



## **UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**

**FACULTAD DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

#### **TITLE**

TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS OF NINTH YEAR “A” OF BASIC EDUCATION, AFTERNOON SESSION AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA DR. MANUEL AGUSTÍN CABRERA LOZANO IN THE CITY OF LOJA DURING THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR.

Thesis as a previous requirement to obtain the Bachelor's Degree in Science of Education, English Language Major

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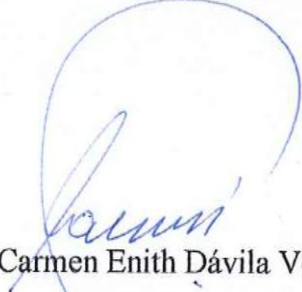
## CERTIFICATION

DRA. CARMEN ENITH DÁVILA VEGA, MG. SC., PROFESSOR OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA,

### CERTIFIES:

The present research work entitled TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS OF NINTH YEAR “A” OF BASIC EDUCATION, AFTERNOON SESSION AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA DR. MANUEL AGUSTÍN CABRERA LOZANO IN THE CITY OF LOJA DURING THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR, under the responsibility of the undergraduate student **JHONY ARMANDO PÉREZ VIÑANZACA**, has been thoroughly revised and fully analyzed. Therefore, I authorize the presentation of thesis for the pertinent legal aims.

Loja, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019



Dra. Carmen Enith Dávila Vega, Mg. Sc.

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## **THE AUTHOR**

## **DEDICATION**

This work is wholeheartedly dedicated to my beloved parents, who have been my source of inspiration and gave me strength when I thought of giving up, who continually provide their moral, spiritual, emotional, and financial support. Also, I would like to thank my grandmother who has taught me to keep going when facing adversities.

This research work would not have been a reality without the support of my brothers who have motivated me and shared their words of advice and encouragement to finish my studies.

As well as that, I dedicate this work to my friends who have been my learning partners and who played such important roles along the journey, as we mutually engaged in making sense of the various challenges we faced and in providing encouragement to each other at those times when it seemed impossible to continue. And last but not least, I dedicate this work to almighty God, who has been my guidance, strength, power of mind, and protection that have helped me to still standing working to reach to my goals.

**JHONY ARMANDO**

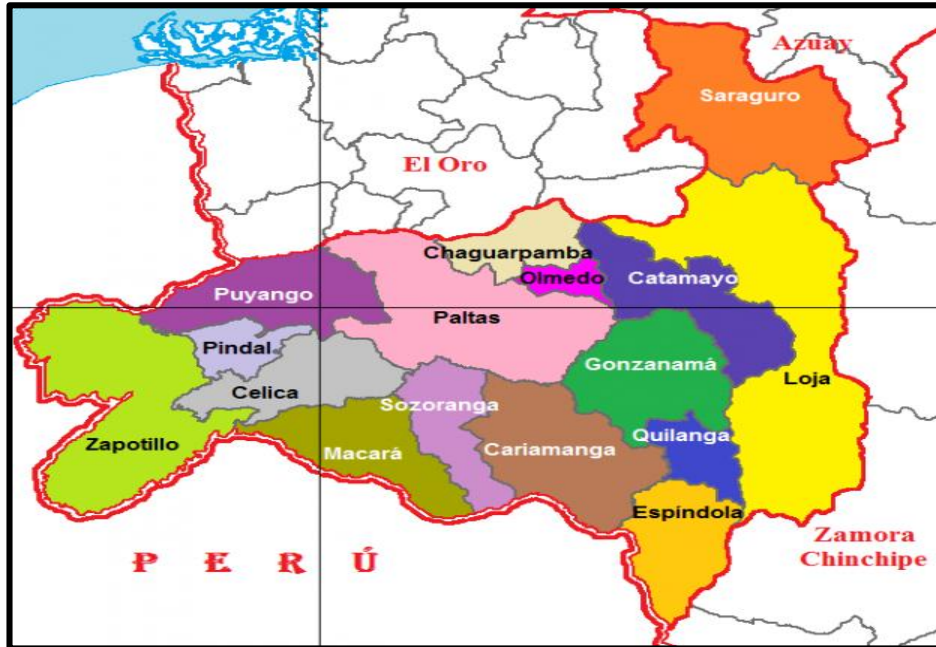
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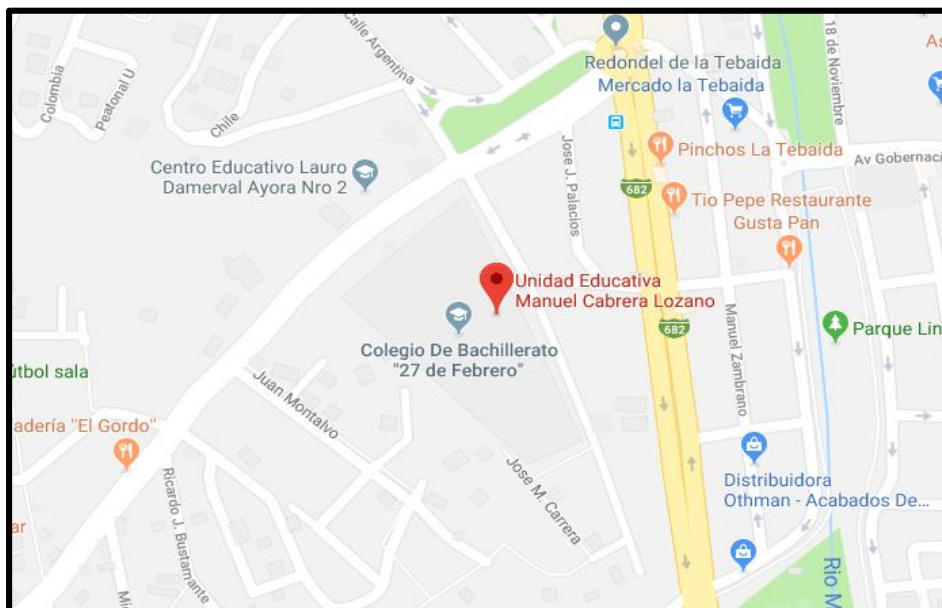
## MAPA GEOGRÁFICO Y CROQUIS

