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A SECOND LANGUAGE TASK BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR CHILDREN

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
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Pittsburg, Kansas

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A SECOND LANGUAGE TASK BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR CHILDREN

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A SECOND LANGUAGE TASK BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR CHILDREN

"An Abstract of the Thesis by"
Sofia Alfieri

The study was designed to investigate the implementation phase of a Task Based

Learning approach for teaching English as a Second Language to an intact sample of 25 children,

six to seven years of age and whose first language in Asuncion, Paraguay was Spanish. Most of

the theory behind Task Based Learning (TBL) was accomplished with adolescents and adults.

The present researcher found that many of the tasks researched were either not

developmentally appropriate or likely needed significant adaptations. Therefore, tasks were

developed and adapted to be likely appropriate for children 6 to7 years of age. Findings

revealed that adaptations to tasks were crucial to achieving maximum success. This was true for

pre-planning and for the implementation phase. More time, scenarios, games, pictures and

active learning experiences were found to be needed than originally thought by the present

researcher. To the surprise of two teachers and present researcher, most children enjoyed

repetition and recycling of new vocabulary. The highest level of motivation emerged when

children interviewed high school seniors in their school. Emerging English learners made

increased progress when paired with high or moderate level learners. Tasks that were most

effective were the interview and retelling of a story. Abstract tasks required increased

adaptations, increased teacher intervention in the first language and time to achieve even

moderate success. Children responded with curiosity, high motivation and high achievement

during the implementation phase. Additional tasks, planning and adaptations must continue to

occur before and during the continued implementation of TBL at Colegio del Sol School. Task

Based Learning holds promise for young children; however, there needs to be additional

development of ideas and materials to support TBL theoretical background.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the past thirty years, there has been an increase in the number of young children who are learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Parental demands for EFL serviceshave increased and bilingual schools and English language institutes have increased in number and size. There has also been an increase in research studies, in methods and materials, and in textbooks to serve younger children. Teaching younger children English has added pedagogical and managerial challenges, such as development and use of materials, methods of teaching, evaluation of learning, and time allocated for planning and delivering learning experiences. Another area of concern is among school administrators, who note the absence of highly qualified English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. EFL teachers for children need to be highly qualified to reach into the child's world, understanding not only language teaching, but how children make sense of their surroundings and how children learn. The way young children learn a foreign language depends on their developmental stage and previous language proficiency in their first and second language. Younger children may be expected to be holistic learners who respond to language according to its usage and functionality, rather than a series of abstract activities (Phillips, 1993).

More specifically, in the past twenty years Paraguay has experienced an increased demand for Bilingual Spanish/English education. While much of this education is provided by private schools that use a Content Based Instruction approach to learning a foreign language, there are now public schools providing some Bilingual Spanish/English in the secondary schools. Formerly, public schools limited Bilingual instruction to Spanish and Guarani, the latter being the second language spoken in Paraguay. A few years ago, public schools started implementing two hours of English education in the curriculum. Because there is a shortage of English teachers, less than 40% of public schools provide English instruction.   Essentially, English instruction is delivered primarily by the private sector,especially in the capitol city of Asuncion. Content and Language Integration (CLI) is the established teaching approach in Paraguay (McDougald, 2009).

Cameron (2001) explained why context for young learners is important. The persistent view by some teachers is that children should learn simple language, such as colors, animals, fruits, numbers, nursery rhymes, and songs. Unfortunately, these examples are frequently taught through isolated words and without a real context. Children need to make sense of what they are learning through a natural context. In addition, Pinter, (2007) noted that much of the status quo (EFL) teaching for children centers on drill and memorization of prefabricated expressions. Status quo teachers frequently contend that young children are unable to profit from communicative tasks, because the second language proficiency level for most young children is minimal. As such, these teachers resist experimenting with this approach.

Delineation of the Problem

Becker and Ross (2016) described the main objective of a second language method as students learning to communicate in the target (second) language. Traditional methods, such as the Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, and Audi-Lingual Method, among others, were subject to some scholars questioning their success in developing communicative competence. Some researchers and teachers observed that students could produce sentences accurately in the context of the classroom lesson, but were unable to communicate fluently outside of the classroom. This observation helped form the assumption that communication calls for more than mastering simple vocabulary and phrases in isolation. Moreover, the English classroom is perhaps the major place to practice oral communication in the second language, having few opportunities to engage in natural usage of the second language outside of the classroom. Furthermore, young children in the classroom are often exposed to a fixed set of pre-fabricated expressions, with no room for creative experiences that include making mistakes. Children need to engage in learning experiences that will challenge their current knowledge, pushing them to use their language inventory. What has been briefly described above is the communicative approach to learning a second language.

Ellis (2005) described a popular communicative approach known as Task Based Learning (TBL). This approach focuses on children processing language to communicate with other people. This requires children to rely on their own linguistic resources and to use the second language in much the way children likely learned their first language in a real world situation. How can Task Based Learning (TBL) become a pedagogical resource for teachers to use with children to develop fluency and basic speaking competencies inside

and outside of the classroom? A Task Based Learning (TBL) approach used commonly with adolescents and adults may not work well with young children. Pinter (2007) cautioned that young learners frequently require adaptations to tasks used with adolescents and adults. The role of the teacher is vital in adapting Task Based Learning tasks for young learners, bridging possible difficulties that arise from lack of language context and experience.

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how implementation of a Task Based Learning approach, focusing on five preplanned and adapted language tasks by the present researcher, could enhance young learner's language performance for an intact sample of 25 children, ages six and seven years, at Colegio del Sol, a private school in Asuncion, Paraguay.

Ten research objectives were formulated to guide the researcher in this study:

1. Create tasks that were developmentally appropriate for both girls and boys who were six and seven years of age.

2. Create tasks that motivated students to remain engaged.

3. Assess individual performance of tasks in a formative manner.

4. Assess group performance of tasks in a formative manner.

5. Descriptively record observed performance of students.

6. Note variance in observed performance of children.

7. Note deviation from planned implementation of tasks.

8. Note adaptations to pre-planned tasks to enhance language production.

9. Assess the individual performance of tasks in a summative manner.

10. Assess the group performance of tasks in a summative manner.

In addition, eleven pedagogical techniques that are specific to Task Based Learning were selected to be used during the pre-planning and implementation phases of this study. The following eleven Task Based Learning techniques are: (1) intervention with first language, (2) pre-taught vocabulary, (3) learner's motivation, (4.) mixing high, moderate and emerging proficiency children, (5) adaptations to pre-planned tasks, (6) intervention with emerging level children by a teacher, (7) children's attitudes toward a task, (8) oral production as part of the process, (9) opportunities for extending language competency, (10) interaction among children, and (11) task repetition (Ellis, 2016).

Research Questions

The following research questions were drawn from questions posed by the researcher of this study:

1. Did data gathered during the implementation phase of the study inform future procedure for implementing Task Based Learning?

2. Did pre-task planning inform children's understanding and performance of a task?

3. What pre-task planning activities appeared to be effective with children?

Delimitation of the Study

This study was limited to an intact sample of 25 subjects who participated in the implementation of a Task Based Learning approach for learning English as a second language. Likewise, there was no attempt to generalize to a population beyond the subjects who participated. Discretion is advised to the reader pertaining to findings that may or may not be applicable to other populations.

Definition of Selected Terms

Communicative Learning Task (CLT): "sets as its goal the teaching of communicative competence." (Richards, 2006, [p.2])

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): English as taught to people whose first language is not English and who live where English is not the official language.

Task Based Learning (TBL): "An activity that is communicative at some level, but whose purpose, overt or covert, is to practice specific linguistic items. Students may read a story about the chain of events that resulted in a traffic accident, and then answer comprehension questions on the text, as a way of improving their control of past time reference. Or they may role-play imaginary job interviews, not because they are preparing for a real job interview conducted in the second language (L2), but in order to improve their production and comprehension of questions." (Long, 2015, [p.5])

Pre-task: "The pre-task is an essential phase of the task-based lesson cycle since it is the place in the task cycle which determines learners' orientation to the main task and as a consequence may affect subsequent task performance." (Van de Guchte, Rijlaarsdam, Braaksma, &Bimmel, 2017 [p. 3])

Pre-task planning: "Pre-task planning is a means to help learners' overcome limitations in attentional resources and improve L2 performance, it is a problem solving activity, and it seems to assist performance; by triggering a range of strategic, metalinguistic and metacognitive behaviors." (Guara-Tavares, 2016. [p. 80])

Summary

The purpose of Chapter I was to create a conceptual framework in terms of background and need for the proposed study, and to develop the research problem into

research objectives, and pedagogical techniques that generate descriptive data, during the implementation phase to inform three research questions posed in Chapter I. To this end, Chapter II was designed to further support the conceptual framework established in Chapter I.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

A review of literature produced a considerable quantity of writing that detailed the emergence, development and expansion of Task Based Learning. In addition, Chapter II captured pedagogical practice and research that supported the conceptual framework developed in Chapter I of this study.

Task Based Learning (TBL) has drawn attention since it was first introduced in the late 1980s by Prabhu in India. Task Based Learning emerged as an extension of the Communicative Learning Teaching (CLT) approach, which became recognized worldwide in the field of second language acquisition, by focusing on a student's real use of language, through meaningful social interaction, rather than a product acquired by practicing isolated grammatical structures. TBL has been implemented mainly in middle and secondary schools; whereas, with young learners, the Presentation Practice and Performance (PPP) method has predominated (Prabhu, 1987: & Ellis, 2003).

