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Master's Dissertation

THE TASK-BASED LEARNING APPROACH AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH VOCABULARY IN ADULT EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT AND KEY WORDS

The teaching field, and more specifically, foreign language teaching becomes complex because of the variety of teaching methods and approaches we can find within it. Times have changed and the methodology has been modified in order to respond to those changes in today's society. Thus, one of the most efficient and current methods used is task-based learning. This master's dissertation includes a description of it.

As a teacher of English who considers vocabulary as crucial to communicate in a language and who is aware of the difficulty that students, especially adults, have to acquire it, I decided to apply the previously mentioned approach to the teaching-learning vocabulary process in adult education. It is for this reason that this master's dissertation also includes a description of the importance of vocabulary and how to assimilate it, as well as the context where the teaching process takes place.

Last but not least, by considering all the previous elements, I have contributed some sample tasks designed for the acquisition of vocabulary by following the task-based learning approach in order to demonstrate its usefulness for the whole teaching-learning process.

Task-based learning, vocabulary acquisition, adult education, communicative language teaching

RESUMEN Y PALABRAS CLAVE

El campo de la enseñanza, y concretamente, la enseñanza de la lengua extranjera resulta compleja debido a la variedad de los métodos de enseñanza y enfoques de los que consta. Los tiempos han cambiado y la metodología ha sido modificada para responder a esos cambios en la sociedad actual. Así, uno de los métodos más eficientes y actuales es el enfoque basado en el aprendizaje por tareas. Este proyecto incluye una descripción del mismo.

Como maestra de inglés que considera el vocabulario como algo crucial para comunicarse en una lengua y que es consciente de la dificultad de los estudiantes, especialmente de los adultos, para aprenderlo, he decidido aplicar el enfoque mencionado anteriormente al proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del vocabulario en la

educación de adultos. Es por esta razón que este proyecto, además, incluye una descripción de la importancia de vocabulario y cómo asimilarlo, así como el contexto donde el proceso tiene lugar.

Por último, pero no menos importante, considerando todos los elementos previos, he contribuido con algunas muestras de tareas diseñadas para la adquisición de vocabulario siguiendo el enfoque por tareas para demostrar su utilidad durante todo el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

Aprendizaje por tareas, adquisición de vocabulario, educación de adultos, enseñanza comunicativa de la lengua

1. INTRODUCTION

As a teacher of English for Primary Education, the school year 2021/22 being the third one that I am working in the Adults Education stage, I have decided to take one of my groups of students as object of study for this Master's Dissertation. Throughout these three years, I have noticed that they find it hard to learn and acquire English vocabulary. Most of them are used to facing the learning of vocabulary by following a most traditional approach, such as memorising long lists of terms which they will forget because they do not know how to use them within a context or because they do not feel motivated to do it. This is the main reason why I am carrying out this project, since vocabulary becomes fundamental for my students to express their own needs and interests, as well as communicate with each other.

Traditionally, vocabulary was taught just by recurring to repetition drills and translating from the mother tongue into the native one, and viceversa. This turned out boring for our students, who were not able to use vocabulary in order to communicate in real life. Consequently, a new method completely opposed to the traditional one was proposed: the task-based approach. Thus, this project deals with the teaching-learning process of vocabulary by means of the task-based approach. The objectives which are pursued in this Master's Dissertation are:

- To learn vocabulary belonging to different fields of our students' interests in the target language.
- To practice and develop the four language skills at the time they learn vocabulary.

- To be able to perform tasks which are similar to those ones carried out within real life contexts.
- To motivate our students in the learning of the English language.
- To make our students aware of the importance of learning another language.

In order to achieve these goals, I have conducted a piece of qualitative research, based on the literature review relative to the task-based approach and to the learning of vocabulary. Afterwards, once I have analysed the context where this study is going to be carried out, I have proposed a series of tasks for my students to carry them out so that I can test the utility of this kind of methodology.

To end up this introductory section, I am going to provide a brief summary of the content of the different sections of my project: the first two chapters offer a review of the different authors who have investigated the task-based approach and the learning and acquisition of vocabulary. Thus, we can get a complete definition of what such approach consists in and the importance of vocabulary when learning a language. Chapter 3 is a detailed description of the context (group of students, school curriculum, socioeconomic features, objectives in the English lesson, contents, methodology, facilities and resources and evaluation tools). The last part presents the practical applications, that is, the contribution that I have made through this Master's Dissertation.

2. TASK-BASED LEARNING

2.1. A framework for task-based learning

The development of task-based learning was set during the 80s period and it emerged as an alternative for other kinds of methodologies, specifically Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP) model, which had many limitations. Among these ones, the difficulty for students to communicate with each other must be mentioned (Willis, 1996:1), being the ability to communicate the main goal which is pursued when learning a language. PPP model was mainly focused on forms, disregarding meaning. Therefore, task-based learning, which proved to be more efficient, was proposed. Its promotion started due to the success of Communicational Teaching Project in Primary and Secondary School, carried out by Prabhu (1987), as quoted by Willis (1996:1), in Bangalore Project. This new method prioritized meaning over grammatical forms and its development was supported by some researchers in the field of Second Language Acquisition, such as Skehan (1996), cited by Willis (1996:1).

2.2. Definition of task-based learning and task-based learning models

2.2.1. Definition of task-based learning approach

In order to define task-based learning and explain its basis as detailed as possible, I am going to focus on Nunan's work (2004:48) and list the main tenets which characterize this method:

- Contents will be selected in accordance with the students' needs.
- Learning to communicate is achieved throughout student's interaction by using the target language.
- Authentic texts are used in the learning process.
- Learners are offered opportunities to focus on the language as well as on the learning process itself.
- Learners' personal experiences must be promoted, since they are considered as important and basic elements which contribute to their learning process.
- The connection between the language learned within the classroom and that one used outside.

Communication is the centre of this learning method, involving and allowing the development of the four language skills: the productive ones (speaking and writing) and the receptive ones (listening and reading) (Willis, 1996:1). All four skills are going to be developed throughout the performance of tasks, so considering the importance of these ones within the method being studied, this concept has to be defined by taking several essential authors as basis:

- a) Willis (1996:2): a task is an activity which has a defined goal and the learners use the target language and their linguistic resources to fulfill that objective. They will solve problems such as doing a puzzle or playing games. An example of a task provided by the same author would be writing down three features of their pet. The next step would be comparing their descriptions with their partners' by interacting with each other.
- b) Willis and Willis (2007:70), quoted by Rodríguez-Bonces and Rodríguez-Bonces (2010:7), emphasizes that a good task is a challenge for students, providing them with experiences where they are going to use their language as much as possible.
- c) Long (1985:89), quoted by Nunan (2004:19), proposes that a task has to be freely undertaken by someone or it may be made in order to get some reward.

Some examples of tasks proposed by him are: dressing a child, filling out a form or buying a pair of shoes. In addition tasks have a non- linguistic outcome and they could make it up a large sequence of those ones. Finally, he establishes the definition of pedagogical tasks- one which is transformed from the real world to the classroom. Examples: drawing a house while listening to a recording or listening to a song and performing the commands it says.

- d) Breen (1987:23), quoted by Nunan (2004:20), explains that tasks are any attempts of structure language learning, constituted by an objective, an appropriate content, a determined procedure to carry out and some outcomes for the people who perform it. From this perspective, tasks can be ranged from simple to more complex ones which aim at facilitating language learning.
- e) Skehan (1998), quoted by Nunan (2004:20), summarised the features of a pedagogical task as:
 - Prioritizing meaning.
 - Learners are not given other people's meaning in order to avoid the repetition of the structures mechanically.
 - A comparison is established between classroom tasks and real-world activities.
 - Prioritization of the completion of a task.
 - The outcomes of the tasks are the basis for their assessment.
- f) Ellis (2003:16), quoted by Nunan (2004:20), incorporates the context, which goes hand in hand with pragmatics and the appropriateness of contents, in his definition of pedagogical task. Learners have to process language pragmatically, that is, they are going to bear context in mind in order to select the correct and appropriate content so as to get a goal which will be evaluated attending to the appropriateness or correctness of the content used. Emphasis is made on meaning by part of students, from the very beginning and, in so doing, they will use the linguistic resources which they own, basing on what they want to express or for the understanding of meanings. The linguistic forms used for the completion of the task can be also determined by the proper task and the goals pursued throughout the performance of it. To end up, this author states that two main goals of a task are: using the language by simulating its use in the real world and developing all language skills, making use of various cognitive processes.

g) A pedagogical task is performed by learners through the processes of comprehension, manipulation, production or interaction by using the target language (Nunan, 2004:21). As their main intention is to express meaning, they will use their grammatical knowledge by considering that aim. A task is a communicative act, divided into two types: target tasks- the use of language in the real world, and pedagogical ones- they take place in the classroom.

As a summary, the essential elements for a task to be defined which can be extracted from the above definitions are:

- a) The main focus of the task is on meaning, that is, learners use the language to exchange meanings with a real purpose, and in so doing, they can use whatever forms they want.
- b) Comprehension, manipulation, production and interaction with each other are fundamental for language learning when dealing with a task.
- c) The context is also crucial for the selection of those, since it will determine the appropriateness of contents.
- d) It is at the very end of the task process when students begin to focus on forms.