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#### DR. MANUEL AGUSTÍN CABRERA LOZANO





## THESIS OUTLINE

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**a. TITLE**

TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS  
AMONG STUDENTS OF NINTH YEAR “A” OF BASIC EDUCATION,  
AFTERNOON SESSION AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA DR. MANUEL AGUSTÍN  
CABRERA LOZANO IN THE CITY OF LOJA DURING THE 2018-2019  
SCHOOL YEAR.

## **b. RESUMEN**

El objetivo de esta investigación fue mejorar las destrezas auditivas a través de actividades de aprendizaje basadas en la tarea, con los estudiantes de noveno año “A” de Educación Básica, sección vespertina, en la Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano de la ciudad de Loja, durante el año escolar 2018-2019. Se emplearon los métodos científico, descriptivo, estadístico y analítico-sintético para obtener, describir, representar e interpretar y analizar los resultados. Los instrumentos para recopilar la información fueron pruebas y cuestionarios aplicados a 19 estudiantes. Además, fichas de observación y notas de campo fueron empleadas para registrar el rendimiento y actitud de los estudiantes al realizar actividades de aprendizaje basadas en la tarea. Los resultados indicaron que los estudiantes mejoraron satisfactoriamente sus habilidades auditivas para identificar ideas principales, detalles específicos, comprender grandes cantidades de información, e inferir e interpretar el significado del mensaje. En conclusión, las actividades de aprendizaje basadas en la tarea contribuyeron al mejoramiento de los estudiantes, quienes interactuaron espontáneamente, se sintieron cómodos, incrementaron su confianza, y permanecieron atentos, curiosos y motivados para trabajar en diferentes tareas.

## **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this research was to improve listening skills through task-based learning activities among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year. The scientific, descriptive, statistical, and analytic/synthetic methods were utilized to obtain, describe, represent and interpret and analyze data. The instruments to collect data were tests and questionnaires applied to 19 students. Besides, observation sheets and field notes were employed to record students’ performance and attitude towards task-based learning activities. The results indicated that students improved satisfactorily their listening abilities to identify main ideas, specific details, comprehend large amounts of listening input, and infer and interpret the meaning of the message. In conclusion, through the application of task-based learning activities, students interacted spontaneously, felt comfortable, built their confidence, and were attentive and motivated to work on different tasks.

### **c. INTRODUCTION**

Listening is an important part of communication. It has always been a crucial part of interaction among individuals. It must be stated that listening is not just hearing what is around, but also giving a response to the message being communicated. When people are good at listening, they are capable of giving an answer through the use of the forms of the language. However, this input process can be complicated when the individual is employing a foreign language such as English, which has different language structures.

Listening involves understanding the speaker's accent or pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and more importantly, the meaning of their words. Therefore, a good listener is able to do these four things simultaneously. However, students are constantly facing difficulties when they perform listening activities in the classroom. Sometimes students cannot keep up with the process of getting the intended meaning of the speaker. They find problems in listening in the following areas: the complexity of grammar and vocabulary in which students do not comprehend the structure of spoken sentences; the speed of the speaker when talking in English; environmental obstructions such as distracting noises in the background, unclear voices or sounds; and finally, the lack of motivation to develop listening activities.

Considering the issues mentioned above, the researcher pointed out its importance to research the following problem: How do task-based learning activities improve listening skills among students of Ninth year "A" of Basic

Education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year?

Due to this problem, the application of task-based learning activities was chosen to counteract students' weaknesses in listening skills and improve them during the process. The choice of these activities is justified by the great support it provides to the students' needs. As this is a student-centered approach, the learning process brings better results to the table. Task-based learning activities help students to be independent when performing a task in the classroom. With the use of these activities, students use the language they know and continue improving their skills as they progress with the tasks. Moreover, task-based learning activities are focused first on meaning and then on form. For this reason, students can work on listening activities with the aim of picking up the main idea of the message of spoken texts.

In order to carry out this research work, the following objectives were proposed: to research the theoretical and methodological references about task-based learning activities and their application to improve listening skills; to diagnose the issues that limit the improvement of listening skills in the English language among students of ninth year "A"; to design an intervention plan in order to improve listening skills; to apply the most suitable task-based learning activities to enhance listening skills; and finally, to validate the results obtained after the application of task-based learning activities to improve listening skills.