Critics view TBL as challenging for young learners. This is likely due to the nature of the task itself, instead of the TBL process.   Today, many linguists and English teachers support a real-life scenario for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

In middle or secondary schools, EFL students often perform tasks, for example, that require them to ask for pricing information, to book a hotel, or to talk to a foreign student via Skype. When a task is not developmentally appropriate; then, task-based learners may become overwhelmed.   As such, teachers need to plan for tasks that are age appropriate and that use a language repertoire that will grow with the child. For young children, singing a song or playing a game may be a real scenario. In addition, some young foreign language learners are still going through a silent period, because the vocabulary acquired by a first grade student is often minimal for producing a fluid conversation. Moreover, Task Based Learning implementation requires more time and structure. Making the task clear and identifiable is central to a first grade child's performing a task successfully. The TBL framework needs to be adapted to the age and proficiency level of the child, while supplying sufficient vocabulary to perform the task. Repetition and practice of vocabulary are frequently required before moving to the successful performance of a task (Thornbury, 2015).

Background of Task Based Learning

Task Based Learning (TBL) emerged naturally from the Communicative Teaching Learning (CTL) approach, in the sense that tasks are meant to create communicative context for learning the second language. Like the Communicative Teaching Learning (CTL) approach, TBL emerged as a response to the Audio-Lingual Method, challenging traditional language teaching, where drill and repetition predominate. Instead, TBL proposes an alternative to grammar driven methods of teaching; thereby, presenting a learning scenario where children engage with the target language from a more experiential and purposeful perspective. TBL has the goal of

improving the communicative competence of the learner and exploring the real use of language. This goes beyond the mere application of grammatical rules. It was in the late 1980s that this approach for language learning gained strength. Since then, task based researchers the world over have formalized the approach, making it more viable to language learning and teaching (Willis, 1996).

Task Based Learning (TBL) has changed traditional ways for language learning. Teaching young children the traditional Presentation Practice and Production (PPP) method has a tendency to promote passive learning. Whereas, Task Based Learning tends to be more learner-centered. This assists children to communicate and interact in the target language, within a real context. It also creates a learning environment where students can reflect on their own learning, while being involved with co-constructing a task. TBL scholars view language as a communicative tool, aiming at generating opportunities for learners to engage with the target language, both oral and written, depending on the age and proficiency level of the child (Lin, 2009).

Learning Theories That Support Using TBL With Young Children

Many articles and books have been written on the topic of TBL. Before exploring the many aspects of TBL, it is important to establish a framework for analyzing tasks, based on theoretical perspectives that take into account the social and cognitive development of learners (Cameron, 2001).

Experiential learning theory offers a holistic, integrative view on learning that prioritizes the combination of experience, perception, cognition, and behavior. John Dewey, an early scholar in learning and teaching theories, became known for his

emphasis on learning as a dialectical process. This process brings together experience, observation, action, purpose and concept. For any experience to be worthwhile, it needs to have a purpose beyond its original impulse and desire. It needs a plan that can give direction to the experience. A task in this sense frequently emerges from an impulse for communication; yet, for long term learning of the target language to occur, it needs a plan to support it. A task becomes an experience in itself, with its own purpose. A plan should focus on the process, rather than on the outcome (Kolb, 1984).

There is also the social aspect of learning based on the Vygotskian social constructivist approach. Learning is an activity that occurs in and through dialogue. This assists the child on the cognitive level, by socially constructing knowledge through mental processes to solve a problem, while engaging in dialogue with another person. In this way, TBL becomes a language learning tool for using social dialogue as an interactional process to complete a communicative task (Van de Branden, 2006).

The world surrounding the child also offers opportunities for learning. This idea is supported by the theories of Piaget for language construction. In his view, the environment offers children opportunities to adapt through the interaction with objects and ideas. The classroom can then become one example of an environment that provides opportunities for children to communicate with each other (Cameron, 2001).

Scaffolding and theory of routine, developed by Bruner, intersect with the idea behind TBL. For Bruner, language is the most important tool for cognitive growth. Adults need to provide scaffolding tasks to mediate the world for children, helping them solve problems that may overwhelm and frustrate them. A parent in the early years of a child's life needs to provide scaffolding strategies in order for a child to accomplish a

task. Children need to be motivated to complete a task. Parents and teachers may assist the child to break the task into smaller steps and keep the child on track to complete it. In addition, cueing the child may assist in lowering the child's frustration, as the task proceeds toward accomplishing it (Cameron, 2001).

Scaffolding theory can be applied in the English as a Foreign Language classroom, especially, within a TBL activity, where teachers need to model, break lessons into smaller parts, remind, suggest, and provide focus on the activity. Routines also build a background for TBL.   Ordinary moments, such as talking about the weather, giving directions on how to perform a certain task, and providing opportunities for meaningful language to develop within a familiar context, may be of benefit to a child. The success of a task performance lies in the effectiveness of the preparation period, because it is the place in the task cycle which determines learner's orientation to the main task. There are researchers who have identified the benefits of explicit instruction in promoting accuracy and fluency during task performance (Ellis, 2014; & Richards, 2006). In contrast, some researchers object to providing students with explicit teaching of language prior to performing a task. Instruction should be a reaction to a communicative problem that arises from the task itself (Ellis, 1997& Long, 2015).

Tomasello (2008) proclaimed, "Meaning is use!" A word acquires a meaning through its use in a language. This idea was first advanced by Wittenstein in 1953. Meaning emerges by communicating with others. The usage-based theory starts with communicative function. When children acquire the first language, they do not learn words in isolation; and then, stick them together based on abstract rules. Instead, they find a meaning to communicate, producing whole chunks of language. Task Based

Learning researchers have drawn ideas from cognitive and social learning theories,

providing an in-depth view to support Task Based Learning.

<u>Multiple Definitions of Task Based Learning</u>

The term TBL, especially the word "task," has been defined over time by

worldwide scholars. The following five definitions provide some insight.

Definition one proposes a task as an activity that people normally do:

> *"A task is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or*
> *for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a fence,*
> *dressing a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an*
> *airline reservation, borrowing a library book, taking a driving test, typing*
> *a letter, weighing a patient, sorting letters, taking a hotel reservation,*
> *writing a check, finding a street destination, and helping someone across*
> *a road. In other words, by "task" is meant the hundred and one things*
> *people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between. 'Tasks' are*
> *the things people will tell you they do if you ask them and they are not*
> *applied linguists"* (Long, 1985, [p.89]).

Definition two proposes a task as at least two-way communication:

> *"Tasks are always activities where target language is used by the learner*
> *for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome"*
> (Willis, 1996, [p. 23]).

Definition three proposes a task as a means to express meaning:

> "Task as a piece of classroom work which involves learners in
> comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target
> language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical
> knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to
> convey meaning rather than to manipulate form. The task should also have
> a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act
> in its own right" (Nunan, 1989,[p.10]).

Definition four proposes a task as expressing meaning through a variety of actions:

> *"Tasks as 'an activity in which: meaning is primary; there is some sort of*
> *relationship to the real world; task completion has some priority; and the*
> *assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome'. Tasks can*

involve listening, speaking, reading or writing or any combination of these skills (Skehan, 1996, [p.38]).

Definition five proposes a task as a means to communicate:

> *"Task-based language teaching is an approach seeking to provide learners with a natural context for language use. As learners work to complete a task, they have abundant opportunity to interact. Such interaction is thought to facilitate language acquisition as learners have to work to understand each other and to express their own meaning"* (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, [p.144]).

Different Approaches to TBL

Task-based learning has been researched by a number of second language researchers and EFL teachers, who have been in agreement on many issues; however, there are also differences that need to be acknowledged. Frequently, tasks are confusing, based on whether they are task-based or task-supported activities. The first responds to a learning scenario that follows a language curriculum that is built around the task. The second responds to a pre-established linguistic curriculum that uses the task to practice language (Willis, 1996). Further, Ellis (2014) compared four main approaches for implementing Tasked Based Learning, using seven characteristics: (1) natural language use, (2) type of task, (3) linguistic focus, (4) linguistic support, (5) focus on form, (6) learner centeredness, and, (7) rejection of traditional approaches. All four TBL approaches agreed on using natural language. This allows meaningful interaction among learners using real world tasks. Differences were found in linguistic focus in two out of the four approaches. Three of the four approaches did not use linguistic support. Focus on form was used in all four approaches, but varied use in all phases of the lesson, by

using it only in the main task phase. Learner centeredness was used by all four

approaches, but to a lesser degree by one approach. Only one out of the four approaches

did not reject traditional approaches to teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

All four approaches made some attempt to differentiate on the seven characteristics, if

only slightly.

A Framework for TBL Planning

There have been different sequencing frameworks for task-based planning. They

all share the fact that tasks are structured within a three phase schema and organized in a

chronological order. Willis (1996) identified the three stage phases as: Pre-task, Task-

cycle and Language Focus. Whereas, Ellis (2006) identified the three phases as: Pre-

Task, During Task and Post-Task phases, used to design task based lessons with a

framework, as delineated in Table 1 below:

TABLE 1. A FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGNING TASK-BASED LESSONS

Pre-task	Framing the activities Planning time Rehearsing a similar task
During task	Performing the task
Post task	Reflecting on the task Learner report Repeat the task

Pre-task

The general purpose of the pre-task is to bring about a restructuring in the

language of the student, by either incorporating new language or by re-arranging existing

language skills that the student previously acquired (Skehan, 1996). During the pre-task

phase, students are prepared to perform the task. This promotes the acquisition of new language skills (Ellis, 1997). It is important for a teacher to frame the task that students will perform.   One way is to give in advance an organizer describing how the task will develop, so that students know what is expected of them (Lee, 2000).