Throughout the explanation of the concept of task by different authors, advantages can be noticed, but also some difficulties as I list in the chart below. I have borrowed them from González Márquez (2017:12-14):

Advantages	Difficulties		
Chance of improving the 4 language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.	The input for students can be limited by teacher's proficiency.	Classrooms are mixed-ability.	Not existence of creativity in the task proposed by teachers. They use the items of a compulsory syllabus as a guide.
Skills integration so as to complete a task successfully.	Teachers are not used to using this new approach.	The way students need to assume the learning of a language by a new method.	

The assignments proposed are meaningful for the students, that is, when carrying them out, they will be conscious of the relevance of learning that language in order to be used later.	Teachers can not manage lessons with a high rate of students, specially when working in groups.	Students may not be aware of what they are learning, because this method does not follow an explicit learning process.	
Learning process is considered a way of exploring language and its uses.	Teachers have to assess a task by creating clear closed outcomes.		
Assignments must be as realistic as possible to promote the use of authentic language.			
It encourages creativity.			

Table 1. Advantages and difficulties of using the task- based learning approach
(González Márquez, 2017:12-14).

2.2.2. *Task-based learning models*

The origins of those come up through the establishment of the task phases proposed by different authors:

Jane Willis' model (1996:38), cited by Rodríguez-Bonces and Rodríguez-Bonces (2010:4-5):

1. *Pre-task phase*: the topic and task introduction. In so doing, the teacher and the students cooperatively, are going to get some key words and phrases related to the topic established. The teacher will also help students understand the instructions for the task, by using the recordings of others doing similar tasks or reading their comments. An example of task within this phase is a brainstorming

of key linguistic items related to inventions (Willis, 1996, cited by Rodríguez-Boncos and Rodríguez-Boncos (2010:5).

2. *Task-cycle*: Students perform the task in pairs or in small groups, while the teacher encourages them to communicate. Mistakes and corrections are not given relevance, because the students' experience with language is prioritized; what is important is the practice with the target language by part of students. Afterwards, students will prepare an oral or written report in order to explain to the rest of the class how they decided to do the task. As the report is going to be public, students have to be as accurate as possible, so the teacher will give the pupils the guidelines in order to get that accuracy. At the end of this stage, some groups are going to present the reports they have prepared to the class and compare results with the others. The teacher, at first, is an observer; and then, he will comment the results of the reports (Willis, 1996, cited by Rodríguez-Boncos and Rodríguez-Boncos (2010:5).

Once again, students are going to listen to or read other people's comments dealing with the experience they had while doing the same task. It is at the end of this entire process when students focus on language- forms, and this occurs naturally and unconsciously while they are concentrated on the performance of the task 1 (Willis, 1996, cited by Rodríguez-Boncos and Rodríguez-Boncos (2010:5).

An example of task performed during this stage is to divide the classroom into different small groups. Each of them has to choose an ICT device (digital whiteboard, PC, pen drive and so on) and analyze the advantages and disadvantages of it. Afterwards, each group will prepare a summary of the discussion to report it to the rest of the class. Finally, each group will listen to what the other groups that were doing the same tasks have reported. For the description of those devices, they are going to focus on the modal verb "can", and its corresponding negative form, "can't".

3. *Language focus*: Students carry out an analysis to discuss specific characteristics of the readings or of the transcription of their recording, aiming at proposing new words, phrases and patterns for vocabulary books. This practice is going to be guided by the teacher. Later on, learners can benefit from doing a task with similar features with a different partner (Willis, 1996, cited by Rodríguez-Boncos and Rodríguez-Boncos (2010:5).

An example of task in this stage is writing two or three examples of sentences containing the modal verb “can” on the board. Afterwards, each group will write their summary using “can” forms. A few students will report back to the class and check the language mistakes.

Within the first model proposed, each of the task phases has a different purpose, and it embraces from catching students’ attention to engage them in real world activities where they are going to put into practice their reading and listening skills.

Ellis model (2003), cited by Rodríguez-Bonces and Rodríguez-Bonces (2010:4): Its model focuses on meaning and real world activities which demand the processing of language by part of learners to be used in real life situations. This model consists of the following phases:

- Pre-task: It establishes the outcome of the activity, regulates planning time and students are proposed to do a similar task. This stage has several goals: students will be more conscious of the activities they are doing and the proposals they have with those activities, as well as being aware of the grammar they will have learned and acquired at the end of the entire process (Ellis, 2003, cited by Rodríguez Bonces and Rodríguez-Bonces (2010:4).
- During task: the elements that make it up are time pressure and regulating topic. Performance will characterize this stage. For the correction of the activities that students are going to do, teachers must take into consideration that the achievement of a fluent communication is the main goal, without disregarding form. The process of error corrections must be selected carefully so as to avoid students’ discouragement.
- The post-task: it is focused on communication activities. It considers several factors: the number of participants, the learner report, the repetition of tasks and the reflection. Students will report their results to the class. First, they are exposed to input and then, they will show the group their understanding (output).

The development of language in learners, in this model, has to do with the time they have to prepare and perform the task. The familiarity that students have with a topic will facilitate the task performance. Last but not least, some attention to form is paid while communication takes place (Ellis, 2003, cited by Rodríguez-Bonces and Rodríguez-Bonces (2010: 4).

2.3. Key conditions of task-based learning which lead to language learning

Willis (1996:8) proposes four key conditions for language learning:

1. *Students must be exposed to real, rich and comprehensible linguistic input.* This linguistic input exposition comes from a diversity of sources: the teacher talk, listening to other students, a text which they read, listening to recordings of others doing the same task and so on. They all constitute examples of input of real language which are accessible for students.
2. *Opportunities for students to real use of language.* It provides the pupils with the chance not just of using language to express whatever, but also practice turn-taking, the control of the interaction; they will practice spontaneous interaction in pairs, as it usually occurs in real life, among others. The Report Phase, on its own, will allow the students to draft and prepare their report to present it to the rest of the class. However, during the Planning Stage, confidence and support is given to pupils so that they can revise their report before presenting it in front of their classmates.
3. *Students must be motivated to listen and read, and to speak and write.* Motivation is determined by two different factors: firstly, by the goals of the task, as students have to work hard to get them, becoming the task a challenge for pupils. Secondly, the success in doing the task. The feeling of success will increase their motivation. In addition, as participants of their own learning process who have done and will do the task themselves, they feel real enthusiasm to listen or read the comments of other students who also performed similar tasks. They can practice a different skill each time, or both at the same time.
4. *Focus on language forms.* Immediately after the task cycle, students will be aware of what they have learned while performing the task and what their actual knowledge of the language is, since task-based learning gives the students the possibility to reflect on language. During the analysis, students are investigators and when doing the consciousness-raising activities, they can work at their own pace and it is then, when they start to get the discoveries which they will apply later on, when they feel they are ready and when they have the need.

The main goal of these four principles is that students acquire fluency and confidence when using the language, and it is for this reason that it is so important that both, teachers and pupils, completely understand these four principles.

2.4. Teacher and students' role in task-based learning

Rodríguez-Bonces and Rodríguez-Bonces (2010:3) establish a different role for each of the participants. As the main goal of the task-based model is the students' learning, students are the center of the lessons. On the other hand, the teacher's role is minimized, being seen as a facilitator or a guide who will address the students' needs and interests. According to the study conducted by the two researchers aforementioned, different authors have also made some contributions:

Willis and Willis (2007), quoted by the same authors mentioned in the lines just above (2010:3) say that teachers have a variety of functions, being underlined the promotion of the real use of the language, the organization and leading of discussions, the management of the students' work, either group or pair; they are motivators for the learners to be involved in the task and they provide language feedback.

On the other hand, students are going to be the leader of their own learning process.

Van Den Branden (2006), quoted by Rodríguez-Bonces and Rodríguez-Bonces (2010:3) bases on a general premise: students are the most important elements in their learning process, although this author incorporates the notion of autonomy of students, which they are going to use to negotiate course contents and choose the linguistic forms which they consider more adequate for the performance of the task. Negotiation is possible because different options are offered to students. Learners are also risk takers that face challenges which involve the use of the target language and they have to make the most of every single option they have to use the language while performing a task. Most of the tasks are done in pair and group works.

Richards and Rodgers (2004), quoted by the same authors as the previous ones (2010:3-4) state that teachers and learners role are equally important for the interaction during classroom development, and so, they both are responsible for it.

