed them it was necessary to take notes and film all throughout the class. In order to participate, a consent form was given to all 4 independent participants where they were informed of everything previously mentioned and where they had to sign if they wanted to cooperate in this research project. As a result, all of the participants signed, giving permission to use their image in order to conduct the investigation and implement the data collection instruments.

Data Collection instruments

Three instruments were used for the data collection process. First, a Semi-Structured Interview was performed to the participants. Evans and Lewis (2018) state that Semi-structured interviews “are valuable because they allow researchers to explore subjective viewpoints” (p. 2). Second, the use of a Video Recording which allowed us to observe the development of each class in detail as well as the progress that the participants had throughout the course of each session. Third, an Observation checklist, Tong (2020) views observation as “a reliable approach to evaluate instructional quality and fidelity of implementation” (p. 8). This instrument was applied by two observers: A, and B. Thus, allowing to analyze the process of each participant and develop throughout each class.

Instructional Design

Pedagogical approach and method:

Once the needs of each participant were identified a pedagogical approach and method that benefited them all was sought out. As a means of approach, it was determined that social constructivism was a key component, allowing the participants to construct their own learning process through a

collaborative environment. On the other hand, a method that would complement the approach was pursued, therefore the decision was made to incorporate Task-Based Learning, granting a more demonstrative and conversational setting. In short, both methods and approaches were chosen wisely in the execution of this investigation due to their effectiveness in foreign language acquisition.

Stages/steps of Task - Based Learning

Pre-task: It provides an introduction of the class; it gives instruction of the task and what is expected from the students.

Task:

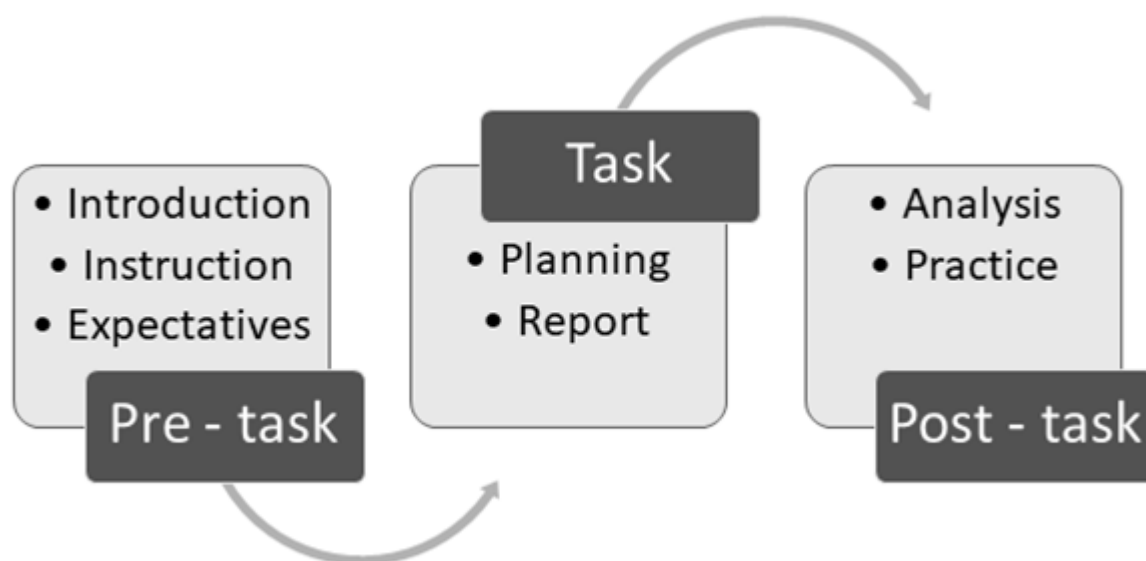
- a) **Planning:** This phase informs what they performed, and the outcome obtained once the task is completely accomplished
- b) **Report:** The students can share, compare and comment the findings or results in groups with the rest of the class.

Post - task:

- a) **Analysis:** it is planned to highlight the relevant parts of the students' report. The teacher is expected to ask students to analyze content looking for interesting details. Lastly, the teacher mediates an analysis of the language used in the previous phase.

- b) **Practice:** Task that allowed the students to practice activities based on the language competence developing when needed.

Figure 6. Stages of TBL [Graph].



Criteria for selection of topics and organization

The participants developed a diagnostic test that allowed us to identify their English level and choose the appropriate topics according to their Professional and Personal needs. According to the results of the test, all participants obtained an A2 level. Thus, the process of teaching-learning was defined, where the main focus works upon promoting communicative competence and real content involving useful knowledge. As a result, a syllabus was designed with the main purpose of building and producing an introduction to performing self-presentation through tasks and social constructivism as an approach to achieve knowledge.