To introduce new vocabulary, children may view videos of people performing the same task, and play games for repeating and recycling new words. There is also value in motivating students during the preparation period to enhance learning. If a task does not have enough interest for children, motivational strategies are not enough. There should be a strong correlation between the type of task and its relationship to a child's interest (Dornyei, 2001).

Another factor to consider when going through the pre-task stage is the planning that includes language focus.   Under the no planning conditions, students are given a task and left to decide on their own how to perform it. On the other hand, guided planning that focuses on language will provide a more accurate use of grammatical structure, such as how to construct short sentences to give directions. Finally, a focus on content or meaning deals with a scenario where teachers provide students with information concerning the task itself. For instance, in the case of giving directions, they will talk about why directions are given, and what types of directions are given (Skehan, 2003).

Teachers should focus on both content and language, because fluency and accuracy should not be separate entities.   Van de Guchte, Rijlaarsdam, Braaksma and Bimmel, (2017) conducted research with 49 ninth grade students in Germany. The purpose was to observe how two different pre-tasks, one focusing on content and the

other on language, could change the outcome of the task. Results indicated that a focus on content may provide for less accuracy in the grammatical target structure. Yet, a focus on language aspects, lacked the factor of complexity in the discourse. The study encourages teachers to achieve a balanced language development that embraces accuracy and complexity.

Bygate (2001) investigated the effects of practicing specific types of tasks, involving narrative and interviewing, by repeating the same task, and by performing a similar task. What the study revealed was that the group who engaged in more practicing activities, during the pre-task phase, had increased fluency and accuracy (Ellis, 2005).

During the Task

During the task cycle, learners performed the task by doing all the things that were planned and designed in the pre-task stage. Tasks were accomplished in pairs or small groups. The role of the teacher varied depending on the age of the students. Teachers may set different time limits for each task; however, younger students should not feel time pressure; whereas, for older learners, a time constraint will perhaps motivate and encourage fluency. Depending on the task, students could have access to data input, such as in a retelling activity, where a child's task is to retell a story by using a book to borrow language from it. In addition, a focus on form does not mean that teachers will correct students during the performance of the task. At the end of a task, however, teachers may give learners feedback, so that learners may correct mistakes in language before repeating the task (Ellis, 2006).

Grammar exercises and practice activities are examples of activities that are not tasks. A task has a specific objective that must be achieved in a given time (Rodríguez-Bonces, 2010). Cameron (2001) called the during task stage, core activities, which is central to the task. For young learners, the core activities are planned, based on language learning objectives. A core activity could describe a picture for other children to draw. The pre-task could involve activating the vocabulary with action verbs and names of objects and places.

<u>Post Task</u>

The post phase focuses on language form, allowing an examination of the specific features occurring in the language used during the task. Ellis (2006) divided the post-task into three pedagogical goals: (1) repeat performance, (2) reflection on performance of task, and (3) attention to form.

A repeat performance suggests that when learners repeat a task, production generally improves, by becoming more fluent in the target language. The repetition of the performance may be accomplished in the same manner as in the first performance, in small groups, individually, or by using a different scenario. Further, Helgesen (2003) claimed that repeating language tasks improve accuracy, fluency, and complexity. This allows children to improve their conceptualization, formulation, and complexity. Moreover, learners are clear as to what they want to say, and might also improve their articulation. In addition, a similar version of the task may also improve performance.

Reflection on performance of a task assists students to report on how they accomplished the task. For younger learners, the teacher can conduct an oral interview to get some insight into the child's perspective on the performance of a task (Willis, 1996).

Attention to form, at the end of the task cycle, requires teachers to discuss with students the fluency of the performance and its accuracy (Willis, 1996). In addition, Ellis (2006) emphasized that attention to form may appear during any of the three phases.

Even though TBL proposes a more inclusive learning environment than traditional methods, it still requires a syllabus-methodology that provides a structural plan to perform the task. Nunan (1993) argued that using a task framework does not make the task less communicative, because the target language cannot be separated from the means of achieving it.

Types of Tasks

Tasks may be classified in different and distinctive ways. Nunan (2004) described tasks as being either "real-world" or "pedagogic" in nature. Real-world tasks have the objective of creating situations and interactions that arise from real life, such as ordering food in a restaurant or making a flight reservation. On the other hand, a pedagogic task aims at creating an interactional learning environment, where real life situations are not necessarily part of the task. Long (1985) and Willis (1996) contended that the essence of a task lies on its authenticity, as to how it reflects the things people do in everyday life, such as buying clothing, going to the supermarket, writing an e-mail, introducing yourself to a new person, sending a tweet or posting a comment on any social network. In contrast, Skehan & Foster (1997); Cameron (2001) & Ellis (2014) maintained that both real and pedagogical tasks have merit. Frequently, teachers need to create a fictional situation for students to use; especially, for young learners who are not ready and/or interested in a task that may have been designed for an older audience.

Ellis (2014) advised that after deciding on a pedagogical or a real-world task, or both, teachers may design a task that addresses an information-gap, a reasoning-gap, or an opinion-gap. In addition, there are seven commonly used tasks: (1) the listing-task, (2) the ordering and sorting-task, (3) the comparing and contrasting-task, (4) the problem-solving-task, (5) the sharing personal experience-task, (6) the matching-task, and (7) the project and creative task. Further, all tasks may involve cognitive processes, such as listening, reading, speaking or writing.

<u>Importance of Planning During the Pre-task Stage</u>

Abdia, Estamid and Zahedic (2012) maintained that pre-task planning has a positive influence on a child's task performance, as measured by its impact on a child's fluency and accuracy. In addition, Ellis (2016) was not in favor of presenting to learners grammatical rules, as part of pre-task planning. Instead, linguistic support should be provided by teaching vocabulary to be used during the performance of the main task.

In four ways, a task-based framework for young learners differs from the standard framework of pre-task, task cycle, and post-task. First, more time is allocated to the pre-task phase, and shorter periods of time for the task performance. Second, the performance of the task resides in short sets of tasks. Third, there is less focus on the reporting aspect of the post-task phase. Fourth, the language focus lies mainly on words and short chunks of language (Willis, 1996).

Ellis (2005) maintained that there is a distinction between two types of planning: pre-task planning and within-task planning. Pre-task planning is divided into rehearsal and strategic planning. During the rehearsal period, the child has the opportunity to

repeat the task as many times as needed, before performing the main task. During

strategic planning, the child has time to process the content of the task, so that the main

performance may excel. For young learners, rehearsal time is important, so that

scaffolding and guidance may be provided during all phases of the task cycle. In contrast,

Bygate and Samuda (2005) claimed that an increased focus on content and fluency may

hinder the child's capacity to explore his or her own vocabulary and grammatical

repertory. Willis (1996) asserted, however, that pre-task planning may support a child's

linguistic deficit that comes from the lack of exposure to the target language and to

developmental factors.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

The purpose of this review of literature was to plot descriptively the pedagogical

practice and research necessary to support the implementation of a Task Based Learning

program for 25 children, six to seven years of age, and who were studying English as a

Foreign Language, using a traditional approach. The goal was to capture pedagogical

practices and research for Task Based Learning and to further inform the conceptual

framework for the present study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the implementation of a Task Based Learning approach, focusing on English as a Second Language, using pre-task planning and adaptations to enhance English language performance for 25 children, six to seven years of age, and whose first language is Spanish.

The purpose of Chapter III was to describe the permission to conduct research, research design, statistical treatment of data, sample, sources of data, and data gathering procedure that produced the findings in Chapter IV.

Permission to Conduct Research

A request was made by a graduate student, Sofia Alfieri, enrolled at Pittsburg State University in the Department of Teaching and Leadership and who is a teacher/administrator at Colegio del Sol School in Asuncion, Paraguay. Permission was requested to conduct research during a proposed implementation phase of teaching a new English as a Foreign Language program, known as Task Based Learning, using pre-planned and adapted tasks developed by the present researcher. Colegio del Sol School supported this request and further required the researcher to provide anonymity for each and all children at the school, by not providing names or distinguishable characteristics

that would compromise children's anonymity. A letter supporting this request was placed in Appendix A of this thesis.

A letter of support from the Department of Teaching and Leadership at Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kansas provided permission to the researcher to conduct the proposed research under the conditions set forth in the letter and policies of the Department of Teaching and Leadership. A copy of the letter of support was placed in Appendix B of this thesis. Furthermore, permission from Pittsburg State University Committee for Protection of Human Subjects was not sought nor granted, because the present thesis met the normal and usual performance of research activities for graduate students within the Department of Teaching and Leadership. Both letters of support required complete anonymity for each and all 25 subjects, signified by not using names and distinguishable characteristics for research subjects in this thesis.

Research Design

A descriptive qualitative research design was used to collect the data in a way to identify and describe emerging patterns, assumptions, implications, and/or meanings. In addition, ten research objectives and eleven pedagogical techniques were formulated to guide the researcher during the implementation phase for the five pre-planned and adapted tasks administered to the 25 subjects. The ten research objectives used by the researcher were: (1) create tasks that were developmentally appropriate for both girls and boys, who were six and seven years of age. (2) create tasks that motivate students to remain engaged. (3) assess performance of tasks in a formative manner. (4) assess group performance of tasks in a formative manner. (5) record descriptively observed performance of students. (6) note variance in in observed performance of students.

(7) note deviation from planned implementation. (8) note adaptations to pre-planned tasks to enhance language production. (9) assess the individual performance of tasks in a summative manner. (10) assess the group performance of tasks in a summative manner.

In addition, eleven pedagogical techniques used were: (1) intervention with first language, (2) pre-taught vocabulary, (3) learner's motivation, (4) mixing high, moderate and emerging level children during each task, (5) adaptations to pre-planned tasks, (6) intervention with emerging level children, (7) children's attitudes toward task, (8) oral production as part of the process, (9) opportunities for extending language competency, and (10) interaction among children, and (11) task repetition.