For the development of this study, the application of the following methods were indispensable: the *scientific method* for exploring the observations and answering questions that appear when gathering information; the *descriptive method* to



describe the phenomenon and its characteristics; the *statistical method* to collect, analyze and represent all gathered information in graphics to indicate the percentages and results got on the questionnaires, checklist, and tests applied to students; and finally, the *analytic/synthetic method* was used to analyze all the information found through the observation checklist, questionnaires, and the pre and posttest, and then to make the interpretation and logical analysis of the data and then reach to conclusions.

The present research work includes: first, the *abstract* which states the general objective, the description of the principal methods, techniques, and materials, and the main results obtained from the data collection; second, the *introduction*, which evokes the contextualization of the problem, the central problem, the reason for the selection of the theme, and the specific objectives of the study and the methodology used; then, *literature review* which incorporates detailed information on the two variables: task-based learning activities and listening skills. Also, it includes *materials and methods*, which carries the various techniques, materials, and tools used to gather information, and the population involved in this research. Subsequently, the *results* shown through tables, figures with the appropriate interpretation and logical analysis. Next, the *discussion* includes a general analysis of the results obtained, and finally the *conclusions* and *recommendations*.

## **d. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

In the task-based learning approach, learning is fostered through performing a series of activities as steps towards successful task realization. These task-based learning activities are purely focused on having students use the genuine target language in order to complete meaningful tasks linked to situations they might encounter in the real world and other project-based assignments. Also, there is an emphasis on the use of spontaneous and creative language rather than absolute accuracy, and the assessment is based on task outcome.

There are different ways of applying task-based learning activities, but this document will focus on what has become the most popular and reliable source, the framework presented by Jane Willis (2007). For this purpose, a brief definition of task-based learning will be given. Following this, the process and the methodology framework will be stated in which it is explained the three stages: pre-task, task cycle, and post-task. Subsequently, based on the types of tasks proposed by Willis (2007), task-based learning activities will be defined in detail to have a clear understanding of how to use them in the classroom.

#### **Task-based learning**

Task-based learning is an approach that involves using communicative and meaningful tasks during language learning. The process of using language in communication is more important than simply producing correct language forms. Because of this, task-based learning is seen as a communicative approach that is

concerned with real and meaningful communication as the main objective of language learning (Willis & Willis, 2007).

Based on Willis' definition, task-based learning focuses on the language and the way it is used when performing tasks with communicative purposes. By employing this approach, the teacher can encourage learners to engage in meaning with the language resources they already have.

### **Task-Based Language Learning Process**

In Task-Based Language Learning (TBL), learning is promoted through the development of a series of activities as steps towards successful completion of tasks. The approach of these tasks goes from learning language items in a non-contextualized vacuum to using language as a way to meet authentic and real-world needs. Through the realization of a task, learners use the language immediately in a real-world context, which makes learning authentic. In a TBL framework, the language needed is not pre-determined and given to the learners. Learners by themselves practice it, by working with the support of the facilitator and meeting the demands of a task and the series of activities that it includes (Curran, Deguent, Williams, Miletto, & Van der Straeten, 2000).

Regarding the development of task-based learning activities in the classroom, students are allowed to use the language in the way they know it. In fact, students can use the language in activities in a context that are not well-structured and then they can employ the language as a means to communicate something in a real-world context.

## **Task-Based Methodology Framework**

One of the advantages for both teachers and learners in the task-based approach is access to a well-designed framework for the development of a task-based lesson. For teachers, the simple fact of developing this kind of task provides experiences that subsequently will help them to guide their students in their learning process, and for that purpose it is important to design a lesson plan and execute it following each step. In addition, the task-based approach is thought to foster the necessity to be creative and variate in teaching, this is specifically for novice teachers that are beginning. A framework such as the one outlined below caters to both needs. This framework provides a clear structure for a lesson and it also allows for creativity and variety in the choice of options in each phase. This TBL framework is based on the Willis model (1996) and is also supported by some contributions of Rod Ellis (2003). In this way, we have three main phases: the pre-task, the task cycle, and the post-task.

### **The Pre-task**

As the first step, the pre-task is a phase with the sole purpose of preparing students to perform the task in ways that will promote acquisition. Lee (2000), states how important it is to frame the task to be performed and indicates that one way of doing this is to provide in advance an organizer of what students need to do and the nature of the outcome they will arrive at the end of the task. Also, the way a task is presented plays an important role in the students' motivation and reflects the purpose and utility of the task (Dornyei, 2011).

Willis (1996) (as cited in Willis & Willis, 2007) suggests that the teacher (facilitator) explores the topic with the group and highlights useful words and phrases. At this stage, it is the right time when the facilitator needs to take advantage and exploit materials to create a close relation to the task to be performed. Besides, the facilitator is required to consider and visualize how the chosen materials will be used.

Clear methods of exploring the topic could be by listening to an audio script, or by hearing a set of sounds to associate them with background knowledge. These methods can be used for content as a springboard or to highlight key vocabulary. All of this depends on how much the facilitator manages to work on language and which aspects are more relevant to be worked by the learners. However, it is important to point out that the goal of using a piece of material is to introduce the content in the pre-task, for example: material exploitation by using songs/videos etc. can be used to introduce the topic, as well as brainstorming by making a list, comparing ideas, sharing experiences and activating language by eliciting and providing vocabulary (Curran et al, 2000).