Due to the debilities of the language, the process initiated with the basics regarding the topic of greetings. Then, it continued with the verb to be, allowing them to produce questions and answers regarding their personal information. In addition, participants were guided to use the proper structure of an introduction by using accurate information with likes and dislikes as the tool to express their preferences. Consequently, adverbs of frequency were applied to convey how often they performed certain activities. Lastly, the modal verbs *can* and *can't* as the medium to manifest possibilities, request permission, and talk about abilities. Furthermore, to reinforce the application of the syllabus, important

historical figures were added to the content. As well as tasks that required interaction among the participants to set up and produce the information necessary to accomplish each session.

Data Analysis Procedures

For the analysis procedure, the triangulation method was used, incorporating the three data collection instruments. Graue (2015) affirms “Triangulation means that the researcher uses data from a variety of sources applying a variety of methods” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 397), allowing to gather conclusive information from all sources. These three instruments consisted of the semi-structured interview, applied at the beginning and at the conclusion of the process, As well as two video recordings that were conducted on the third and fifth session. Finally, the observational checklist utilized in each class. As a result, through the application of the instruments, two main categories were identified: *self-confidence when communicating in an EFL class* and *learners’ language attitude in a TBL class*. These categories were evidenced throughout the development of the project replying to the research question. It is important to clarify the results obtained by the researchers were in Spanish but were later on translated into English.

Findings

Self-confidence when communicating in an EFL class

Acquiring a foreign language can be challenging for any student. More so, when the learner feels pressured. For that reason, it is important to create a surrounding environment where the students feel more confident. According to Tunçel (2015) “self-confidence can be considered as a cognitive human perception that plays important roles in fulfilling basic human requirements such as happiness and success” (p. 1). Consequently, for Ackerman (2020) self-confidence is the trust we have in our own abilities and qualities to fulfill actions, tasks or goals at the moment to acquire a foreign language. With this definition in mind, is it safe to say that self-confidence allows learners to have a more meaningful learning process.

In accordance with the information collected through interviews, observations, and video recordings, as well as the task-based learning method used in each session, the researchers demonstrated how the participants' self-confidence progressed each class. Allowing learners to have more communicative participation throughout the course. Resulting in, a lot more effort being put into the development of each task done by them. The following excerpts exhibit the difficulties participants had at the beginning and their progression towards the final session.

Excerpt 1. Observational Checklist First Class Observer A

Criteria	Always				Often				Sometimes				Never				Comments
Uses English to communicate in class.	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4	Being the first session a lot of insecurities were noticed. P2 and P3 were not very communicative while P1 and P4 were more active during the class.
Comprehends what is said in English				X	X		X		X					X	X	X	
Use Spanish to express their ideas.	X	X	X	X													
Demonstrate confidence when trying to communicate.							X	X	X	X							
Support their classmates in attempts to communicate													X	X	X	X	
Avoid using their native													X	X	X	X	

Excerpt 2. Observational checklist Last Class Observer A

Criteria	Always				Often				Sometimes				Never				Comments
Uses English to communicate in class.	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4	It is noticeable that the students feel more confident with the foreign language when working together it also takes away their shyness. As evidenced with P2 and P3.
Comprehends what is said in English	X			X			X		X								
Use Spanish to express their ideas.	X				X		X	X									
Demonstrate confidence when trying to communicate.	X			X			X		X								
Support their classmates in attempts to communicate	X	X	X	X													
Avoid using their native													X	X	X	X	

As evidenced in the previous excerpts, the participants felt unsure of themselves and very rarely participated throughout the class. As a result, in *Excerpt 1*, it is noticeable how the participants barely

used the foreign language, demonstrating their lack of confidence making them rely more on their native tongue. Nevertheless, As indicated in *Excerpt 2*, the participants showed a significant improvement in confidence with the implementation of the method, leading them to use the foreign language and communicate more in class. As Chuan (cited by Córdoba, 2016) concluded in his study: “tblt helped students to be self-confident to practice the language without anxiety” (p. 22). This was also evidenced in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 3. Video recording transcript third Class Observer B

T: Ok we are ready. Who wants to start?

T: Who wants to start?

P3: Ok, I am first

P3: Ready?

T: Yes

As shown in the previous excerpt, Participant 3 (P3) attempted to participate voluntarily while delivering a task. The teacher promoted participation by asking who would like to go first presenting the activity. Consequently, P3 who was initially shy indicated his desire to go first. Thus, the development of self-confidence was evidenced to interact and communicate in English. In Addition, Al-Hebaish (2012) suggested that “language instructors are recommended to focus on building their students’ self-confidence through creating a supportive classroom environment that encourages them to speak and participate in oral activities without fear” (p. 64).

It was concluded that the application of task-based learning during each class contributed to the students’ overall confidence performance throughout the sessions. During the first class, the participants presented several insecurities that did not permit them to fully participate. Furthermore, the students did not feel comfortable speaking in the foreign language for which they only relied on their native language and only participated when asked. After the implementation of the methodology, all the students demonstrated a significant boost of self-confidence, taking the liberty of participating without asking them to. Therefore, the application of task-based learning helped the participants with their self-confidence.