<u>Statistical Treatment of Data</u>

Descriptive statistics at the nominal, ordinal, and interval levels were collected for this study. Further, descriptive statistics were used in a mathematical manner in Chapter V to identify and describe emerging patterns, implications, and/or meanings from the descriptive data findings in Chapter IV.   Statistical significance was not used or established by the statistical treatment in this thesis.

<u>Sample</u>

The sample was an intact sample of girls and boys, who were six to seven years of age and who were beginning first grade. There were 14 females and 11 males. Of the 25 children, 18 children entered the Colegio del Sol school during pre-school, four children were added during kindergarten and three children entered at the start of first grade. Most children had been exposed to English from age three to four years of age. For the 18 children, who entered during pre-school, they were exposed to two hours of English daily, using primarily input based activities. There were two children, who were native

speakers and three children, who had previously acquired a solid start to speaking

English. Nevertheless, most of the students had not developed fluid speaking skills, but

tended to communicate through body language and single words.

Sources of Data

Data for this study were obtained from an intact sample of 25 children, six to

seven years of age at Colegio del Sol, a private school in Asuncion, Paraguay. Further,

the data represented how the intact sample of 25 children interacted and responded to

instruction and material presented during the implementation phase, using a new method

for teaching English as a Foreign Language. The new method was a Task Based

Learning approach, focusing on the present researcher's pre-task planning and

adaptations to enhance language performance for children six to seven years of age.

Data Gathering Procedure

On March 04, 2019 the implementation of the Task Based Learning approach

commenced, using pre-planned tasks to enhance children's English language

performance.

More specifically, five different tasks were pre-planned by the present researcher

and designed for children (1) to describe a picture, (2) to play a memory game, (3) to

describe a shape, (4) to conduct an interview, and (5) to retell a story. For each task the

children were engaged in the task with whatever English language skills that they had

brought to the start of the implementation phase of the present study. Formative and

summative observational assessments were used during and after each Task. Oral

performance of participants was measured based on fluency and accuracy in the

execution of tasks. Further, an additional oral assessment was conducted after the

children went through an exercise in repeating and recycling the new vocabulary in different situations.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Chapter III, Methodology, described the following: (1) permission to conduct research, (2) research design, (3) statistical treatment of data, (4) sample, (5) sources of data, and (6) data gathering procedure. The findings from this methodology were presented descriptively in Chapter IV of the present thesis.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the implementation phase of a Task Based Learning approach, using pre-task planning and adaptations to enhance English language performance for 25 first grade children, six to seven years of age.

The purpose of this chapter was to present the descriptive data gathered during the implementation phase as findings.   In total, Chapter IV represents the findings of this study.

Pre-implementation Phase

The present researcher had a pre-implementation discussion with two first grade English as a Second Language teachers, who were selected to work with children during the implementation phase of this study.   Both teachers majored in Psychology and completed an internationally accredited certificate in Teaching English as a Second or Other Language (TESOL). While both teachers have some background training in the Task Based Learning approach, most of their experience was with other second language teaching methods. Both teachers have over six years of experience in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to young children.   After a series of discussions, it became evident to the present researcher that both teacher's views on second language acquisition

were aligned with the constructivist and communicative approach for teaching young learners. As such, both teachers became involved in planning the five tasks and in the delivery of learning experiences for young children, during the implementation phase of this study.

<p align="center">Implementation Phase</p>

On March 04, 2019, the implementation phase of the Task Based Learning approach commenced and ended on May 03, 2019. Five different tasks were pre-planned and adapted by the present researcher and designed for children (1) to design a picture, (2) to play a memory game, (3) to describe a shape, (4) to conduct an interview, and (5) to retell a story. The five tasks were administered in a linear/ sequential manner, during the entire implementation stage of this study. Notwithstanding, ample time was given for each task to achieve success, by adding pre-task and recycling experiences to help children become prepared for the task performance itself.

For each of the five tasks listed above, the outcomes were analyzed using eleven pedagogical techniques: (1) intervention of first language, (2) pre-taught vocabulary, (3) learner's motivation, (4) mixing high, moderate, and emerging proficiency children, (5) adaptations to pre-planned tasks, (6) teacher's intervention with emerging level children, (7) children's attitudes toward the task, (8) oral production as part of the process, (9) opportunities for extending language competency, (10) interaction among children, and (11) task repetition.

Pedagogical Documentation

Pedagogical documentation was used to film the implementation of each task.

This allowed teachers to view how children and teachers approached each task. Each session was recorded to later analyze each session with both teachers. The objective was to capture aspects that would help make improved decisions as to how to navigate each task. It also helped give an insight into the fluency and accuracy of children's individual performance. In addition, documentation of each task allowed more than a superficial evaluation after the task was completed. Trying to remember how children achieved during a task performance is challenging for teachers. Watching a video recording may reveal where children had a problem making sense of the task activity. Analyzing video tape and journals may reveal to teachers how to rethink the complexity of the task activity. Before starting the pre-task process for each task, children performed the task without any preparation. This was a powerful way to check for previous knowledge. This information assisted with the design and adaptations for each pre-task phase. In addition, teachers used a journal to record aspects that were thought to inform future activities.

Task-1: Describing and Drawing a Picture

The lesson was a description activity that is used in most EFL classrooms. It was selected, because it provided the right balance of demand and support. It was decided that before pre-teaching any vocabulary for the task, children would perform an activity for describing a picture. The teachers and researcher decided that before pre-teaching any vocabulary for the task, the learners were initially required to perform a simple activity of describing the picture with their current language inventory. The picture was a park scene and represented vocabulary that children had experienced during kindergarten.

Most children experienced difficulty in constructing a short sentence for describing

actions portrayed in the picture.

Excerpt from task- 1 exhibits an example sequence, where T= teacher and S= student:

T: *"Can you tell me what you see in the picture?" and, "What do you see?"*

S1: *boy red balloon.*

T: *A boy running with a red balloon.*

S1: *si.*

T:*" yes. What else do you see?"*

S2: *ice cream.*

T: *"Do you see a girl eating ice cream?"*

S3: *music, music.*

T: *"yes, a young men is listening to music."*

Analysis of the Outcomes from the Describing a Picture Task:

    (1) Use of first language: The use of some Spanish was required to continue the

introduction of the task. Even though the use of English is important, sometimes it can be

counterproductive, by frustrating children and leading to disengagement from the

activity.   For this task, the first language (L1) was seldom used. The only situation

where most children struggled to comprehend was when explaining the objectives of the

task. In general, when children tried to describe to their partner their picture, most

children used English. For all other communication that arose in between the description,

the children used their first language (L1).   Children in the emerging proficiency

category did use Spanish for parts of their description.

(2) Pre-taught vocabulary: With this first task, it became clear that children needed to spend a longer period of time than first planned. Teachers used the strategy of pre-teaching vocabulary in the following ways: (1) By going over the picture and repeating verbally each of the actions. (2) Using games that included movement, after listening to a description for an action, and then, children mimicked the action. (4) Presenting flashcards with pictures for each of the actions. (5) For the mimic game, the class was divided in half, so that each half could guess the actions.

(3) Learner's motivation: As children started to acquire more vocabulary, their confidence increased; and they became engaged in the activity. It is interesting to note how one picture created so much enthusiasm from children. Children did not mind repeating the scenes several times. Using games enhanced children's motivation and also provided an incentive to use the target language.

(4) Mixing high, moderate, and emerging proficiency children: Different groupings were used throughout the task, from the entire group to working in pairs. For the task performance, the teachers selected how each pair was selected, because the mixed abilities arrangement helped achieve higher levels of communication competence, especially for the emerging group. Table-2, below, is a summary of category levels achieved by children during the performance of a task. The five high proficiency children were all girls and two were actually native English speakers, while the other three were strong English learners. These five children helped the balance of the children, by modeling accurate language forms. During the performance of the task, many children experienced difficulty constructing full sentences. Most children focused on the action words, such as "boy walking or girl hiding." Mixing the proficiency levels

helped emergent learners to moderate levels of proficiency. Table-2, below, is a

summative number and percentage of children who achieved English proficiency at three

varied category levels:

TABLE 2. SUMMATIVE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS WHO PERFORMED TASK 1 WITH HIGH, MODERATE OR EMERGEING PROFICIENCY

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS
High Proficiency (80%-100%)	5	20%
Moderate Proficiency (51%-79%)	11	44%
Emerging Proficiency (0%-50%)	9	36%
Total	**N = 25**	**100%**

(5) Adaptations to the pre-planned tasks: During the planning stage, the pre-

planned tasks were fewer. Teachers thought that pre-teaching vocabulary by modeling

with a picture and a game would be sufficient. Each time the picture was presented,

children struggled to recall the vocabulary from one day to the next. This is why more

games were incorporated into the mix. Increased repetition of phrases was also used.

(6) Teacher's intervention with emerging level children: Each task was taught by

the two teachers. At times during the pre-task phase, they were able to change groupings

to accommodate language proficiency. For some children who continued to struggle, a

teacher reinforced some of the activities by modeling with flash cards.

(7) Children's attitudes toward the task: The activities during the pre-task phase

engaged children more than the task itself. During the pre-task phase, teachers provided

increased support, especially, for emerging proficiency children. During the performance

of the task, learners were expected to work more independently, using whatever linguistic

tools that they acquired during the preparation process. The lack of constant support

increased frustration among some children. This tended to harm their task performance.