2.5. A task-based syllabus and a task-based lesson

Long and Crookes (1992, 1993), cited by Criado and Sánchez (2012-2013:21), defend that the syllabus does not specify which are the linguistic forms selected in which our students must focus on, and nor it is done at the beginning of the lesson. In the same

line, tasks do not depend on any linguistic item previously selected, but the focus on form will occur by basing on the context where meaningful communication takes place. Van den Branden (2006:5), cited by Nicholson (2014:2), states that for the task-based syllabus, language is presented in tasks which consider it as a whole of different grammatical structures and vocabulary, that is, they are holistic. Moreover, language is used to fulfill different functions, depending on the context taken into account to present them, and through language, students communicate while doing the tasks. Thus, attending to these two features, tasks are functional and communicative. On the contrary, they are not seen as small pieces; and tasks are the starting point of the creation of any educational activity. In the same line, TBS is assumed to be focused on the procedure of learning, that is, how learning is produced, leading to the appearance of the concept of “procedural syllabus”. Wilkins (1976:14), quoted in Long & Crookes (1992:29), quoted by Nicholson (2014:3), classified the TBS as being analytical, since it relies on learner’s analytic abilities, and Type B, because it does not require any previous selection or organization of linguistic items. Nicholson (2014:3) also proposed several theories of language and learning which may have influenced task- based syllabus design. The former ones consider language as a system to express meanings, instead of a system of abstract syntactic rules (Nunan 1991:9), cited by Nicholson (2014:3). Willis & Willis (2007:177), quoted by the previously mentioned author, sees language as the means needed to communicate for meaning expression, being meaning the starting point of TBS.

On the contrary, there are the theories of learning: Krashen’s Comprehensible Input and negotiation of meaning. Krashen establishes that when exposing students to language which corresponds to a level of competence a little beyond their current one, there are more chances for learners to acquire a second language (Krashen, 1982; cited in Nunan 1991:289, cited by Nicholson, 2014:3). Language is the input they receive and it must be varied, rich and comprehensible through the use of authentic materials in classroom. It is throughout interaction that negotiation of meaning can occur, because it is then when students will find difficulties to complete the task and they will have the need to interact (Long, 1985, 1996; Gass, 1997; Pica, 1994, 1996), quoted by Nicholson (2014:4).

Task- based syllabus leads to establish task- based lessons. By following Richards and Rodgers (2004), quoted by Rodríguez- Bonces and Rodríguez- Bonces (2010:6), tasks, which have been already defined, are the main units for planning and

instruction in a task- based lesson. A lesson can consist of a series of task or a task may be carried out throughout different lessons. The language used must be meaningful for the correct learning process to take place, which means it must be useful for students in their real life, so that learners are engaged in the task and in so doing, learning takes place. Tasks have goals and objectives, which stand as linguistic functions or language use, but not as linguistic forms. Willis & Willis (2007), quoted by Rodríguez- Bonces and Rodríguez- Bonces (2010:6), incorporate the fact that communicative tasks are the means for communication. The best way to introduce this kind of approach within a class is going from the topic to the task. But the topic cannot be chosen from any textbook or exams; we will ask students for their preferences so that we get their whole involvement during the lessons, as they are the centre of the learning- process.

2.6. Attention to diversity

González Márquez (2017:18) mentions Brown (2000), who sees diversity as a fundamental feature of the academic world and which is present in all students. Thus, a teacher must be conscious of the fact that pupils have different abilities as well as levels of motivations. This is also the reason why a teacher must advocate for more than an approach, be flexible and provide materials for all our students in order to overcome their differences and reach the same goals. In relation to the use of the task- based approach, he establishes that as a way of attending to diversity, when students are going to work in groups, they can be grouped according to their level and assigned a task according to each student's level. In addition, teachers can make use of the peer teaching method: fast finishers, who are the most advanced students in the classroom, will take the role of teachers and they will explain the contents or the instructions to the slower finishers, the least advanced ones, so as to make their understanding easier. Teachers can include visual reinforcements within their materials, such as concept maps, charts or multimedia, for slow finishers. Moreover, they can include reinforcement activities for the slow finishers to reach the goals, as well as extension activities for the fast finishers to do so.

3. VOCABULARY LEARNING

3.1. The importance of vocabulary in language learning

Vocabulary is defined as the core component of any language learning (McCarthy, 1990:8). If a person cannot recognize the words of a language, they will not understand

what other people mean when communicating and communication breakdowns may occur. According to Richards & Renandya (2002:255), cited by Sarani¹ & Farzaneh Sahebi¹ (2012:3), vocabulary is essential to acquire the proficiency in any language, since it allows learners the use and development of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Many students progressively lack the vocabulary belonging to a language because of their lack of motivation, insufficient practice or maybe, they have not been taught it effectively. Therefore, motivation is a key factor in a learning process in order to tasks completion and achievement of goals (Brophy, 2005, mentioned by Ngoc Thanh, 2012:3).

When dealing with a foreign language, vocabulary acquisition becomes a fundamental part of language learning and teaching (Huckin & Coady, 1999, quoted by Ngoc Thanh, 2012:4). People need words for the exchange of information with the others and thus, for their own needs to be met. The way in which they can learn new vocabulary is by exposing them to the target language, which must be used from the very beginning of the teaching process. Once they recognize and know words' meanings, they will be able to construct sentences and communicate meaningfully.

Words in a language can come in two forms: oral and print. The former ones are those that we recognize and use in listening and speaking, whereas the second ones refer to those that we recognize and use in reading and writing (Hiebert and kamil, 2005:2, quoted in Horton, Beattie and Lannie, 2019:45). There are two additional forms in which vocabulary can be classified, but they are related to knowledge of the words: receptive, which are those ones which we can just recognize and understand when we hear or read them, and productive, relative to the words you can recall and use for real communication in speech or in writing, in any context (Benjamin and Crow, 2010). They both are going to take place in our lessons, aiming at the achievement of fluent communication.

3.2. What does it mean to know a word

The knowledge of a word can involve different aspects depending on the author being considered.

When we want to check the level of knowledge regarding vocabulary that a student has, it is usual to focus on the knowledge of form-meaning connection that our student has acquired. Nevertheless, knowledge of vocabulary on the part of students is

more than that, since other aspects such as spelling, pronunciation or the grammatical functions, as well as derivations, collocations and associations must also be born in mind. So, acquiring the mastery of vocabulary involves the knowledge of it by considering all those aspects. In so doing, the idea of measuring the knowledge of vocabulary by concentrating just on the form- meaning relationship must be deleted (Yanagisawa and Webb, 2020:371). The same author affirms that there is one more item which must be taken into consideration when studying that field: master the knowledge of the word in the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) to fulfill different communicative tasks (Yanagisawa and Webb, 2020:371). In addition, a crucial factor is the context. It is necessary for learners to know in which context they can use a word and also, in what other context that word is not meaningful. Words should not be studied as isolated items.

Nation (2020) considers a minimum of nine aspects for the knowledge of a word, and they involve form, meaning and use. At the same time, each of these ones takes into account productive and receptive knowledge of vocabulary. In addition, he recommends that the development of this knowledge can be achieved through different ways: on the one hand, by using language in different activities and tasks, or simply as classroom language, where some processes occur- language input, language output and fluency development of language; on the other hand, through teaching and learning. All these processes should be born in mind for learning a language. Basing on that, he establishes that the learning of vocabulary requires repetition and processing of words, chances for using the language and different activities in which they can make use of all these requirements. In that way, we are facilitating the evaluation process and improving the opportunities for learning new vocabulary.

In short and to end up with these sections, below are the main aspects which will determine the knowledge of a word:

- a) Not focusing just on the form- meaning relationship, but also pronunciation, spelling and grammatical functions, derivations, collocations and associations.
- b) The mastery of vocabulary in the four language skills, aiming at different communicative functions. This will lead to the acquisition of proficiency in the target language.
- c) Context is fundamental for learning the knowledge of a word.
- d) Language use in different activities and tasks, and as classroom language.

- e) Mechanisms of vocabulary repetition and processing.

3.3. Vocabulary learning and task-based learning

Vocabulary learning in students can be achieved through two different approaches: explicit and incidental learning (Schmitt, 2000, quoted by Ngoc Thanh, 2012:4). The present study is going to be devoted to incidental learning and to a discovering learning process, one of the premises of task-based learning, being completely opposite to direct explanation. According to Schmitt (2000), quoted by Ngoc Thanh (2012:4), what many teachers have experienced is that students' motivation during the English lesson gets increased when they have to guess the meaning of a word or a determined structure when dealing with a simple or a complex text, depending on their students' level, instead of being exposed directly to the vocabulary of the language being object of study.

Previously, in section 1.2.1, we talked about the development of the four language skills as one of the advantages of task-based learning which were established by González Márquez. By focusing on reading, Storch & Whitehurst (2002), cited by Adlof and L. Storkel (2006:110), affirm that the knowledge of vocabulary and reading comprehension have a direct connection. The knowledge of vocabulary will improve the reading comprehension level of our students, ranging from words, at the earliest ages, to whole texts. Comprehension of texts is higher when they can recognize the words and they know the words' meaning appearing in the texts (Adams, 1990, cited by Adlof and L. Storkel, 2006:110). In the same way as vocabulary knowledge helps to decode a text, certainly through a text, vocabulary knowledge is increased (Stanovich, 1986, cited by Adlof and L. Storkel, 2006:110). According to Allington (1984), cited by Adlof and L. Storkel (2006:110), good readers acquire more new words because they are more exposed to texts than poor readers.