### **Task cycle**

In the task phase, students are immersed in the task realization in the different ways it can be performed, displayed, recorded, conducted as a group or in small groups, where the main focus is always directed to the successful completion of the task. At this stage, students are required to use the language for doing the task with a communicative and student-centered approach where they are the target during the whole process. The task must be established in a real-world context where it is

not necessary to place a strong emphasis on grammatical accuracy but rather on communicative skills. Inside this cycle, there is the planning stage in which the learners have to work on preparing a report for the rest of the class about what they have done in the task phase. This report could be spoken or written and the purpose is that the learners gain experience with public speaking or writing. In addition, the teacher is in charge of monitoring students' work and help them in any aspect of the language they need (Lackman, K, n.d, p. 3).

After the reports have been planned, it is time for them to reflect orally or in writing. With the purpose of sharing the report to the whole class, students should stick charts on the wall and write what they have done in the task. If it is an oral report, the leader of each group has the responsibility of delivering it to the rest of the class. It is important to mention that whether the report is oral or written, the students in all the groups should complete a reading or listening task during exposure to the other groups' reports. In this way, the students could be asked to listen for suggestions, and the teacher can take notes of all the errors that were made by students during the reading of the reports.

### **The post-task**

At this stage, students focus on language and analyze their performance on the task they have done. This focus could be developed by having students listening to (or reading) a sample of native speakers completing the same task that they did. The facilitator (teacher) makes the students listen for language (words, expressions) that they could have included in their task. Considering that the students only used their previous background knowledge, it is more probable that they notice some words



and useful expressions in the sample they are listening to. With this activity, students will get valuable new knowledge that can be used in future tasks. For example, students can write down the expressions they hear in the recording and then compare them with a partner, and the teacher must play the audio track twice if it is needed. Then, the teacher and students must deal with form, meaning, and, where necessary, the pronunciation of the new words and expressions that they identify (Ellis, 2003).

In the end, the language focus finishes with a controlled practice. This practice is designed to use the target language correctly and students are required to demonstrate their skill in the language. A good controlled practice activity could be the substitution drill, where students have to substitute words in a structure.

Pre-task		
Introduction to topic and tasks		
Teacher explores the topic with the class, highlights useful words and phrases. Learners may be exposed to examples.		
Task cycle		
Task	Planning	Report
Students do the task in pairs or small groups. Teacher monitors; mistakes do not matter.	Students prepare to report. Accuracy is important, so the teacher stands by and gives advice.	Students exchange or present report. Teacher listens and then comments.
Language focus		
Analysis	Practice	
Students examine then discuss.	Teacher conducts practice of new words	

*(TBL Framework by Willis, 1996)*

As it was shown above, the three phases of the task-based learning approach are synthesized ways to carry out activities in the classroom in an organized way. In the first stage, the teacher and learners explore the topic, highlight key language

forms and choose the material for the development of the task. Then, in the second stage, they mirror an authentic undertaking as closely as possible, in which participants carry out the successful realization of the main task. Finally, in the third stage, there is a focus on the language forms used in the main task; feedback and evaluation to identify things to improve for the next sessions; some reflections upon task realization; and peer suggestions.

### **Types of tasks and activities**

According to Willis (2007), there are closed and open tasks. The closed tasks are designed for specific goals that may be established by the teacher, which means that the focus on the language is much stronger than the open tasks, which are more freely structured with less specific goals. In the closed tasks, there are: listing, ordering and sorting, comparing and matching; and in the open tasks, there are: problem-solving, sharing personal experiences, and creative tasks.

#### **Closed tasks**

##### **1. Listing task**

Listing is a task that may be seen as an unimaginative resource in the context of a task in the classroom. Listing generates a strong reaction from the students, listing generates conversation among the class when everyone is explaining their ideas. In this process, brainstorming is an important aspect because students use their background knowledge and experience. Also, fact-finding, in which students try to find out specific things by asking each other, making reference to books, etc., (Willis, 1996).

### **Listing activities**

**Brainstorming:** Brainstorming's main purpose is to generate as many ideas as possible within the time frame specified in the classroom. It encourages people to come up with ideas and thoughts that may seem a little crazy at first. Some of these ideas can be developed into original, creative solutions to a problem, while others can give rise to even more ideas. Teachers may use brainstorming to encourage students to share their ideas on a specific topic or question with each other (Bearing & Unin, 2015).

**Fact-finding:** In this kind of activity, students employ research, meetings, interviews, questionnaires, sampling, and other techniques to collect information about something related to the topic. Answers for this activity may be developed using different sources to get information and generate answers about aspects such as qualities or features about a specific topic.

### **2. Ordering and sorting task**

Ordering and sorting is a closed task designed with specific goals and it involves different activities in which students organize information and content of a specific topic. By developing this kind of task, the teacher can set some specific goals focused on using the language as a means of communication and for analyzing key language forms that may be used during the task. In ordering and sorting tasks, students are involved in four main processes: sequencing items, actions or events in a logical chronological way; ranking items based on a specified criteria or personal values; categorizing items by grouping them in their corresponding

headings; and classifying items when the categories are not given, so, they could be set in different ways (Willis & Willis, 2007)

### **Ordering and sorting activities**

**Sequencing items:** students are required to put actions or events in a logical or chronological order. For example, in a listening activity about a famous artist, students may order the events about the artist's career in a sequence according to the audio that they listen to.

**Ranking items:** students sort items or information that they are provided by the teacher based on personal values or specified criteria. For example, students can rank food items from the healthiest to the less healthy.