A questionnaire was conducted in Spanish with the entire group after each task

performance. It indicated how children felt about the process. In general, most children

enjoyed the task and said that it was familiar to them. Repetition, using different

activities, was thought by children to assist them to acquire vocabulary. Explaining the

core activity or task in Spanish, also helped children comprehend what was expected of

them. Table-3, below presents children's reflections for the described task:

TABLE 3. PRESENTS A POST TASK REFLECTION FOR

EACH CHILD TOWARDS THE TASK.

ITEMS	I AGREE	I DON'T AGREE	TOTAL STUDENTS
1. I think the task was interesting.	21	4	N=25
2. This was a familiar activity.	17	8	N=25
3. I understood the task.	21	4	N=25
4. This task helped me learn new words in English.	23	2	N=25
5. Repeating the task many times helped me.	23	2	N=25
6. Learning the words before helped me to perform the task.	23	2	N=25
7. Learning new words through games helped me.	23	2	N=25
8. I want to repeat the task.	19	6	N=25

(8) Oral production as part of the process: This was a closed task. Children needed to use a set of words and phrases that they learned during the pre-task, such as "a boy is listening to music: a girl is hiding behind a tree; and a girl is eating ice cream." A factor that challenged children was that the pictures for the actual task were somewhat different from the ones used during the pre-task phase. This encouraged some children to improvise. The children in high and moderate levels of proficiency, thought of words to describe some new scenes. The emerging learners struggled with new pictures, and used some Spanish language to describe the pictures. The more vocabulary children acquired prior to the task, the more confident and engaged they were in their oral production.

(9) A context promotes language competence: For planning the task, the focus was placed on the describing and drawing game itself, and not on the grammar curriculum. The context of the game, however, required consideration of not only its meaning, but also its form.

(10) Interaction among children: Counting who guessed more scenes from the picture may incorporate friendly competition. There were no conflicts among children. Children enjoyed trying to guess the pictures selected by their partner. The unveiling of the pictures, also created enthusiasm, as children checked their mistakes. This extended language competency was not predicted by the present researcher.

(11) Task repetition: The task was repeated once during the same day, but partners changed. This time children wanted to select their own partner. Unfortunately, this created chaos. Some pairs were not as effective, due to the chaos.

Task-2: The Memory Game

The "memory game" was planned as an extension to the first task, "Describing and Drawing a Picture Game," focusing again on describing different scenes presented in a picture format. Incorporating another game was important, because it's a method that may be used to prevent children from becoming bored. A game may be used by English as a Foreign Language teachers to achieve several language objectives, especially for learning new vocabulary. This game is also familiar to children, because they likely have played a language game at home and in school, with different sets of pictures. The game was designed using a variety of black and white pictures, depicting worldwide children who are doing different things. All pictures presented relatable images for children, things that they usually do. Teachers checked children's understanding of the images and previous knowledge of vocabulary. Teachers found that by repeating the first task, many children remembered the sentence structure, such as "A girl is……" The emerging learners, however, struggled to remember not only the sentence structure, but also the vocabulary for many of the actions.

Analysis of the Outcomes from the Task: Memory Game

(1) Use of the first language: Because memory games are familiar to children, the objective was to use mainly English. During the pre-task phase, most children were able to follow the activities proposed by the teacher, especially, children who were more input oriented. As the activities became more demanding, the support from the teachers had to increase. This was particularly true for children who required oral production. When the teachers asked children to describe pictures presented in the flashcards, many children struggled. Children preferred to stay quiet, rather than try to use Spanish and English to describe the picture.

(2) Pre-taught vocabulary: With Task-2, teachers proposed more activities, during the pre-task phase, to make sure that children acquired the needed vocabulary to perform the task. After the first task, teachers noticed that children needed more opportunities to engage with the target language. Different activities were designed to recycle the vocabulary. The scavenger hunt activity was meaningful, where children found different actions during recess, and took a photograph of it. Children realized that the vocabulary that they were learning was taken from a real context. Teachers also noticed that by presenting different contexts for recycling the vocabulary, they kept children interested in the task.

(3) Learner's motivation: Games create an atmosphere where children can engage in meaningful communication. The memory game in particular did not require the use of demanding linguistic competencies, giving children the right amount of confidence to play it in the target language. Teachers noticed that children were more motivated by who they were playing the game with, than about the game itself. This was especially true when children invited students from the senior class to play the game with them. As mentioned earlier, the pre-task activity that was most motivating to children was the scavenger hunt, by children acting out vocabulary at recess.

(4) Mixing high, moderate and emerging proficiency children: With the memory game, pairs were based on who children selected. Children wanted to play with friends and with students from other grades. Even though children selected whom to play with, the pairs were still mixed. Pairs tended to have one child with higher language proficiency, than the other child in the pair. One child in the pair helped the other child play the game. Also, the opposite took place. When both players were in the emerging

proficiency category, neither could provide help, causing the game to stop. When

children selected their playing partners, for the most part, the demand of the task was

usually manageable. The pre-task also allowed the emergent proficiency children to gain

confidence to speak more fluently. Table-4, below, is a summative number and

percentage of children who achieved a proficiency at three varied category levels.

**TABLE 4. SUMMATIVE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS
WHO PERFORMED TASK 2 WITH HIGH, MODERATE OF
EMERGEING PROFICIENCY**

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS
High Proficiency (80%-100%)	7	32%
Moderate Proficiency (51%-79%)	11	44%
Emerging Proficiency (0%-50%)	7	28%
Total	**N = 25**	**100%**

(5) Adaptations to pre-planned tasks: There were two main adjustment decisions

made to the pre-planned task. One was introducing the scavenger hunt activity, and the

second involved allowing children to select their playing partners, instead of having the

teachers select each playing pair. Both decisions worked, because children became more

motivated to play the game.

(6) Teacher's intervention with emerging level children: Because children were

allowed to select their playing partner, some duos were formed with two emerging

proficiency children. In this situation, more teacher intervention was used. This helped

the children find words to describe the picture.

(7) Children's attitudes toward the task: After the task performance was completed, a questionnaire was administered in Spanish to 25 children. Most children enjoyed the task. Table-5, below, is a post task reflection of how children valued the experience:

TABLE 5. PRESENTS A POST TASK REFLECTION
FOR EACH CHILD TOWARDS THE TASK

ITEMS	I AGREE	I DON'T AGREE	TOTAL STUDENTS
1. I think the task was interesting.	21	4	N=25
2. This was a familiar activity.	21	4	N=25
3. I understood the task.	23	2	N=25
4. This task helped me learn new words in English.	23	2	N=25
5. Repeating the task many times helped me.	23	2	N=25
6. Learning the words before helped me to perform the task.	23	2	N=25
7. Learning new words through games helped me.	25	0	N=25
8. I needed more time to prepare for the task.	2	23	N=25
9. I wanted to repeat the task.	15	10	N=25

(8) Oral production as part of process: In most cases, children's oral production used phrases learned during the pre-task phase, such as "a girl sleeping and a boy running." The high proficiency children were able to introduce spontaneous vocabulary to the game. For example, one girl would count at the end of each game, using the target language to

check who won. Another example, was a girl who extended some of the sentences by saying: "A girl jumping on bed."

(9) A context promotes language competence: The game became a context that provided a reason to learn a set of phrases that were required to perform the task. The same as with Task-1, if the phrases were learned without any meaningful context, the impact on children's motivation would tend to vary negatively.

(10) Interaction among children: Games usually encouraged cooperation among children. This was the case with the Memory Game. However, children with higher and moderate language proficiency levels performed the game without as many interruptions. Whereas, the emergent language proficiency children were distracted more easily by forgetting words to describe the pictures.

(11) Task repetition: The task was repeated many times, because children wanted to play with other classmates and with the high school students. The teachers also played with some children. Because the game was short, it allowed children to repeat it multiple times.

Task-3: The Interview:

Each year students from the senior year of high school received first grade children, during a ceremony held at the school. Before the ceremony, both groups engaged in several bonding activities. As part of the "get to know each other activity," an interview in English was planned. The interview was about their favorite foods, animals, and colors.

Analysis of the Outcomes from the Interview Task:

(1) <u>Use of first language:</u> This activity required a more complex introduction. Both teachers used L-1 on several occasions. The teachers noticed that most children did not understand what an interview was. It was important to explain the meaning using L-1, because otherwise the cognitive demand would have been too high. On the other hand, when performing the task, children used the target language when asking the questions from the sheet. During the balance of the time used with seniors, the conversation was mainly in Spanish.

(2) <u>Pre-taught vocabulary:</u> The first phrase taught was: "What is your favorite …?" The teachers designed the balance of the questions, by saying: "What is your favorite color?" The recycling of the question during the pre-task phase, with songs and practice interview, helped children become confident about their language skills. This encouraged children to perform the task with the students, who were high school seniors.

(3) <u>Learner's motivation:</u> This task highly motivated the children, because it involved interacting with senior high school students. Children were eager to get to ask the seniors the questions that they designed. Seniors were instructed to use only English while interviewing with the first grade students. This motivated the young learners to prepare for the actual interview.

(4) <u>Mixing high, moderate and emerging proficiency level children:</u> This task was executed on an individual basis, because each child had to interview at least three different senior students. During the pre- task phase, however, children interview each other. High and moderate proficiency learner's modeled for the emerging proficiency learners how to ask and answer interview questions, by repeating the pre-task multiple times. Table-6,

below, is a summative number and percentage of children who achieved English proficiency at three varied levels.