Learners language attitude in a TBL class.

There are several setbacks that can make learning a foreign language demanding. One of these complications is an uncertain language attitude towards the learning process of acquiring a new language.

Thus, as said by Gardner and Lambert (cited by Abidin, M., Pour-Mohammadi, M., & Alzwari, H., 2012) it is not only the cerebral ability or language competence but also the students' attitudes and impressions in relation to the target language that facilitates the acquisition of a foreign language. Therefore, language attitude is an essential characteristic for students to make a conscious decision to learn a foreign language.

Consequently, upon revision within the selected group of participants, the researchers discovered through the data analysis instruments, that the students presented towards the beginning of the course an unfavorable language attitude. However, with the application of task-based learning, it was noticeable how the learner's opinion of English started to shift positively, having a huge impact on their communicative competence. The following excerpts will display the initial language attitudes the participants had and their progress approaching the final class.

Excerpt 4. First Interview transcript Observer B

R:3. Have you studied an English course?

P3: No.

R: Why?

P3: Because I dedicated myself to other things, to other studies that were more important to me or considered important at the time.

Excerpt 5. First Interview transcript Observer C.

R: Ready. Have you studied an English course?

P1: No

R: Why?

P1: Good question. I have not suddenly felt the need, as well as to do it. **(I1P1-Min-1:26)**

As seen in *Excerpts 4* and *6*, the participants demonstrated an absence of language attitude, stating that they did not consider English to be a necessity. It is important to clarify that all of the participants attended school before the 1994 law, declaring English an essential class was put into fruition. Hence the participants did not consider it fundamental for their studies. However, after the implementation of task-based learning, their language attitude shifted positively as seen by the following excerpt.

Excerpt 5. Final Interview transcript Observer B

R: Do you think you could continue studying a foreign language after this process? Yes / No and Why?

P4: Of course, studying is always beneficial. It helps one to grow as a person, I am very interested in continuing to learn English and the way you have done it has been very good, the group work was enjoyable. It has been very good. (I2P4-Min-1:43)

Excerpt 6. **Observational checklist fifth class Observer A**

Criteria	Always				Often				Sometimes				Never				Comments
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4	
Uses English to communicate in class.					X		X	X	X								It is noticeable that the students feel more confident with the foreign language when working together it also takes away their shyness. As evidenced with P2 and P3.
Comprehends what is said in English	X			X			X		X								
Use Spanish to express their ideas.		X			X		X	X									
Demonstrate confidence when trying to communicate.	X			X			X		X								
Support their classmates in attempts to communicate	X	X	X	X													
Avoid using their native language to ask questions													X	X	X	X	

As examined in *Excerpt 5*, P4 demonstrated a positive language attitude, going as far as stating that they will continue to practice the foreign language. In addition, in *Excerpt 6*, we can observe all the participants made an effort by not using their native language as much. According to Youssef (2012) “Introducing a new language in a nation where there is an already effective and established language requires total motivation and positive attitude from the trainers and students (p. 366)”. Thus, when the students strived to work in a foreign language. It was possible to observe a positive impact in language attitude resulting in better outcomes.

In summary, it was determined through data analysis that the students initially presented an unfavorable language attitude due to their background with the foreign language. This uncertainty led the students to feel skeptical and unsure of the process. Nonetheless, after the TBL method was implemented, the participants started to positively drift their language attitude, having outstanding results during the course of each session by also impacting their communicative competence as a whole, demonstrating the success of the implementation of task-based learning in a social constructivist environment.

Conclusions

To conclude, the participants enhanced their overall communicative competence with the application of task-based learning methods in a social constructivist approach. Although English is not their native language, each participant was able to successfully adhere to the strategies implemented in class. Therefore, it allowed them to overcome the obstacles that were detaining them from learning at first but later worked in their favor to significantly improve their communicative competence. Thus, demonstrating that although there were difficulties in the beginning, with the help of our method and approach the participants were able to overcome these challenges and strengthen their communicative competence.

All throughout the process, the learners had notable advancements in their communicative competence, especially concerning self-confidence and language attitude. In regard to self-confidence, at first, the students presented several insecurities that held them back when it came to participating or speaking in the foreign language in class. After the implementation of the methodology, they started to feel more confident by participating and using the foreign language. In addition, the participants presented an initial uncertain language attitude due to their background with the foreign language. Following the first few sessions with the TBL method, students started to positively shift their language attitude as they found the dynamic of the class to be quite fruitful. Finally, even though this research was conducted to see the impact TBL and Social constructivism would have on communicative competence, it opens the opportunity to identify if other aspects of the language can also be modified with these same features.

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