**Categorizing items:** students put the items in given groups or group them in their corresponding headings. Example: with the same topic about food, students can put the items into countable or uncountable nouns. Then, they can listen to an audio to verify the items grouped.

**Classifying items:** when the categories are not given; students classify the information in different ways.

### **3. Comparing task**

To reflect on what the students have done or what they are doing, comparing appears as a task to review and identify the common points and/or differences among the tasks, taking into account the different sources that are used to the completion of the task.

### **Comparing activities**

**“Would You Rather” questions:** It can be used as a fun way for students to compare and contrast. Learners must make a choice between two options when answering the question "Would You Rather." His / her mind will automatically compare and contrast the two options, weighing both pros and cons.

**Using rankings:** By ranking things, students can compare and contrast them using a certain set of criteria (usually deciding which one is the best or the worst). This activity can give students the opportunity to compare and contrast in a fun way. However, the most important part of this activity is having students explain their reasoning, justify it or defend it. When students explain why one item received a higher ranking than another, they compare and contrast at a much higher level than just telling how something is the same or different

**The Venn diagram:** This is an activity that is used when students are asked to compare and contrast. By using this activity, students can add differences and similarities by writing them on index cards or small pieces of paper (e.g. comparing two characters of a film).

### **4. Matching task**

By developing this closed task, students use their receptive skills (listening) to identify key features that the task requires. Also, by doing alternative tasks such as listen and do, students can follow instructions and do things in English taking into account the interpretations of meaning (e.g. gestures). The main goal of this task is to link or two items that are related (e.g. match phrases/descriptions to pictures, match directions to maps).

## **Matching activities**

**Listen and identify:** In this activity, students listen to audios to collect specific or relevant information and match it to its appropriate location. Students are not required to understand all the information provided, only important details need to be collected.

**Listen and Do:** The activity helps students develop their understanding of listening by offering opportunities for a physical response (TPR) to the input provided. By listening to and following instructions, learners make the most of their input and intake stages before beginning language production. These activities encourage learners to do things, so the motivation to complete each activity should be high (Švecová, 2007 ).

In relation to the closed tasks, the three proposed by Willis are tasks with well-defined goals and with a strong emphasis on the language forms. As goal-oriented tasks, students have to be very disciplined in the process of the activities, in which there is only one right answer and in which the instructions for the tasks are specific. However, by performing this kind of guided tasks, learners afford fewer opportunities to control their learning and explore their interests because these tasks did not allow them to make choices and decisions.

## **Open tasks**

### **1. Problem-solving task**

In the real-world context, problem-solving is a task that challenges people to solve real problems or at least are closely related. It includes simple activities like logic problems, and more complex like case studies that are focused on students



with a high language level (Nunan, 2004). The problem-solving task is one of the most preferable communicative activities, and it can be used for more learning outcomes than correct speech production.

### **Problem-solving activities**

**Information-gap:** According to Larsen & Freeman, an information gap task is an activity in which students lack information to complete a task and have to communicate with their classmates to fill the gaps. This means that learners must work with each other and exchange useful information in order to complete a task (Larsen-Freeman, 2001, p. 148).

**Reasoning-gap:** This activity involves drawing a conclusion based on given information. Students are basically trained to infer a possible ending or next event that may happen in the context of a task. This task aims to encourage students to engage more deeply with meaning even if the task is characterized by some connection with predictable aspects when using the language.

**Comparing:** To reflect on what the students have done or what they are doing, comparing appears as a task to review and identify the common points and/or differences among the tasks, taking into account the different sources that are used for the completion of the task (Willis & Willis, 2007).

**Clue me in:** This is a fun detective game that encourages problem-solving, critical thinking and cognitive development. Collect a number of items that are associated with a specific profession, social trend, place, public figure, historical event, animal, etc. Assemble actual items (or pictures of items) that are commonly associated with the target answer. Place them all in a bag (five-10 clues should be

sufficient.) Then have a student reach into the bag and one by one pull out clues. Choose a minimum number of clues they must draw out before making their first guess (two-three). After this, the student must venture a guess after each clue pulled until they guess correctly.

**Survivor scenarios:** Create a pretend scenario for students that requires them to think creatively to make it through. An example might be getting stranded on an island, knowing that help will not arrive for three days.

**Moral dilemma:** Create a number of possible moral dilemmas your students might encounter in life, write them down, and place each item folded up in a bowl or bag. Some of the items might include things like, “I saw a good friend of mine shoplifting. What should I do?” or “The cashier gave me an extra \$1.50 in change after I bought candy at the store. What should I do?” Have each student draw an item from the bag one by one, read it aloud, then tell the class their answer on the spot as to how they would handle the situation.

## **2. Sharing personal experiences task**

In sharing personal experience tasks, learners are engaged in talking about themselves and sharing their own experiences. For instance, students can complete activities such as doing a survey, producing a class newspaper, planning a radio show, or designing a brochure.

### **Sharing personal experience activities**

**Story-telling:** Storytelling is an activity where people access, express and retain information and knowledge. When students perform this activity, they share something related to their own real-context and it is not strictly based on the content

of the book (Eck, 2006). Some of the variations of story-telling are to express anecdotes, memories (e.g. early schooldays, terrible journeys, embarrassing moments, personality quizzes, etc.) and show some reactions and express opinions about what just has been told by another speaker.