TABLE 6. SUMMATIVE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS WHO PERFORMED TASK 3 WITH HIGH, MODERATE OF EMERGEING PROFICIENCY

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS
High Proficiency (80%-100%)	6	24%
Moderate Proficiency (51%-79%)	12	48%
Emerging Proficiency (0%-50%)	7	28%
Total	**N = 25**	**100%**

(5) Adaptations to pre-planned tasks: Originally it was planned to include a few more questions: such as, What is your favorite movie? What is your favorite dessert? After presenting the task and practicing the first questions, the researcher realized that many children were struggling to ask more than three basic questions. Another adjustment was to prepare the questionnaires using pictures to signal what the question was about, as well as pictures for each of the multiple choice answers. In first grade children are more focused on reading and writing in native language, thus, the questionnaire had to be understood beyond the words written on the sheet.

(6) Teacher's intervention with emerging level children during each task: Teachers had to intervene mainly during the interviews, due to the fact that some children

became very shy and struggled to construct the questions. However, after the first question, they were able to move to the next with more confidence.

(7) <u>Children's attitudes toward the task</u>: The same questionnaire was run again in Spanish with the whole group after the task performance, showing how children felt about the task. Table 5 reveals children's perspective on the whole task process.

TABLE 7. PRESENTS A POST TASK REFLECTION OF EACH CHILD TOWARDS THE TASK.

ITEMS	I AGREE	I DON'T AGREE	TOTAL STUDENTS
1. I think the task was interesting.	25	0	N=25
2. This was a familiar activity.	8	17	N=25
3. I understood the task.	22	3	N=25
4. This task helped me learn new words in English.	25	0	N=25
5. Repeating the task many times helped me.	22	3	N=25
6. Learning the words before helped me to perform the task.	22	3	N=25
7. Learning new words through games helped me.	22	3	N=25
8. I needed more time to prepare for the task.	0	25	N=25
9. I wanted to repeat the task.	25	0	N=25

(8) <u>Oral production as part of the process</u>: The task demanded a higher oral production than past tasks, since children not only had to learn how to ask different questions but also how to reply to them. The structure of the questions and answers was

close, with a repetitive structure. Yet, it was interesting to observe some interviews where children tried to communicate beyond the set questions. A sample was a girl who asked a senior student; *Do you like dogs?* A question that was learned earlier in the year. Other children added more questions around favorite things. However, in general most children stuck to the structure learned for oral production.

(9) <u>A context promotes language competence</u>: This task suggested that a meaningful context promotes motivation thus promoting higher language competence.

(10) <u>Interaction among children</u>: Children interacted mainly with each other during the pre-task phase, however, during the task the interaction was mainly with the senior high school students. This interaction with older students helped most children rise to the challenge of speaking only English to perform the interview. They put in extra effort on learning the questions.

(11) <u>Task repetition</u>: The task was repeated many times since children had to interview at least three senior students.

<u>Task-4: Giving Directions to Build Structures with Snap Cubes:</u>

This task arose from an adaptation of the math curriculum for first grade on geometry and spatial thinking.

<u>Analysis of the outcomes arising from the task:</u>

(1) Use of first language: The task was most challenging when it required a longer sustained description of a structure, consequently the teachers presented the task in the first language. Besides the introduction of the task, other occasions that required the use of L1 were when giving feedback to some students to make changes in their approach to the descriptions, or to call the attention of other children to behave better during the task

performance with their classmates. On the other hand, during task performance the emerging proficiency children did use Spanish to describe parts of their structure. When running out of English vocabulary, Spanish was introduced.

(2) Pre-taught vocabulary: This task required more vocabulary than expected; among the main words needed were: snap, in a row, next to, put, grab, on top, under and cubes.

(3) Learner's motivation: One more time the game approach was utilized to engage children in the task. The pre-task planning phase consisted of a lot of pre-taught vocabulary activities, which had many children distracted and disengaged due to the amount of learning material. Using snap cubes however helped, since they love building structures with them. The actual performance of the task was more motivating, yet emerging proficiency children struggled to accomplish using English entirely during the process, thus the level of difficulty played against the motivation.

(4) Mixing High, Moderate and Emerging proficiency children: For this task it was important to mix different proficiency levels especially during the preparation phase, since emerging and moderate children needed a lot of modeling. The high proficiency which actually were native English speakers, helped to improve the performance of others because they not only corrected their classmates but were helpful whenever others did not know the right words to use. In Table 8, observe that this task when compared with other tasks has more children in the emerging proficiency level.

TABLE 8. SUMMATIVE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS

WHO PERFORMED TASK 4 WITH HIGH, MODERATE OF EMERGEING

PROFICIENCY

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS
High Proficiency (80%-100%)	4	16%
Moderate Proficiency (51%-79%)	6	24%
Emerging Proficiency (0%-50%)	15	60%
Total	**N = 25**	**100%**

(5) Adaptations to pre-planned tasks: This task required several adaptations. At first the plan was for children to describe more complex structures; however, it was adapted to organize cubes in a role. The more complex the structure, the more difficult it was for children to describe them. The vocabulary needed to be simplified. The decision was made to simplify the structure, reducing the linguistic demand, by asking children to build structures in a row.

(6) Teacher's intervention with emerging level children during each task: Teachers had to intervene mainly during the development of the task because many children encountered difficulties when trying to describe the structure to their partner.

Excerpt from task 4 shows a small sequence from a pair of children playing the game of guessing the structure, and a few interventions from the teacher. On one side of the card board panel, S1 was in charge of building the structure and giving directions for S2 to build it without seeing the structure.

Excerpt from task 4 shows a small sequence from the introductory part:

S1: agarra five cubes, two yellows, two blue y one green.

T: grab five cubes, yes.

S1: grab five cubes.

S1: snap one yellow cube y one blue cube…

T: together…

S1: together…

S1: agarra yellow cube y snap a lado blue cube.

T: grab a yellow cube and snap next to the blue cube.

S1: grab yellow cube y snap blue cube.

T: next to the blue cube.

S1: next to blue cube.

This student was a moderate proficiency learner who still struggled to perform the task. The teachers needed to intervene frequently, because children constantly needed to be reminded of words. Nevertheless, children who followed their partner's instructions were able to understand the vocabulary.

(7) Children's attitudes toward the task: The same questionnaire was run again in Spanish with the whole group after the task performance, showing how children felt about the task. In Table 8, can be seen children's perspective on the whole task process. Overall, the task demanded more vocabulary than most children could handle at their proficiency levels. The cognitive demand was according to their skills, yet the linguistic demands were beyond their zone of proximal development. However, most children did agree on the fact that they learned many new words, but found it difficult to remember words during the game.

TABLE 9. PRESENTS A POST TASK REFLECTION OF EACH CHILD TOWARDS THE TASK.

ITEMS	I AGREE	I DON'T AGREE	TOTAL STUDENTS
1. I think the task was interesting.	7	18	N=25
2. This was a familiar activity.	1	24	N=25
3. I understood the task.	11	14	N=25
4. This task helped me learn new words in English.	19	6	N=25
5. Repeating the task many times helped me.	17	8	N=25
6. Learning the words before helped me to perform the task.	12	13	N=25
7. Learning new words through games helped me.	23	2	N=25
8. I needed more time to prepare for the task.	4	21	N=25
9. I wanted to repeat the task.	8	17	N=25

(8) Oral production as part of the process: The task placed a heavy demand on children, because it required multiple vocabulary words for children to produce spontaneously. The tasks were performed in small groups, where each pair passed to a table with a card board panel and played the game of describing and guessing the structure. The task was to build a simple structure that required children to place

different colored cubes in a row.   Some pairs decided to create more complex structures that require an expanded vocabulary using next to, under, and on top of. It was interesting to observe how some children were able to remember the vocabulary and apply it to the task. These children did ask for the teacher's assistance, yet they managed to communicate in creative ways.

(9) A context promotes language competence: At first most children did not find the spatial thinking math curriculum meaningful. However, the cubes were a very familiar material used for math and most children enjoyed using them. This created a context. The task was presented as a game. Teachers observed that playing the game among themselves was not as attractive as previously thought.   One child asked to play the game with senior high students. Senior high students were engaged with children in the repetition of the task, and children's motivation increased significantly.

(10) Interaction among children: Children worked mainly in pairs formed with different proficiency levels. During the pre-task phase the children played the game in groups of five, where one child would build the structure and the other four children would guess what it was. Emerging learners benefited from larger groups because they were able to listen to different children describing the structure. Within the large group experience it was noted that children helped each other by providing missing words and by making needed corrections.

(11) Task repetition: The task was repeated at least three times per child, first by playing the game with two different partners and then with one senior high student. With each repetition children improved in confidence, in speaking, and in taking more linguistic risks.

Task-5: Story Retelling:

The first grade children at the beginning of March 2019 started an inquiry project about snails. The English teachers supported the project through different EFL activities, with one planned for the final exhibit of the project due in June 2019. The task chosen was a story retelling of a very simple book by Petr Horacek "Where do you live snail?"

Analysis of the outcomes arising from the task:

(1) Use of first language: This activity required a teacher to introduce the task in L1, even though the linguistic demand was not high, the introduction to the task was. During the task some children needed feedback in L1 from the teachers, because they did not understand the organizational aspect of retelling a story in a group. On the other hand, many children during the pre-task phase spoke in Spanish, yet during the task were able to perform in English fluently.

(2) Pre-taught vocabulary: During the pre-task phase, the teacher read the book twice, the second reading involved a pre-teaching of the vocabulary found in the book. The book presented a very simple linguistic structure that was repeated in each page with different characters; "Where do you live fluffy bird? I live in my nest" or "Where do you live shiny fish? I live in my pond." The children practiced sentence structures presented in the book.

Excerpt from task 5:

T: where do you live Mariel?

S1: I live in my house.

T: where do you live Fausto?

S2: in my house.

T: where do you live Sol?

S3: live apartment.