As it has been justified in the paragraph above, reading tasks are predominant in the acquisition of new vocabulary in Primary Education stages, because children are acquiring new words unconsciously. It will facilitate the acquisition of vocabulary within a context, and not as isolated items. Moreover, after completing a reading task, they will be ready to complete a writing one. For instance: students can be exposed to a reading task to learn the numbers and then, use them to complete a writing task where they tell about the number of members there are in their family and their age.

Children acquire new words at a very rapid speed, whereas the capacity of adults for their acquisition is lower, due to their brain plasticity. The decrease of their abilities will suppose an added difficulty and their approach to foreign language learning will be a challenge for them. It is for this reason that task- based learning, considered as a greatly motivating approach, has been the one selected for this research. A previous study carried out by Nychkalo et al. (2020:6) with students from the Master's degree of business English to teach them business vocabulary through task- based approach in order to check its effectiveness concluded that this approach not only helps the enrichment of the students' vocabulary, but also improves teamwork skills, the uncertainty in communication is overcome and the development of individual learning strategies is promoted. They all were achieved by exposing the students to tasks that were similar to problems which they had to solve in real life. The five authors mentioned also affirm that this approach avoid the mechanical repetition of vocabulary and structures on the part of students and allow them to use the vocabulary which is appropriate in certain situations when communicating and interacting with the others. It is a way of improving their communication skills as well as their ability to use the knowledge they have acquired.

4. CONTEXT

4.1. Characteristics of our group of students

First of all, our proposal of activities associated to the task-based approach is addressed to a group of students belonging to adult education stage. Our group is made up of 15 students: 6 men and 9 women, and they are between 19 and 40 years old. Their goal is getting their graduate degree of Compulsory Secondary Education. As there is a variety of ages within the group, a description of each range has to be provided:

- a) At the age of 19: Regarding the social area, they are able to make their own decisions, but they like being supported by their parents, who will guide them. With respect to the emotional area, they enjoy when they are recognised for their achievement, they have the feeling of having reached the full maturity stage and they expect adults to treat them as if they were also adults. By taking into account the intellectual features, future plans start to be made and long- term goals are set (Stewart, 2013).

- b) From the age of 20 to 40: at psychological area, it prevails the feeling of autonomy in adults, which is characterized by the control of their emotions and the use of their energy efficiently. On the other hand, socially, they are facing the most important period of their life: their identity becomes stronger and they want to extend their knowledge for the completion of their studies or just to finish, and making some progress in their life or find a job. Moreover, during this stage, people take decisions which will affect their life significantly, such as their life style, professional career, habits and so on. Nevertheless, it is from the age of 30 on when adults consolidate their social roles and professions, and also, they have a higher stability. Last but not least, at this stage a higher integration of knowledge when doing any practice takes place (Gabarda, 2015:4-5).

A particular characteristic which affects most of the students who constitute this group is that they gave up their studies when they were younger because of difficult familiar circumstances or because they suffered serious problems, such as bullying. In addition, it is a long time since the oldest ones quit their studies, so their concentration abilities have also changed. Therefore, their motivation will be increasingly affected as well as their learning capacity. This demonstrates that their different backgrounds influence their learning processes.

None of the students making up the group needs a curricular adaptation, they just have different learning abilities: we can distinguish between fast-finishers and slower-finishers. Thus, we are dealing with a mixed-ability group and we must take into account the attention to diversity when planning the activities.

An important datum that we have to bear in mind with regard to the foreign language learning is that they all know each other and they interact with each other every day.

In relation to their linguistic profile, the younger ones have a higher level of English because they like listening to music in that language when they have time, or just because many words from that language have been incorporated into the Spanish one and they are used in our everyday life, being especially more frequent among the young population and in social networks. Nonetheless, none of them have an English certificate. They all talk Spanish and Andalusian as their mother tongue.

The previous paragraphs refer to factors which must be taken into consideration when designing and planning the activities which our group of students are going to

carry out, as the kind of activities planned will strongly influence their motivation and their learning process.

4.2. School curriculum

The studies mentioned in the previous section, Compulsory Secondary Education stage, offer two different levels, 1st and 2nd. Level 2 is taken once the studies at level 1 are completed. Our group of students belongs to the 2nd level, which corresponds to 3rd and 4th grades of Compulsory Secondary Education. They have to study subjects from three different areas: scientific, communicative and social. Each area has three modules: IV, V and VI. Within the scientific area, they study subjects such as Maths, Biology, Physics and Chemistry. The communicative area is constituted by Spanish and English and, finally, the social area covers the subject of Social Science, mainly dealing with History. This project is concretely focused on the English subject, within the communicative area.

Apart from the different levels of Compulsory Secondary Education which our students are taking and which constitute the “Study Support Tutoring” plan, there are some others which can contribute to the completion of our adults’educative process: “Study Support Tutoring in A1 level”, “Basic Use of the English Language”, “Basic formation” and “Initial Training in Information and Communication Technologies”.

4.3. Socioeconomic features

The lessons with this group of pupils are developed at a high school, IES Cantillana, located in Cantillana, a town of Seville. There are two fundamental aspects which characterize this town and offer it great chances for its development: Guadalquivir river, which passess next to it, and its closeness to the capital city of Seville and the Natural Park of the North Mountains of Seville. This gives to the town a great cultural and economical homogeneity, whose origin is an agricultural activity. But it is not only agriculture the most predominant activity; construction and agri-food industry are also underlined. Women in Cantillana mostly dedicate to housework and stational agricultural work. With all this data, we can conclude that the socioeconomic background is low middle class one.

4.4. Objectives in the English lessons

The main goal pursued in our lessons is the achievement of a basic level of communicative competence, taking into account the basic level which our adults have. This means that they have to be able to communicate and keep very simple

conversations about daily life situations. In order to do so, the knowledge of vocabulary is essential to my group of students. We are working on it from each of the four language skills. Speaking, listening, reading and writing constitute the key skills for a progressive learning experience. To go on, I present the different objectives which are dealing with in relation to vocabulary in order to get our main goal, the development of a basic communicative competence:

- a) Understanding of a basic and daily life vocabulary related to their interests, in oral and written texts where they are going to use their own strategies as well as supporting pictures to figure out and acquire the vocabulary presented.
- b) Keeping basic and daily life conversations, using the appropriate vocabulary and with the correct pronunciation for the others to understand them.
- c) Adopting a respectful attitude when conversing with the others and acquiring this habit to apply it to their daily life.
- d) Writing texts about basic and daily life topics, using the most adequate vocabulary for each situation and the appropriate spelling, with the help of supporting texts which they are going to deal with in the Reading session.
- e) Using their previous knowledge and prior experience as a help and as supporting resource in their acquisition of the L2.
- f) Valuing the foreign language as a means of communication among people from different countries.
- g) Developing a respectful attitude towards the English language and the culture concerning it.
- h) Identifying and using the phonetic aspects of rhythm, intonation and pronunciation, as well as linguistic structures and lexical aspects, when keeping a conversation.

These can be considered as the primary objectives which contribute to the development of the communicative competence.

On the other hand, there are some objectives which are secondary and are the focus of our English class:

- a) Being aware of the importance of learning the English language as an instrument of communication and as a tool which helps them to understand other cultures around the world.
- b) Developing reading habits in a foreign language.
- c) Arousing their curiosity, interests and motivations towards the English language.

- d) Developing their autonomy in the use of resources to deal with the English language and to perform tasks and communicate by using the language.
- e) Being aware of the importance of the English language for their future professional life.

4.5. Contents and temporalization

Giving personal information: name, age, name, age, telephone number, address, nationality, occupation, e-mail address.	September
Giving instructions to elaborate a recipe: imperative verbs and food.	October
Describing Christmas routines. Use of Christmas vocabulary.	October-November
Personal data, vocabulary about daily routines and hobbies.	November
Making plans	December
Describing a picture	January
Giving directions	February
Contrasting what they do in their daily life and what they are doing at this moment	February
Describing a house	March
Expressing abilities	March
Giving advice and expressing obligations	April
Talking about past events using regular verbs	April
Talking about past events using irregular verbs	May
Making predictions with “will”	May
Describing what they like doing in their summer holidays	June

4.6. Methodology

Although this Master Dissertation is especially devoted to the use of the task-based approach in my English lesson, there are some other approaches which I apply in my lessons:

- a) The student-centered approach is always going to be present in my class, since my pupils are going to be the main participants of the whole teaching learning process and they are going to take the role of active participants in this process. In addition, we are going to help them to identify their own learning strategies and develop their autonomy and confidence in the use of the English language.
- b) The communicative approach, which has as main goal the development of communicative competence of students. It includes some other features such as the exclusive use of the English language to communicate in the English class and a variety of authentic resources for the transmission of the English language. It has to be underlined that we are going to use the Spanish language as a supporting resource in our class, as my adults have a minimum level of English.