### **3. Creative task**

Creative tasks are often projects in which learners, in pairs or groups, can create their own imaginative products. Groups could create short stories, works of art, videos, magazines, etc. Creative projects often involve a combination of task types such as listing, ordering, sorting, comparing, and problem-solving. Some examples of activities that can be applied in the classroom are: story-telling, anecdotes, opinions, reactions (e.g. early schooldays, terrible journeys, embarrassing moments, personality quizzes), (Willis, 1996).

#### **Creative activities**

**Doing and reporting a survey:** This is a good activity to encourage students to write and study a research topic. Students summarize existing studies in an organized manner in a survey report.

**Producing a class newspaper:** Creating a Classroom Newspaper allows students to combine reading and writing activities in the classroom every day. The creativity of students is challenged by the production of a newspaper in the classroom.

**Planning a radio show:** Students plan how to structure a well-designed radio show by doing this activity. After planning, they can execute every single step

(including scripts, setting, topic, time, resources, etc.) and put their input and output skills into practice.

**Designing a brochure:** A brochure is an informative advertising document that can be folded into a template, pamphlet or leaflet. Students can use their creativity to create a brochure to promote something from their local area. By doing so, students not only develop their language skills but also do something related to a real situation that actually happens in their context.

With respect to the four open tasks proposed by Willis, the main purpose remains in the idea of freedom, which means that the goals for the tasks are not established as mandatory commitments. In contrast to closed tasks, the open tasks aim to have students use the language freely without any restrictions made by the teacher. As the control is taken by learners, there is a wide range of possible answers to a question as there is not a specified procedure to use. Additionally, these tasks are appropriate for students who can set their own goals, select and organize information, choose strategies, and assess the final results.

## **LISTENING**

In normal daily life, listening to a foreign language has been regarded as the most widely used language skill. According to Rost (2016), listening can be defined as a process of receiving information that the speaker actually says, with a well-structured orientation (receptive orientation), a construction and representation of meaning (constructive orientation), negotiating meaning and give a response to the speaker (collaborative orientation), and, last but not least, the development of

meaning through the involvement, imagination and empathy with the other individual (transformative orientation).

Based on Rost's definition, listening is considered an ability to interpret a message that may be presented in a verbal and non-verbal way. Moreover, listening involves orientations destined to construct a process of setting up meaning, providing a response to it and transforming this meaning as a result of different factors such as creativity, background knowledge, imagination, etc.

### **Listening Process**

Thus, listening is characterized by its complex process that allows students to understand, retain and interpret the spoken messages in real-time through the usage of a variety of sources like phonetic, phonological, prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic (Lynch, 2002). As listening is a complex process, it can be divided into five levels of progress from the beginning to the end.

#### **Receiving**

In this first level, the listener employs hearing that is the physical act of receiving the sound that comes from the speaker. At this level, the student recognizes the sounds as simple words, phrases or thoughts. Although hearing is not the same as listening, it is an essential component of the process of listening in which the listener reads the message or information by hearing (Promruang, 2012).

#### **Understanding**

In this part of the process, the listener's brain is trying to comprehend the meaning of the message received. Complications may be found at this stage since the receptor interprets or gives incorrect meaning to words or phrases, which causes

the information given to become something totally different. This step helps the learner to understand the patterns by making an association with something that has been heard and perceived before, not only words. This could be sounds and any stimuli that can help to find the meaning that the speaker is trying to send (Tyagi, 2013).

### **Remembering**

According to Babita (2013), remembering is an important listening process because it means that an individual has not only received and interpreted a message but has also added it to the mind's storage bank. Also, it is important to point out that the information that is remembered at the moment could differ from what was heard at the beginning.

### **Evaluating**

The fourth stage in the listening process is evaluating, in which listeners judge the value of the message. It means that they analyze the sense of the message. Everything may be seen from different perspectives and diverse life experiences, and because of this, evaluation of the same message can be totally different (Whench, 2012).

### **Responding**

Finally, to complete the process, the receiver of the message reacts through verbal and/or nonverbal feedback. This stage is important since it helps the speaker to verify whether the message was received or not by the listener. Through this stage, the speaker is able to determine how much of the message was understood by the receptor (Tyagi, 2013).

The process of listening definitely provides a clear explanation of how the activities of listening are performed, what goes first and what goes next. As is stated above, this process involves five levels: receiving (hearing) that is a response caused by sound waves stimulating the sensory receptors of the ear; understanding, which aims to learn what the speaker means-based on thoughts and emotional tone; remembering, which describes how the listener adds new information to the mind's storage bank; evaluating involves the process of judging the message provided; and responding, in which the listener gives a response in verbal and/or nonverbal way as a feedback.

### **Approaches of listening**

Rost (2016) explains two main approaches that are used in the listening process. These approaches are the bottom-up and top-down, which allow an acceptable measure of comprehension to take place smoothly in the learning context.

#### **Bottom-Up**

According to Rost (2016), the bottom-up approach is text-based, which means that everything depends on the message of the language that is the combination of words, sounds and grammar structures that create meaning. When listeners use their linguistic knowledge clues such as phonemes, syllables, words, phrases, and sentences to understand, it means that they are using a bottom-up approach (Vandergrift, 2007). Thus, the listeners use the incoming input as the basis for understanding the message. It includes recognizing cognates, listening for specific details and identifying word-order patterns (Richards, 2008).