(3) Learner's motivation: Several factors motivated children to perform this task. (1) Children investigated water and earth snails that were available in the classroom for over two months. (2) Retelling the story using puppets and a puppet theater gave enhanced anonymity. (3) A task was performed in groups of four or five and was enjoyed. (4) Each group was able to adapt the characters of the story to their favorite animals.

(4) Mixing High, Moderate and Emerging proficiency children: The task was performed in groups of four or five, with a total of five groups retelling the story. The teachers formed each group by having at least one high proficiency student for each group, followed by moderate and emerging learners. Each child was given a similar number of words to retell. The end of the story was assigned to the higher proficiency group member because it was the longest part of the book. Teachers previously observed groups with mainly emerging proficiency students having major difficulties. For this task teachers carefully balanced the proficiency levels of group members. In addition, children were guided in creating a text, and then memorizing it. This process helped improve children's performance proficiency.

**TABLE 10. SUMMATIVE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS
WHO PERFORMED TASK 4 WITH HIGH, MODERATE OF
EMERGEING PROFICIENCY**

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS
High Proficiency (80%-100%)	6	24%
Moderate Proficiency (51%-79%)	11	44%
Emerging Proficiency (0%-50%)	8	32%
Total	**N = 25**	**100%**

(5) Adaptations to pre-planned tasks: The main adaptation to the task was that
children decided to change the secondary characters of the story. The story required each
child to play a snail and one other animal. Children picked different animals to talk to
their snail, such as, elephants, zebras, horses, dogs, cats, and snakes. The fact that
children were able to adapt the story to their own interest, presented a visible
improvement in their motivation towards the task. The pre-task planning included time
spent on pre-teaching vocabulary on new animals and their habitat.

(6) Teacher's intervention with emerging level children during each task: At first
some emerging learners feared that they would not be able to remember the dialogue. In
addition, they were uncomfortable with performing in front of an audience. During the
pre-task activities, emerging learners started to realize that the dialogue they needed to
remember was not long and that with practice they could remember their lines. The more
time they spent repeating their lines during pre-task phase, the more confidence they
gained to perform in front of other children. The teachers were strategic in guiding
emerging children by providing appropriate positive feedback.

(7) Children's attitudes toward the task: The same questionnaire was conducted in
Spanish with the whole group after the task performance, indicating how children felt

about the task.   Table 11 indicated the children's perspective on the whole task process.

The responses were positive. Children acknowledged that repeating the retelling of the

story several times helped with the final performance in front of an audience. Children

also expressed that the task helped them learn new words. Most children did not know

how to say, "Where do you live? And I live in…."   After practice this expression was

understood and remembered by most of the children, including emerging learners.

TABLE 11. PRESENTS A POST TASK REFLECTION OF EACH CHILD TOWARDS THE TASK.

ITEMS	I AGREE	I DON'T AGREE	TOTAL STUDENTS
1. I think the task was interesting.	19	6	N=25
2. This was a familiar activity.	14	11	N=25
3. I understood the task.	21	4	N=25
4. This task helped me learn new words in English.	23	2	N=25
5. Repeating the task many times helped me.	23	2	N=25
6. Learning the words before helped me to perform the task.	23	2	N=25
7. Learning new words through games helped me.	23	2	N=25
8. I needed more time to prepare for the task.	4	21	N=25
9. I want to repeat the task.	22	3	N=25

(8) Oral production as part of the process: During the task performance of the

story each child was able to retell their lines. The task required a structured phrase to be

memorized by each child. During the pre-task process some spontaneous talking took

place among the high and moderate proficiency children. During practice children would grab their puppets and play with them in the puppet theater.

Excerpt from task five shows a short spontaneous dialogue among two children playing with their snail puppets:

S1: hello, what is your name?

S2: hello, Paolo.

S1: what is your favorite color?

S2: blue.

S1: do you like pizza?

S2: yes.

This short dialogue indicated how these two children were using expressions learned in previous activities.

(9) A context promotes language competence: Because the story was about snails, children in general related to the topic. Children had been investigating snails for over two months prior to the task. Story retelling was an activity that they had used in the past, by mimicking a story with body movements. Both factors helped improve children's language competence.

(10) Interaction among children: This task presented a learning scenario where children really collaborated with each other to perform in the little puppet theater. The high and moderate proficiency learners assisted their emerging proficiency classmates.

(11) Task repetition: This task required several repetitions during the pre-task phase. Children rehearsed their lines over several days individually and then as part of their group performance. By repeating the same task, children were able to build upon

prior experience, helping to improve the fluency and accuracy during each repetition. It was interesting to observe how some children started adding animal sounds and new expressions to make their story longer.

COMPARATIVE PERCEPTION OF FIVE TASKS

After the five tasks were performed, both teachers and children completed a brief survey about their favorite task and about the task that was their most effective learning experience.

TABLE 12-Children's Perceptions

TASKS	DESCRIBE & DRAW	MEMORY GAME	GIVING INSTRUCTIONS TO BUILD WITH CUBES	INTERVIEW	STORY RETELLING	TOTAL STUDENTS N=25
FAVORITE	1	--	--	17	7	25
LEARN MORE	--	--	2	16	7	25

TABLE 13-Teacher's Perceptions

TASKS	DESCRIBE & DRAW	MEMORY GAME	GIVING INSTRUCTIONS TO BUILD WITH CUBES	INTERVIEW	STORY RETELLING	TOTAL TEACHERS N=2
FAVORITE	--	--	--	2	--	2
EFFECTIVE	--	--	--	2	--	2

SUMMARY

Chapter IV presented the qualitative data collected from implementing an English as a Second Language Task Based Learning experience for 25 first grade children. Data were gathered by describing children's responses to learning experiences provided to them. Documentation of children's performance and interview questions conducted with all 25 children and two English teachers in the first grade were collected. Each task was analyzed based on eleven outcomes that were intended to answer the three research questions and to

generate descriptive data concerning the implementation phase of a Second Language Task Based Learning experience.

Chapter V was designed to interpret and analyze findings provided in Chapter IV through identifying and describing emerging patterns, assumptions, and/or meanings into conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DISCUSSION

Summary of Purpose for the Study

This study was designed to investigate the implementation phase of a Task Based

Learning approach. A descriptive, qualitative research design was used as a means to

collect the data from the intact sample, to reveal how the 25 children responded to the Task

Based Learning approach, using pre-task planning and adaptations to enhance the English

as a Second Language performance for 25 first grade children, who were six to seven years

of age.

The present researcher acted on the assumption that theory should inform practice

and that practice should validate theory. As such, pedagogical techniques were selected

from theoretical sources, as described in Chapters I, II, and III to guide and to evaluate

methods and materials, and to gather data from the intact sample's response to the Task

Based Learning approach.   In addition, three research questions were addressed by

conclusions. Further, recommendations for future study were also made.

 A Discussion of Findings from Chapter IV

An abundance of data was collected. As such, the present researcher decided to

limit the findings to implementation procedures, pedagogical practices, and responses from children that appeared consistently throughout the implementation phase of the study.

(First Language Intervention) There were multiple examples, during the implementation phase in Chapter IV of this study, where teachers needed to use the first language (L1) to explain the proposed pre-task and task, because 23 out of the 25 children did not have sufficient background in English to comprehend what was needed to proceed. Once the purpose and directions for the pre-task and task were established, through explaining expectations in the first language, then students could consistently engage with a measure of success in the pre-task activities. The emergent proficiency category needed the most intervention. Before planning pre-task activities, teachers need to know as much as possible about what children have been previously exposed to in the second language. Finding out what children have experienced and know about the second language is a powerful way to proceed with planning.

(Pre-taught Vocabulary) The need for first language intervention encouraged teachers to focus more on pre-taught vocabulary in the context, by having multiple scenarios and games to reinforce the vocabulary. In addition, the repeated recycling of questions and phrases used in songs and games assisted children in comprehension of words and phrases. One-on-one review of vocabulary is one way to assist with memory recall and to also increase the child's confidence. This can be achieved through pairing an emergent proficiency child with a high or moderate proficiency child. Teachers may also assist all levels of language proficiency, by checking for understanding and for providing immediate input or scaffolding to meet individual needs.

(Learner's Motivation) Motivation for children in this study came from speaking and identifying with other people, and from identifying with the task itself. There were multiple examples where children became highly motivated while working with peers and older students. There were also cases where teachers working with students increased children's motivation to continue to persist. The pre-tasks and tasks also engendered motivation, especially if a child could achieve some level of perceived success. This held for all three levels of second language proficiency.

(Mixing high, moderate and emerging level proficiency) Teachers observed that pairs of children who were mixed in moderate to high proficiency levels, and emergent to moderate or emergent to high proficiency language levels, tended to have increased motivation and persistence to achieve. In Chapter IV, Tables 2,4,6,8, and 10 revealed that children's achievement in high, moderate and emergent English language levels was more a process of the difficulty or abstractness of the task than the children's level of English language proficiency. This study found that mixed pairs are crucial to children's success, especially, at the emergent level of English language proficiency. Mixing older students with younger students is a powerful social way to increase motivation and persistence to achieve. To a lesser extent, children who selected their partners also tended to have pairings that reflected sufficient proficiency level differences to become successful pairs. There were also examples where a pair of emergent proficiency level students, who paired themselves, were not successful pairings. With teacher intervention, however, these cases were moderated.