After describing the different approaches used in my English lessons and which constitute an eclectic one, it is precise to describe how I get the different goals detailed in section 3.4. The constant use of the English language in all the activities proposed contributes to the development of the four language skills. This is related to the first four objectives mentioned. We are going to carry out different types of listening activities, such as dictations, listening to monologues and dialogues where different topics such as recipes or Christmas routines are going to be covered. They will have to complete some fill in the gaps activities according to what they hear or underline, and circle the correct word on other occasions. In the same line, they are working on the achievement of goal h), dealing with identification of phonetic aspects as well as linguistic structures and lexical aspects. In addition, they are going to interact with each other in every speaking activity, working on the objective related to valuing the English language as a means of communication among people from different countries; at the same time they are putting into practice phonetic and linguistic and lexical aspects. In relation to Reading and writing, they are going to be exposed to different types of texts, such as written recipes or the description of the daily routine of a person. These are

going to be used as support for the writing activities, where they have to elaborate their own recipes or describe their own daily routines, for instance. These activities are presented in different contexts of their daily lives, so they are going to be aware of the importance of learning this language and its use in a variety of contexts close to them.

Throughout the contents proposed in order to be worked on along the school year, they are also going to learn typical expressions of the English culture, as well as some traditions and cultural aspects. This is going to lead them to the achievement of the objective referred to the development of a respectful attitude towards the English language.

In each of the activities and final tasks proposed, they are going to use their previous knowledge in their mother tongue, different resources, such as online dictionaries in an autonomous way, and their own learning strategies so as to complete them all. Moreover, in all activities and tasks, they have to read the instructions in order to carry them out, and one of them is completely devoted to the development of the reading skill and thus, the reading habit.

4.7. Facilities and resources used in the English class

1. Internet availability, which becomes essential for our students to work with Moodle platform in our English lessons. There, they are going to find the different contents they are going to deal with along the whole course. This platform is also essential for the presentation of the final tasks.
2. A textbook, which is going to complement the contents from the platform. We are going to use it to reinforce vocabulary or any of the language skills, and to extract extension activities too. The textbook proposed is “English File-Elementary Workbook with keys”.
3. A digital whiteboard, which can be used to practice listening or speaking with the whole class, through different well-known webpages, such as Liveworksheets.com, which contains activities ranged into different levels. It can also be useful for reading and extraction of vocabulary from the texts being read, which can be later used in a writing as a follow-up activity.
4. A projector, which complements the function of the digital whiteboard.
5. Computers for each student, so that they can work individually or in pairs.

6. A computer for the teacher to be able to guide the learning process of the students when they use the mentioned platform or when playing an audio in order to complete a listening activity.
7. Loudspeakers, which will facilitate the realization of listening activities.
8. A traditional whiteboard, which will be used for the explanation of fundamental concepts for the performance of the final tasks.

It must be added that the classroom is well-lit and ventilated, and the computers are facing the teacher's table, as well as the traditional and digital whiteboard. Within the classroom, there are also books and dictionaries as useful resources. Thus, the conditions are perfect to meet the needs of our students, and changes can be made if needed depending on the activity being carried out or for the performance of the final tasks.

4.8. Evaluation

For the evaluation process, we use a variety of tools:

- a) Direct observation, as a way to assess their attitude towards the others and their capacities to work in pairs as well as individually.
- b) Question and answer activities, to check their progress through the answers they give when I ask them something related to the content being dealt with.
- c) A rubric to evaluate the four language skills involved in each of the tasks, in order to check the progress of them all and the level of competence they acquire in each of them. They have been included in the practical section of this Master Dissertation. For the rubrics, we are going to take as reference of the evaluation those criteria from the article 14.1, of the Decree 111/2016, of the 14th of June, which establishes the ordination and curriculum of Secondary Obligatory Education in Andalusia.
- d) A rubric to evaluate the teaching process, so that I can check what aspects of my teaching practice need to be improved for the completion of the educational process of my adult pupils in the most efficient way.

In addition, there are some materials which we use as resources for the evaluation: the worksheets, which we are going to use to assess their pronunciation when reading a text or their orthographic level when writing any word or a brief description or recipe; the answers given by my students in oral activities, a way of

reviewing contents, and the final tasks, to evaluate some specific skill or skills, the content learned throughout the didactic unit and their level of competence.

5. PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

5.1. Introduction

By considering what the different authors mentioned in the theoretical background explain in relation to the task-based approach, in this section of my Master dissertation I am going to present some samples which I have designed on my own. I am going to explain the procedure to carry them out and the objectives that I am pursuing with them. At every moment, I am going to take into account the context described for their implementation. The structure that I am going to follow for the explanation of each task proposed includes: topic, description of the task, contents, objectives, activities, methodology and evaluation.

I must underline that the different tasks proposed, as well as the activities used for the development of each of the skills, are exclusively focused on the acquisition and learning of vocabulary. As Nunan (2004:48) said in his work, the contents selected for dealing with them in the tasks are all related to our students' needs. Some examples are: giving personal information in a reservation for a hotel or elaborating a recipe. In the same line, as this author stated, they can see the connection between the language used within and outside the classroom, by the proposal of close contexts in order to carry out the different activities and tasks. Moreover, there is an activity in all tasks where they are going to interact with their classmates, leading to the development of communicative competence. To go on, according to Willis' (1996:2) definition of a task, the ones proposed in our Master's Dissertation have their goal. In this case, the main objective is the learning of vocabulary related to different topics. Thus, my adult students are going to use the linguistic resource they possess to fill in the different tasks and get the main goal. Following Willis and Willis (2007:70), quoted by Rodríguez-Bonces and Rodríguez-Bonces (2010:7), these activities constitute experiences where my students are going to use the target language as much as possible. The four key conditions proposed by Willis (1996:8) have been also fulfilled: students are going to be exposed to real and comprehensible input, such as listening to a conversation or a monologue, and reading the planning of a trip. They all have been accompanied by pictures to make language more accessible and comprehensible, facilitating the acquisition of the vocabulary. All the activities are samples which provide our students

with real chances of using the target language: writing about their daily routines at Christmas holidays or planning their own trip. My pupils will be motivated while doing all the activities, since they have been selected according to their interests and motivations; and last, but not least, they will be aware of the language forms learned after having carried out each task.

5.2. Task 1: Filling a form for a hotel stay

Topic

First of all, the topic established for this task is “giving personal information”. The selection of this topic is due to my students’ familiarity with it, since they have to give their personal data in a great variety of occasions in their daily life: filling a curriculum, giving their data in a travel agency when planning a trip, signing up when taking up a new course or when they want to start at high school and filling a survey or a questionnaire.

Description of the task

Our group of students is going to work in pairs. They have to imagine they are the receptionist in a hotel of a foreign country and they have to fill in the form for the check-in and the check-out of a tourist who is going to stay in that hotel. So, there are two different roles established for each of the members of the couple: one of them is going to be the receptionist and the other one, the tourist.

Secondly, in relation to the contents which they are going to deal with:

- **Listening skill:** understanding of the vocabulary related to personal data: name, age, telephone number, address, nationality, occupation, e-mail address, among others.
- **Speaking skill:** using questions where they make use of the vocabulary mentioned, in order to exchange personal information and giving information by using the same vocabulary.
- **Reading skill:** understanding of a form filled in by another person with the vocabulary being learned
- **Writing skill:** using the vocabulary related to personal data to fill in a form.

Objectives

The intended objectives for the task presented are:

- Recognizing and understanding specific personal data when listening to a dialogue where a person is introduced.

- Expressing orally in the correct way when being asked for personal information, by using appropriately the vocabulary learned to ask questions and to answer them.
- Understanding written vocabulary related to personal information when reading a form for the check-in and check-out of a hotel.
- Filling in a form for a hotel with the correct spelling and correct data.

Activities

I am going to provide examples of the activities which lead my students to the realization of the final task:

Brainstorming: As a whole class activity, I am going to ask them what a receptionist asks you when you arrive at a hotel. I am going to show them pictures on the digital whiteboard to better contextualize them. The questions they suggest are going to be written down on the blackboard so that they can copy them in their notebook.

Listening activity

1. Listen and fill in the following form using the personal data you hear:

Personal Information Form	
Name:	
Date:	
Gender:	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other
Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY):	
Country of Origin:	
Address:	

Retrieved from Liveworksheets.com

Here is the link for the listening: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIIVv9un5wA>

Speaking activity

1. Write down in your notebook a series of questions for the exchange of personal data with your classmate. Then, ask your classmate the questions and write down the answers in your notebook.

Reading activity

ROOM RESERVATION	
CHECK-IN DATE: 19 th OCTOBER 2021	CHECK-OUT DATE: 22 nd OCTOBER 2021
NAME: MARIA JOSE	
SURNAME: CAMPAÑA	
DATE OF BIRTH: 31/01/1991	
NATIONALITY: SPANISH	
ADDRESS: ECHEGARAY STREET, 1	
OCCUPATION: TEACHER	
TELEPHONE: 666852456	
MARITAL STATUS: SINGLE	
ROOM: SINGLE ROOM	

1. Read the following form for the check-in and check-out of a hotel and answer the questions under it:
 - a) What's her name?
 - b) What's her surname?
 - c) What is her date of birth?
 - d) Where is she from?
 - e) What's her address?
 - f) What does she do?
 - g) What's her telephone number?
 - h) What's her marital status?
 - i) What kind of room does she want?