### **Top-Down**

In the same way, Rost (2016) states that the top-down approach aims to use the background knowledge of the topic, the situation or context, the type of text, and the language to understand the meaning of the message. When students use context and prior knowledge such as topic, genre, culture and other schema knowledge stored in long term memory to decide the meaning, they use a top-down approach (Vandergrift, 2007). While the bottom-up approach goes from language to meaning, the top-down goes from meaning to language (Richards, 2008).

As we could see, there are two important approaches to listening: the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach. When teachers apply the top-down approach, the listener uses their knowledge of the topic to facilitate comprehension. Otherwise, if the listener is not at the required level of knowledge, then the bottom-up approach would be an alternative because this focuses on the basic elements of language such as phonemes, lexis, words, etc.

### **Stages of listening**

The listening sequences during the development of a task help to improve students' metacognitive abilities, especially in the first two years of language learning (Vandergrift, 2007). These listening sequences may be divided into three stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening and each one of the three stages have its own specific purpose.

#### **Pre-listening**

This step is designed to activate what the learner already knows, to provide an advanced understanding to help the learner predict ideas and pre-structure



information (Rost, 2016). Pre-listening activities put students in the context of the main task, it is a tool to guide them to the things they need to know before they listen. Pre-listening activities help students to activate their prior knowledge and predict what they will hear. These activities might include brainstorming, visuals, realia, text and words, situations and opinions, ideas and facts (Wilson, 2008).

### **While-Listening**

While-listening activities are the core of the process of listening and they are performed during the listening task or they can be completed immediately after listening. While-tasks may include taking guided notes, completing a picture or schematic diagram or table, composing questions—any tangible activity that the learner performs while listening to demonstrate ongoing understanding (Rost, 2016). The teacher has to provide the instructions clearly with a specified goal to be accomplished and also base the task on the students' level. At this stage, learners are expected to understand the message while they listen. Examples of while listening activities can be: making/checking items in a picture, putting pictures in order, true/false, form/chart completion, completing grids, predicting and making inferences, multiple-choice completion, etc (Underwood, 1989, as cited in Bedwell, 2014).

The benefit of a well-designed while-listening activity is that it helps listeners to understand the spoken text, retain the information and subsequently find the clues to give a response. Also, it helps to provide a focus, to emphasize the important parts while listening, to stay alert and to allow them to understand the structure of the texts (Wilson, 2008).

### **Post-Listening**

The post-task allows the learner to create mental representations and develop short-term L2 memory, and increase motivation for listening to a second time. Post-listening tasks can involve reading, writing, speaking, interaction, in which students can make comparisons, notes, compose a summary with a partner, and formulating answers, or generate questions about what was just heard (Rost, 2016). In addition, as students deal with thinking, discussing, reflecting and writing processes, the post-listening tasks require more time than the other ones. To work properly on these tasks, students work in detail, and they are able to use both top-down and bottom-up approaches to make a connection between the classroom activities and their real lives (Wilson, 2008).

As we read before, there are three stages that are designed with well-structured features and aims. In the pre-listening, the teacher prepares students to listen by highlighting language forms that can be challenging for students. In the while-listening stage, students listen and do tasks such as listening for gist, listening for specific information, listening for overall understanding, making inferences, summarizing, etc. and finally, we have the post-task where the teacher takes learners beyond the listening text and uses it as a springboard for further language practice.

### **Listening subskills**

There are a number of sub-skills that students need to develop in the classroom. Thus, the most appropriate skills were selected for students who participated in this research project. Each one of the sub-skills is thought to help students to improve their level and become more familiar with the language by communicating.

### **Listening for gist**

According to Wilson (2008), listening for gist means to understand the main idea of what it is about, or what it is being said instead of focusing on specific words. Listening for gist is an activity that allows students to develop a top-down approach rather than a bottom-up approach to listening. It is beneficial for those students who are stuck on finding details such as words or phrases that they do not understand that prevent them from seeing the bigger picture.

In this listening, students have to grasp the main ideas without worrying about the details. They try to understand what is happening even if he or she does not understand every phrase or sentence in the audio. There are no detailed questions to answer, students are just required to pick up keywords, phrases, take references from intonation, and other clues to guess at the meaning of the whole text.

### **Listening for Specific Information**

The purpose of this listening is to train students to discover a particular piece of information, details that are relevant, important or necessary. This type of task can train the students about how to extract specific information (Wilson, 2008). According to Harmer (1991), this task can be seen as a simple one, but learners can find some complications when constructing the meaning and understanding the listening extract. Fortunately, the pre-task activities provide the necessary support to make it easy and the learners can easily identify and extract the specific information from the spoken text. In the end, students will be able to obtain the required information without any problem.

### **Overall understanding**

Overall understanding requires that learners construct meaning by using clues from contextual information and from existing knowledge while relying upon numerous strategic resources to perform the task requirement. In this listening sub-skill, students are challenged to understand the spoken texts in as much detail as possible. Overall understanding verifies students' comprehension at a high level. At this stage, it necessary to get more than isolated details or the main idea, it demands that students identify all the components of the text and obtain the context and meaning of it (Rost, 2016).

Due to the fact that overall understanding is a high-level sub-skill, students are expected to put a lot of effort into the tasks. Students need to be concentrated to pick up as much information as possible, and it can be possible if they pay attention to every single word and phrase performed by the speaker. Moreover, they can use their background knowledge and experiences to make associations and be closely related to the topic of the task.