(Adaptations to pre-planned tasks) Early on in the implementations phase, the researcher and teachers realized that more games and pictures were essential to assist

students with accumulating vocabulary, so that children, especially in the emergent level could remember vital vocabulary from one day to the next. In addition, the number of questions that students were expected to ask needed to be reduced. These changes produced workable results, until the task became more abstract. The researcher and the teachers decided to simplify the task by having children put cubes in a row and not try to identify and explain geometric configurations. Pre-planned games and activities continued to increase; and more time was allotted for pre-teaching vocabulary. Children were able to use and recycle vocabulary to learn additional vocabulary. For example, children had the idea of having the animals that they remembered talk to the snail, mixing new and familiar vocabulary, questions, and phrases. Further, because children in the first grade are beginning readers in the first language, children rely on pictures to inform their understanding of what is taking place. Written words in the second language had little to no meaning for 23 of the children.

Adaptations to pre-planned activities are crucial to achieving maximum success for second language learners. Further, more time has to be provided, so that children can accommodate their lack of vocabulary in the second language and continue to progress.

(Teacher's intervention with emerging level children) For the emerging level child to progress, and to some extent with the moderate level child, teachers need to use the first language to fill in the gaps, so that children comprehend what the pre-task and task are about. Determining what vocabulary children don't know is crucial to planning and adapting learning experiences to increase vocabulary. When a task is overwhelming, children usually shut down. By finding ways to break the task into parts and by increasing learning experiences that scaffold what they know to what they do not know, are both

powerful techniques to use. As such, it is crucial for the teacher to model or explain what is not known in the first language. Cueing is another way to assist children, by modeling the missing vocabulary in the first and also in the second language. Clarification helps reduce stress and frustration.

(Children's attitudes toward a task) Tables 3, 5, 7, and 9 provided an insight into how children reflected over and valued each task that they had completed. Children consistently said that they needed more time to prepare for the task, that they had a desire to repeat a task, that the task helped them learn more English, that they needed to know more words before the task started, that the task was interesting, that they understood the task, and that learning new words through games helped. Children consistently reported positive values for their experience with Task Based Learning. The few children who did not express a positive value to their experience were not ignored. More effort to assist them was noted by the researcher and both teachers. While children liked familiar tasks and games, they also were willing to try new games and tasks.

(Oral production as part of the process) In most cases, children learned phrases during the pre-task phase for the oral production in the task phase. Some children in the moderate to high levels of proficiency provided innovations to phrases. A few children struggled, especially in the emerging category, with changes in pictures from the pre-task to the task phase. The more vocabulary that children acquired during the pre-task phase, the more vocabulary children exhibited during the task phase.

(A context promotes language competence)   A meaningful context promotes motivation and increased language competence. When a pre-task or task is abstract or not familiar, children tend to have decreased motivation and decreased language competence.

Completing a task with a high school senior, motivates young students to persist and to increase in language competence.

(Interaction among children) Children throughout the study enjoyed interacting with each other. While children wanted to select a partner for a game, children also enjoyed interacting with pairings made by a teacher. Children clearly preferred to interact with high school seniors. Children made an extra effort, while interacting with high school seniors.

(Task repetition) Children clearly enjoyed repetition of a pre-task or a task. This allowed children to improve and be more confident. Task Based Learning that is carefully planned and that uses adaptations to enhance clarity and to promote successful learning, encourages children to keep trying to achieve.

After the five tasks were completed, children were asked to complete a brief questionnaire on their favorite task and a task that that they learned the most from. Seventeen children claimed that their favorite task was the interview, while seven children liked story retelling. One child selected to describe and draw task. Sixteen children thought that they learned the most from the interview, while seven children thought that they learned the most by retelling a story. Two children thought that they learned the most from giving instruction on how to build with cubes. Both teachers thought that the interview was their favorite and most effective task.

Conclusions

While considering the conclusions of the present study, the reader should keep in mind the limited intact sample of 25 children. Notwithstanding, descriptive data were

made available to assist anyone seeking to make generalizations in view of contextual similarities between populations.

With this in mind, the following conclusions were drawn from the profile and summary of findings in this study:

1. A group of children tend to vary in language competence, even while increasing their individual language competency.

2. As soon as children can be placed into three categories, pair them high/emerging and moderate/emerging, so that children may recycle and practice vocabulary in context with each other. Children can help each other in achieving a higher level of communicative competence.

3. Increased intervention in the first language was needed to explain, prompt and encourage children in the emerging proficiency category, as compared to the moderate or high proficiency categories.

4. Recycling and practicing vocabulary in context assisted all three categories of language proficiency performance.

5. As children increased their language proficiency, they were highly motivated to persist in increasing their working vocabulary.

6. Even with careful pre-planning and adaptations for a pre-task and a task, there will be teachable opportunities that emerge for individuals and for the group.

7. As pre-planned tasks are implemented, there are situations where a pre-planned task should be modified or clarified to encourage all children to interact with the task and to persist with communication.

8. Children who persist in not interacting with a task are likely to need more pedagogical intervention from the teacher to explain, to prompt or to encourage.

9. Frustration levels need to be minimized and dealt with for communicative competence to increase.

10. While students strive to communicate, the teacher should make mistakes permissible and turn those mistakes into teachable opportunities.

11. As the second language increases in both vocabulary and phrases, allocate additional time for oral communication between and among people in the classroom.

12. As the second language increases in both vocabulary and phrases, ask questions in the second language; however, use the first language when needed to enhance clarity and meaning to promote language competency.

13. Provide opportunities for individuals to explain to others what they have learned, and how they learned to communicate their needs and desires.

14. Encourage children to ask questions in the second language.

15. Learning language within a context promotes language competency.

16. The level of vocabulary acquisition for individual students must be compared to the target vocabulary.

Research Questions

The following research questions were drawn from questions posed by the present researcher of this study:

1. Did data gathered during the implementation phase of the study inform future procedure for implementing Task Based Learning? The short answer is yes. The 16

conclusions stated above apply directly to future implementation practices that were revealed from implementing the present study.

2. Did pre-task planning inform children's understanding and performance of a task? With some reservation, the short answer is yes. Pre-task planning is important; however, expect additional adaptations during delivery of the planed pre-task and task phases. The delivery process tends to reveal individual needs of children that surface during the delivery process.

3. What pre-task planning activities appeared to be effective with children? Of the five pre-planned tasks delivered, two tasks clearly emerged. The first task selected by students was the interview. Children worked hard to interview high school seniors from their school. Motivation was high; and children exerted themselves to prepare for speaking in English only during the interview. The second task selected was the retelling of a story. In addition, many more games and activities were added to increase children's English proficiency, so that more success in language competence could emerge during the task phase. Both teachers also selected the interview as their choice for being the best planned and delivered pre-task.

<div align="center">Recommendations for Further Study</div>

From this study, the following recommendations for further study were generated:

1. The present researcher observed that children wanted to select their partners. The thought occurred that children could also be included to add ideas for pre-tasks and tasks. Young children could have more ownership in the pre-task and during-task activities by being involved in planning ideas for learning.

2. There is a high need to have additional pre- and- during task activities for young children that are designed to support Task Based Learning theory and pedagogy.

3. The present study should be extended to a longitudinal study. Additional data may emerge to validate or to question conclusions from the present study.

4. First grade children in the present study became highly motivated for an increased period of time, while partnering with high school students.   Could   including older students as role models motivate younger students to achieve additional language competence?

<u>Overview of the Study</u>

As a result of this brief study, the present researcher gained a deeper insight into the implementation process. Most of the theory behind Task Based Learning (TBL) was accomplished using adolescents and adults. This study found that TBL theory holds promise for young children; however, there needs to be additional development of ideas and materials to support the TBL theoretical background. Children in the present study responded with curiosity, high motivation, and high achievement during the implementation phase of Task Based Learning. Additional ideas and planning must occur before and during the continued implementation of Task Based Learning at Colegio del Sol School in Paraguay.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Asunción, 22 de Noviembre de 2018

SEÑORA
MARIA VICTORIA DE TOMASINI
DIRECTORA INSTITUCIONAL
COLEGIO DEL SOL
PRESENTE:

Me dirijo a usted para solicitar su permiso para realizar una investigación en su institución. Actualmente soy estudiante de Pisttsburg State University en el Departamento de Teaching and Leadership. La solicitud obedece a la posibilidad de implementar un nuevo programa piloto de Inglés como lengua extranjera en el primer grado de la primaria del Colegio del Sol. La metodología de enseñanza a ser aplicada es Task Based Learning, donde se llevarán adelante cinco tasks pre diseñados por la solicitante, Sofia Alfieri.

El tiempo de investigación será de aproximadamente tres meses, donde se trabajará directamente con las teachers del primer grado, quiénes a su vez ayudarán en la implementación de cada lección.

Considero que esta investigación será de gran aporte al área de Inglés del Colegio ya que el material será luego compartido y analizado con el resto del equipo de teachers de la primaria.

Su aprobación para la implementación de la investigación será gratamente recibida. Cualquier pregunta o sugerencia que tenga al respecto favor ponerse en contacto.

Saludos cordiales,

Sofia Alfieri
Coordinadora Pedagógica del Colegio del Sol

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

January 15, 2019

Sofia Alfieri
Dr Justo Prieto
260 Asuncion
Central 0000
Asuncion,
Paraguay, SA

Dear Sofia,
Your request to conduct research at Colegio del Sol School in Asuncion, Paraguay
has been received and granted. Dr. Ray Willard has agreed to serve as the thesis
advisor. He will guide and direct you in this research project. His email is
rwillard@pittstate.edu, and he will advise you on policy for conducting research in
the Department of Teaching and Leadership and the Graduate School at Pittsburg
State University.

Anonymity for your students by not providing name or distinguishable characteristics
in the thesis must be assured. Please stay in contact with Dr. Willard to move
forward by writing a formal proposal

 Sincerely,

 Alice C. Sagehorn

 Alice C. Sagehorn
 Chairperson and University Professor