Writing activity

1. Fill in the same form, but this time using your own data.

ROOM RESERVATION	
CHECK-IN DATE:	CHECK-OUT DATE:
NAME:	
SURNAME:	
DATE OF BIRTH:	
NATIONALITY:	

ADDRESS:
OCCUPATION:
TELEPHONE:
MARITAL STATUS:
ROOM:

Methodology

The task proposed, as well as the activities, combines all different skills, responding to the skill integrated feature of the task-based approach.

In the case of the first activity, it combines three of them: listening, reading and writing. Students have to read the information they are asked for in the handout that I am going to give them and then listen to the audio that I am going to play in the digital whiteboard in order to write the correct answer in the right gaps. This is an individual activity, where each of my students is going to start to work on the development of the three skills previously mentioned. Each of them is going to be aware of their level of listening skill and, at the same time, this is going to increase their motivation.

Regarding the second activity, although it is specially focused on the listening skill, students are also going to practice several skills at the same time. They are going to be grouped in pairs, and they have several gaps related to the personal data of their classmate (reading skill) which they have to complete by interacting with them (speaking skill). They constitute the information gap feature of task-based approach. The material used, in this case, is their notebook.

Activity 3 deals with the development of the reading skill, as they are going to face a hotel form where they have to read the different data they are asked for so that later they can answer the questions correctly. Those questions compose the information gap which is going to motivate my adult students. With this kind of activities, my students can work each of them at their own pace and they are combining reading and writing skill. There is a choice for this activity to be done in pairs, so that the strongest learners can help the weakest ones.

Activity 4 is the one previous to the task they have to perform. They are going to demonstrate that they have understood which word from the vocabulary learned has to be used to fill in each of the gaps, by working on the reading and writing skills.

All the activities have been adapted to my students' level. The vocabulary is going to be learned and interiorized by practicing it throughout all the different activities, and they are going to use the English language in order to fill in those gaps of

the communicative activities, instead of explaining to them directly the meaning of the different words. The context for the listening activity is a form for a hotel which they have to fill in. With respect to the speaking activity, a conversation for the exchange of personal data is the context. In the reading and writing activities, the contexts are provided by a form, as it occurred in the listening one. The final task, on its own, has been contextualized in a hotel. The context becomes familiar for them, and within an English-speaking atmosphere; this is going to help them to select the appropriate linguistic resources they need to complete the task. Moreover, they have to fill in the gaps which they find in the form by interacting with the other classmate and using the target language. As the context is meaningful for them, what they are learning is going to make sense when carrying out the task as well as when they finish it. Communication and fluency when communicating is being worked on and developed.

Evaluation

For the evaluation of the activities and the task, I am going to use a variety of tools:

- Direct observation
- Question and answer when checking the activities
- A rubric to evaluate each of the skills in the task.
- A rubric for the evaluation of the teaching practice.

5.3. Task 2: Elaborate a recipe for Master Chef program

Topic

In this task, the linguistic function which my students are going to put into practice is “giving instructions”, and the vocabulary is related to food. I have decided to focus on this topic because, as adults, they are used to cooking and many of them like it and even they like looking for the recipe to elaborate new dishes. Sometimes, they also ask their friends or their relatives about how to innovate in cooking, so it is a typical topic when meeting them.

Description of the task

They are going to participate in Master Chef program and so, they are going to prepare their recipe, individually, and explain it in front of their classmates.

Content

- **Listening skill:** understanding and identifying the vocabulary related to food (carrots, beef, tomato, potato, for instance), numbers and the one related to

imperative verbs (chop, peel, boil, among others) when listening to the instructions given for a recipe.

- **Speaking skill:** asking for the ingredients they need for the elaboration of any dish and their quantities. Asking for the steps they have to follow for its elaboration, as well as giving the same information to anyone who asks them.
- **Reading skill:** understanding of a recipe found on the Internet.
- **Writing skill:** using the vocabulary related to food and to imperative verbs for writing a recipe.

Objectives

- Listening to a recipe, identifying specific data related to vocabulary about food and imperative form of the verbs.
- Interacting, giving the instructions for a recipe, using the vocabulary related to food in a correct way, as well as the imperative form of the verbs.
- Reading and comprehending specific data of a written recipe.
- Writing a recipe, using the suitable vocabulary in a correct way.

Activities

The samples of the activities which my students are going to do in order to be able to carry out their final task are:

Brainstorming: This is a whole class activity. I am going to show them on the digital whiteboard different pictures of typical Spanish dishes and they have to try to identify the ingredients they are made of. They are going to take note on their notebooks and they are going to add new ingredients which I will tell them.

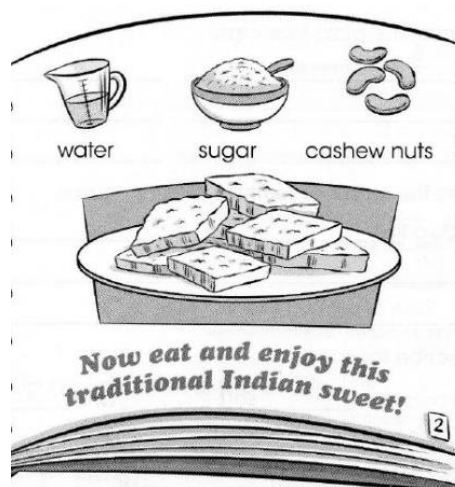
Listening activity

1. You are going to listen to different people talking about a recipe they are going to elaborate. From each list, circle the ingredients you hear:
 - a) Bread- flour- biscuits- chocolate- eggs- salad- carrots- yoghurt- vinegar- sugar
 - b) Butter- salmon- tuna- eggs- tomato sauce- salt- lettuce- water- olive oil
 - c) Garlic- lemon- yoghurt- pepper- chips- lettuce- chicken- beef

Here is the link for the listening that I propose:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rAcrP3FIWBU>

2. Complete the following instructions for a recipe while you hear: _____ (1) the cashew nuts into small pieces. _____ (2) the cashew nuts with hot water and sugar. _____ (3) the mixture on a plate and _____ (4) for two hours.



[https://www.liveworksheets.com/worksheets/en/English as a Second Language \(ESL\)/Food and drinks/Listening-Recipe mi1028291mh](https://www.liveworksheets.com/worksheets/en/English+as+a+Second+Language+(ESL)/Food+and+drinks/Listening-Recipe+mi1028291mh)

Speaking activity

1. You need to know the ingredients and instructions to complete the recipe of a soup you want to cook for the next Friday dinner. Ask your classmate and take notes. It is going to be done in pairs.

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Chemistry-of-cooking-Family-Recipe-Worksheet-4299428>

FROM THE KITCHEN OF _____ GROUP _____

Recipe for _____

NAME OF DISH _____

SERVES	INGREDIENTS
PREP TIME	
TOTAL TIME	
OVEN TEMP	

PREP AND COOKING DIRECTIONS

Reading activity

1. I have found this recipe on the Internet and I need your help for better understanding. Read it and answer the questions:

Pancake Recipe

- 100g plain flour
- 2 eggs
- 300ml milk
- 1 tbsp oil
- pinch of salt



1. Put the flour and milk into a bowl.
2. Crack the eggs and add to the bowl.
3. Whisk the ingredients together.
4. Pour some of the mixture into the pan.
5. Cook until browned then flip.
6. Once the other side is brown leave to cool.
7. Enjoy eating.

1. List 3 ingredients needed for the pancake recipe.
2. How much flour is needed?
3. List two items you will need to use in order to make the pancakes.
4. Put the following steps in order using 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Cook until brown then flip.
 Put the flour and milk into a bowl, then add the cracked eggs.
 Whisk ingredients together.
 Pour the mixture into a pan.
 Once the other side is brown leave it to cool then enjoy.

https://www.liveworksheets.com/worksheets/en/Reading/Reading_Comprehension/Recipe_Comprehension_xr1867708ym

Writing activity

1. Basing on the recipe used for the reading activity, write the recipe for Spanish omelette.

Methodology

To begin with, the activities proposed which lead my students to the performance of the final task integrate different skills at the same time, following the skills integration feature of the task-based approach, which is what allows the achievement of fluency in the target language.

Regarding the listening activities, they both are going to be developed as a whole class activity. Nevertheless, each of the students is going to be given a handout which must be filled in individually, while being played in my computer. The skills they are going to work on are: reading and listening, in the first activity, as they have to circle the word they listen to; listening, reading and writing in the second one, since while reading the brief text and listening to the audio, they have to write the correct words in each of the existing gaps.

Going on with the speaking activity, it is going to be carried out in pairs; one strong learner and a weaker one. This way, the first one can help the other or even taking the role of teacher in the activity. Although it is specifically focused on speaking, they are also going to practice listening, when interacting with their couple, and writing, when taking the notes for the recipe of the soup. Through this interaction, they are going to complete the information gaps existing, as they need to know the steps and ingredients for the recipe. Furthermore, with this activity, they are going to work on the respecting turn-taking objective established at the beginning of the task.

In relation to the reading one, individually, they are going to work on a reading handout which I am going to give them. They are going to practice their reading and comprehension skills, as well as the writing ones; and they are going to work at their own pace. This way, we are attending to diversity respecting their rhythms. In addition, they have to cover some gaps which are provided to them throughout the questions presented.

The last activity is exclusively focused on writing, but they can make use of the resources they need to complete it: their notebooks, online dictionaries, ask another classmate and so on. It is an individual activity.

Finally, during the performance of the task, they are going to put into practice all the skills and knowledge acquired. First, they are going to write the recipe and read it so that they are aware of their own knowledge and possible mistakes they have made. For its realization, they are going to use the computers which they have in the class. Afterwards, they are going to present the task in front of their classmates by using the digital whiteboard. At the same time, each of the other adult students is practicing listening and taking notes of the mistakes they have noticed of their classmates.

Once they all have presented their task, the whole class, with my help, is going to check the possible mistakes they all have made, and comment and reflect on the task.

The acquisition of the vocabulary proposed for this activity, which is the one related to food and cooking verbs in their imperative form, is going to be facilitated by practicing it throughout the different activities proposed related to each of the skills. The activities proposed for the listening, speaking and reading skills are characterized by the “information gap” feature. This one encourages my students to interact with each other looking for the answer or to concentrate on the reading and listening and get the information they need to complete them. They are also going to use different authentic resources (computer, notebook, dictionary). This way, they are constantly using the English language, which is being acquired indirectly and unconsciously, instead of being explained directly to my pupils the meaning of the words. In addition, the task has been contextualized in a famous Spanish TV program, Master Chef. The context becomes familiar for them, because it is a popular Spanish program that many of them are used to watching. It happens the same with the context where all the activities previous to the final task occurs; they all are related to a recipe context. This way, we are facilitating the acquisition and learning of vocabulary, and helping them to select the appropriate linguistic resources they need to complete the task. Last but not least, as we have proposed a meaningful context for them, the vocabulary they are learning is going to make sense while doing and after finishing the activity. This, at the same time, will lead to the achievement of communication and fluency.

Evaluation

For the evaluation of the activities and the task, I am going to use a variety of tools:

- Direct observation
- Question and answer when checking the activities
- A rubric to evaluate each of the skills in the task.
- A rubric for the evaluation of the teaching practice.

5.4. Task 3: Write an e-mail about Christmas in Spain

Topic

With this task, my students are going to cover the vocabulary related to Christmas and the linguistic function dealing with “describing routines”, specifically on Christmas Day. The selection of this topic is because Christmas is a really nice season for many people and because they usually love talking about what they do at Christmas holidays and their traditions.

Description of the task

They are going to write an e-mail to an English-speaking friend that they met on a Facebook forum and tell him/her about their Christmas Day.

Content

- **Listening skill:** Recognizing the vocabulary related to Christmas and understanding it. Examples: present, reindeer, Christmas tree or Christmas Day, among others.
- **Speaking skill:** asking for Christmas holidays and traditions, using the vocabulary mentioned above.
Tell about their Christmas Day traditions, using the appropriate vocabulary.
- **Reading skill:** understanding and completing the information of an e-mail about Christmas Day.
- **Writing skill:** writing an e-mail about their Christmas Day, using the appropriate spelling for the vocabulary learned.

Objectives

- Listening and understanding the oral vocabulary related to Christmas Day and Christmas routines.
- Speaking and interacting in conversations where they are going to ask about Christmas Day routines and traditions, using the vocabulary correctly.
- Reading in a comprehensible way an e-mail about Christmas Day, getting specific details they are asked for.
- Writing an e-mail about their Christmas Day, with the purpose of informing about their routines and traditions on that day, using the vocabulary correctly.

Activities

The proposal of the activities which my students are going to do and which enable them to perform the final task are:

Brainstorming: This is a whole class activity. I am going to stick some pictures of traditions and routines at Christmas Day in Spain on the blackboard. Then, they have to say aloud vocabulary related to Christmas basing on the pictures used.

Listening activity

1. Listen to these brief conversations about Christmas Day and complete them with the correct word:
 - a) Have you gotten your _____ yet?
Not yet.

b) That's a beautiful _____.

Thank you. I made it.

c) We need more _____ for our _____.

Let's go buy some.

d) What should we put in the _____?

We should put a small _____ and an orange in it.

e) Please make some _____ men cookies.

Good idea. I love those.

Here is the link for the listening that I propose:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_7Z1n0iwrA

Speaking activity

1. You have to fill in a form about what your classmate usually does on Christmas Day. Ask him or her for the information you need to complete it.

Reading activity

1. Read and complete this e-mail about Christmas Day celebration that your English-speaking friend has sent you. Use the words you have below:
Turkey- decorations- presents- celebration- Christmas tree- Fireworks- Santa Claus- toast

Recipients: María

Subject: Christmas

Dear María,

How are you? I'm writing to tell you about my traditional Christmas Day.

Every year, I wake up in the morning, I have breakfast and I decorate my _____. After that, my father loves cooking _____, so the whole family helps him. Then, we prepare the _____ and _____ that we put on the Christmas tree and under it. At lunch, we have a light one, we get ready for the _____ and make decorations. In the evening, my whole family comes home and we have dinner. At midnight, we make a

_____ and watch the _____. _____ always appear on the roof of my house and he gives _____ to the little ones of my family.

What about you?

Bye,

Sophie

(My own text)

Writing activity

1. Basing on the e-mail you read on the previous activity, write your own one answering your English-speaking friend.

Methodology

First of all, it is important to underline that in all the activities proposed for my students to be able to develop the final task, all four skills are integrated. Some of the activities provided requires to put into practice more than one skill at the same time. This is the skills integration feature of the task-based approach, which leads to the acquisition of fluency in the target language.

In the brainstorming, they are going to practice both speaking and listening skills; each time one of them is going to say one word aloud, while the rest of them are going to listen to that student and try to get that word. This is a whole class activity, involving the pictures of Christmas Day and the blackboard as resources.

During the listening activity, students are going to put listening, reading and writing into practice. This time, the handout contains some gaps which they have to complete with the correct word while listening to the audio once they have read the sentences. I am going to use my computer to play the audio. This is a whole class activity.

With respect to the reading skill, they are going to face an e-mail they have to read and complete with the words that are given to them. Thus, they are going to practice writing at the same time. This activity is going to be done individually, so each student can work at their own pace. This is a way of attending to diversity.

The last activity, which also constitutes the task, is exclusively focused on writing, as they are going to write an e-mail telling about their Christmas Day. They can make use of a variety of resources to complete it: their notebooks and their computers. It is an individual activity.

Once they all have presented their task, I am going to help the whole class by commenting on all possible mistakes and so, they are going to reflect on the task.

In this case, the activities which are presented for listening, speaking and reading skills meet the feature of “information gap”. In each of them, my students are going to use a variety of resources to complete them: the interaction with the others and authentic resources, such as the computer or the digital whiteboard to fill in the existing gaps. They are going to use the English language in communication to fulfill different goals and functions, such as using questions and vocabulary to ask for routines to discover what are their classmates’ Christmas traditions. This way, vocabulary will be learned unconsciously and indirectly, as well as in an enjoyable way. To go on, this final task has been contextualized through an e-mail they are going to send. This context becomes familiar for them, because they usually send e-mails to people in their daily life. It can be said the same about the contexts where the activities related to each of the skills are presented, placing them in conversations about Christmas and an e-mail about their Christmas routines on Christmas Day. In addition, it will create the need to look for the appropriate linguistic resources in order to complete the task. The context is familiar for them and, in the same line, it is meaningful.

They all are factors which contribute to the main goal of the EFL area: communication and fluency.

Evaluation

For the evaluation of the activities and the task, I am going to use a variety of tools:

- Direct observation
- Question and answer when checking the activities
- A rubric to evaluate each of the skills in the task.
- A rubric for the evaluation of the teaching practice.

5.5. Task 4: Planning a trip

Topic

“Making plans” is the topic of this task. The reason why I have decided to take it as focus of a task is because they usually like travelling and organizing their trip, as well as talking about it.

Description of the task

In pairs, they are going to plan a trip for the bank holidays of December. They are going to visit a foreign country. They have to organize the route and present their planning in front of their classmates.

Content

- **Listening skill:** understanding and identifying the vocabulary related to plans (visiting the castle, eating at the restaurant, going on a free tour...).
- **Speaking skill:** Using the appropriate structures and vocabulary to ask for plans and talk about them.
- **Reading skill:** Identifying the vocabulary related to plans and understanding specific information of the text.
- **Writing skill:** writing a route to visit a foreign country.

Objectives

- Listening to an audio where I am going to detail the plan of a trip, by understanding the oral vocabulary related to plans.
- Talking and asking about plans, using correctly the vocabulary and structures.
- Comprehension of specific information of a text about plans, by identifying a different plan in relation to the pictures representing them.
- Writing a route to visit a foreign country, choosing the most suitable vocabulary with the correct spelling.

Activities

The samples of the activities which my students are going to do in order to be able to perform the final task are:

Brainstorming: In groups of three, they are going to think about the places or the things they like doing when visiting a foreign country. Then, in turns, they will say them aloud and will take note of them on the whiteboard. As a help to extend the vocabulary, I am going to show them pictures on the digital whiteboard.

Listening activity

1. They are going to listen to a recording made by me where I talk about a trip to Edinburgh which occurred two years ago, in December. I am going to give them a handout where different plans are mentioned, and they have to order them as they listen to the audio. Here are some of the plans:

1. *Eating at a famous restaurant.*
2. *Visiting the cemetery.*

3. *Going on a free tour.*

4. *Walking around the city.*

2. Spelling exercise. Each of them is going to select their favourite plan and spell it, while the rest have to write the correct word which has been spelt.

Speaking activity

1. In pairs, they are going to make a list of the things they would like to do during their trip. They have 10 minutes to think about them and write them down on their notebook. Later on, each group is going to say aloud the list of their plans and the rest have to try to memorize them. Afterwards, I am going to say a plan related to each of the group, and the rest of them have to say if that is true or false.

Reading activity

1. Read the route to Edinburgh and associate each plan to the corresponding picture:

PLANNING A TRIP

Our route and Schedule for the trip to Edinburgh:

1. Taking the plane at 5.00 a.m.
2. Checking at the hotel at 10 a.m.
3. Going sightseeing.
4. Eating at "The table" restaurant at 14.00.
5. Visiting the cemetery at 17.00
6. Having a hot wine at 20.00
7. Having pizza at the hotel at 22.00



Here are the links where I have got the different pictures from:

<https://tylerluther.wordpress.com/2019/08/>

<https://www.psicologiathamar.com/la-realidad-del-expatriado/>

<https://engoo.es/app/lessons/checking-in-at-a-hotel/WBvmYipxEee-g4u1WmOvmA>

<https://www.ingles.com/traductor/go%20sightseeing>

<https://unsplash.com/s/photos/restaurant>

<https://www.wanderingcrystal.com/explore-historic-edinburgh-cemeteries/>

<https://www.gimmesomeoven.com/mulled-wine-recipe/>

Writing activity

1. Basing on the text you have read previously, write, in pairs, your own route.

Methodology

To being with, the activities proposed allow the development of the four language skills in my adult students. In addition, they are going to practice more than one skill at the same time.

The brainstorming consists of a group activity where they are going to develop speaking, listening and writing. The members of the group will have a different language level each. As they are going to say aloud what plans they would like to do during their visit to a foreign country, they are going to practice speaking, while the rest is going to listen to them. Each time, one of them is going to say a question aloud, while the rest of them are going to listen to that student. Then, they will take notes of it on their notebooks, so writing skill is involved here. As resources, we are also going to use the digital whiteboard and the blackboard.

For the listening activity, students are going to listen, read and write. The listening consists of an authentic audio where I tell my route to an Edinburgh trip. Meanwhile, my students are going to read the sentences of the route and order them, in accordance to what they listen to. In this activity, the information gap existing requires the identification of specific vocabulary as the audio mentions them. About the second listening activity, they are going to spell their plans aloud, so they are going to practice speaking, while the rest is listening, and viceversa. At the same time, they are going to practice writing, when they set the spelling letters on their notebooks. In this case, the information gap is produced because they need to recognize the words being spelt and write them down correctly.

During the speaking activity, speaking, listening and writing are going to be developed. The reason for this is because each group is going to make a list of their plans and then, say them aloud. Thus, they are going to write and speak. The rest of groups are going to listen and then, they are going to speak by specifying if the sentences are true or false. The respect of turn-taking and cooperating is going to take place during all the activity. Hence, the information gap of the task- based approach is based on guessing the certainty of the given sentences.

With respect to the reading skill, a text containing a route and pictures related to the route are presented. As they read the different sentences of the route, they have to match them with the correct picture. Thus, here is where the information gap takes place, since they have to guess which pictures goes with each step of the route. As all the reading activities proposed, this one is going to be done individually, so each student can work at their own pace. This is a way of attending to diversity.

In the last activity, they are going to put into practice exclusively the writing skill and it is a pair activity. They are going to use the computers in class to look for pictures which support their information about the route. This way, they develop their creativity. All these factors are going to contribute by increasing the motivation of our adults students.

The next step, which is the performance of the final task, is going to be developed with confidence because I have prepared my students to carry it out with the completion of all the activities proposed. It is going to be done in the computers of our class. After that, they will have to present it in front of their classmates, using the digital whiteboard.

The last step is the presentation of their final task, and afterwards, we are going to reflect all together about the mistakes they have made during the performance of the task.

The realization of the different activities proposed, related each one to each of the skills, is going to facilitate the acquisition of vocabulary to my students. As a general feature of them all, they have been presented within a familiar context as motivating element for them. The listening one has been contextualized by using an audio of a trip. The speaking occurs within the context of a route organization, in groups. About the reading one, a written route is presented with supporting pictures to overcome possible understanding difficulties; and regarding the writing activity, they are set in the situation where they have to organize their own trip, individually. On the

other hand, the final task has been contextualized in their bank holidays and the organization of it. The context becomes familiar for them, as they like organizing trips and they are used to talking about it with each other. The closeness of the context motivates our adult students and help them in the selection of the appropriate linguistic resources they need to complete the task. Last but not least, they are going to use and deal with different authentic resources (computer, notebook, dictionary, audios) as well as the mother tongue.

Evaluation

For the evaluation of the activities and the task, I am going to use a variety of tools:

- Direct observation
- Question and answer when checking the activities
- A rubric to evaluate each of the skills in the task.
- A rubric for the evaluation of the teaching practice.

5.6. Example of rubrics to evaluate each skill

ASSESSMENT OF THE LISTENING SKILL	1	2	3	4
Understanding oral texts dealing with vocabulary related to personal information, extracting basic and specific information.	Students do not understand vocabulary related to personal information.	Students understand the vocabulary related to personal information with help.	Students understand the vocabulary related to personal information almost without help.	Students understand the vocabulary related to personal information.
ASSESSMENT OF THE SPEAKING SKILL	1	2	3	4
Participating in conversations where they exchange personal information.	Students know but do not apply basic strategies to produce short dialogues.	Students know and apply basic strategies to produce short dialogues with help.	Students know and apply basic strategies to produce short dialogues almost without help.	Students know and apply basic strategies to produce short dialogues without help.

ASSESSMENT OF THE READING SKILL	1	2	3	4
Understanding the personal information appearing in a form and extract specific details from it.	Students do not understand personal information from the form.	Students understand the personal information appearing in a form and can extract specific details with help.	Students understand the personal information appearing in a form and can extract specific details almost without help.	Students understand the personal information appearing in a form and can extract specific details without help.
ASSESSMENT OF THE WRITING SKILL	1	2	3	4
Filling in a form with vocabulary related to personal information, using the correct spelling.	Students do not know what vocabulary they have to use for each gap.	Students know what they have to write in each gap and use the correct spelling, with help.	Students know what they have to write in each gap and use the correct spelling, almost without help.	Students know what they have to write in each gap and use the correct spelling, without help.

5.7. Example of a rubric to evaluate the teaching practice

ASSESSMENT OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE	1	2	3	4	5
1. Pupils have got the intended area objectives.					
2. Pupils work successfully individually, in pairs, in small groups, in large groups or as a class.					
3. Pupils have developed the different language skills.					
4. Activities proposed and resources used were successful.					

6. CONCLUSION

The Task-based approach, based on the discovery learning technique, which is tested to be one of the most efficient ways to learn vocabulary, is such a motivating and practical one. At the same time, I consider it as a very complex method because of all the factors that must be taken into account in order to apply it. Among them, I have to underline the high level of creativity which it requires on the part of the teacher in order to get all our students' needs covered. This can mean an added difficulty to teachers, since not all of them have such capacity and so the use of this approach may fail for that reason.

Much interaction between students is required for the appropriate implementation of this approach. This is a great advantage for the development of the communicative skills in our students but, on the contrary, for some kind of students, such as the shiest ones or those whose level of competence is lower, it can be a real challenge. Thus, as Richards and Rodgers (2004) say, although it is a very student-centred approach, much of the responsibility falls on the teacher. He has to make the most suitable changes according to their students' needs and also, focusing on the results obtained after the performance of each activity or task. The application of the task-based approach can be also limited by the resources which the context provides us.

The paragraphs above describe some advantages and disadvantages I have discovered after reflecting about the contributions that different authours have made and after studying the context where this research has been carried out.

Now, I am going to focus on the main contribution that I have made. I have proposed a series of four tasks, related to my students' needs, interests and motivations, and taken into account the context where they are performed. They all are set within real life contexts, and they are focused on the learning of vocabulary within the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. This way, we are also working on the achievement of the communicative competence in the English language. Thus, with the proposal of the four tasks that I have included in my Master Dissertation I aim mainly at developing vocabulary about familiar topics to my pupils, while they are working on the development of the four language skills. In order to get these goals, I have used the task-based approach. So after completing these four tasks, I can demonstrate that by using the task-based learning approach, my pupils have acquired the vocabulary being object of study. Thus, they are able to interact, understand in the

written as well as in the spoken area the vocabulary presented, and write by using the vocabulary acquired. Definitely, they can communicate in the English language.

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