### **Inferring**

Inferring in listening can be defined as a strategy through which the listener uses acoustic, vocal, lexical or contextual relevant information from the listening material, and also the previous knowledge to guess the meaning of the message or to compensate for missing information (Guo, 2015, p. 319).

In inferring listening, students make guesses to understand the message of the text. As it requires them to pay total attention, students have to base their inferences

on many details such as the speaker's attitude, intentions, implications, thoughts, motivation, and purpose to finally expect and predict what he or she will say next.

Inferring involves that the listener establishes relations and identifies a social and cultural setting. Moreover, to make a good inference, students should recognize the variation of style, tone, forms of speech, situation, purpose, and topic that the listening involves.

As previously mentioned, four listening sub-skills were established and each one of them aims to work on a specific aspect. When students work on listening for gist activities, they look for the general idea of the information presented. Next, in listening for specific information, students look for specific features or details immersed in spoken texts. Then, getting to a higher level, in overall understanding, students not only look at the main idea or specific pieces of information but they have to understand and construct meaning about all the information provided. Finally, in inferring listening, students make logical reasonings from which they draw a consequence from a fact or a suggestion showed before.

### **Assessing listening**

Assessment is particularly important in the area of listening because it is essential to receive adequate feedback to increase the confidence of the learner and to design instruction that addresses the apparent weaknesses of the learner or the weaknesses in the curriculum. For the purpose of assessing listening, it is necessary to describe some forms of assessment that are suitable or appropriate to apply to students in the classroom. According to Rost (2016), the forms of assessment make reference to materials, including any media (audio, video, text), general procedures

and rubrics for taking the test or participating in the evaluation, and methods for scoring the evaluation. The most common forms of assessment are detailed below.

### **Discrete item tests**

These include multiple-choice questions following a listening text, in which the scoring response is based directly on right or wrong answers. Also, there are open-ended questions following the playing of listening audios and this is scored on a scale of ‘correctness’ and ‘completeness’.

### **Task-based tests**

Tasks involve taking appropriate non-verbal action in response to a listening text. Similarly, it can be performed in two ways: closed tasks requiring a single response; and open tasks involving multiple responses.

### **Integrative tests**

Memory tests following or during listening to an extract, in which learners are required to use their capacity to reduce redundancy of pieces of information provided in spoken texts. For instance, the teacher can apply gap-filling tasks, such as taking notes tasks or summarizing tasks. The scoring guide for this kind of test is based on a scale of accuracy and inclusion of facts and ideas from the information provided. Also, it contains dictation that can be complete or partial, and the scoring guide is based on the correct completion of missing words.

### **Communicative tests**

By applying communicative tests, the aim of the teacher is to use the language for communicative purposes. Due to this, the learner is not required to show his/her competence with the language but his/her ability to use it in real-world situations to

give a message and thus communicate something. Some communicative assessments can be written after or while listening to spoken texts, for example, students listen to a description of a problem and then they decide to write their solutions to that problem. Besides, it is also possible to work with oral tasks involving listening in particular situations such as following directions on a map, ordering food in a restaurant, describing famous characters, making role plays, etc.

From the Rost's perspective, the assessing of listening demands the use of assessment forms. These forms of assessment are: discrete items tests that involves activities such as multiple-choice questions; text-based tests that aim to give non-verbal responses to listening texts; integrative tests, in which learners use their skills to provide short summaries for long pieces of information; and finally, the communicative tests that as the word says is used for communicative purposes where students use the language in real-world contexts.

## **e. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Materials**

The material employed for the successful development of this research work were: human, technical and material resources. Regarding the human resources, 19 students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education were who participated and performed listening activities based on the task-based approach; the English teacher of the educational institution who contributed monitoring the classes and controlling the discipline of the students; and also, the thesis advisor who checked the intervention plans, gave suggestions and advice for the suitable application of them. Referring to the technical and material resources, computer, speakers, printer and a smartphone were used to facilitate the presentations of the activities and preparation of material such as worksheets, pictures, bingo cards, templates, audio tracks, and scripts according to the topics.

### **Design of the research**

This research work was developed through the Creswell action research model (2012), who states that action research is a systematic and sequenced procedure made by teachers or others who are involved in the educational area. The aim of action research is to gather quantitative and qualitative data to get improvements in teaching and learning. Along these lines, Creswell proposes the following process: First, the researcher identifies a thematic of concern that may be happening in the classroom and poses a question based on the identified educational issue. Second, the researcher collects quantitative and qualitative information and finds out the



answer to the issue. Third, the researcher analyzes the gathered information. And fourth, an action plan is designed and applied to create changes in the situation that has been analyzed.

Taking into account Creswell's theory, this research was developed in the following way: making observations of English classes in the ninth year "A" of Basic Education, some students' specific issues in listening skills were identified. Then, the resources to overcome the students' problems were searched and task-based learning activities appeared as a suitable option to improve students' listening skills. Next, the researcher designed and applied an intervention plan based on the theoretical framework aforementioned. And finally, there was a reflection on the results gathered in the intervention phase.

## **Methods, techniques and instruments**

### **Methods**

In the course of this research work, different methods were applied. *The Scientific method* was useful to study task-based learning activities as a resource to improve students' learning as well as to study listening and the different aspects it involves. Based on the study of the aforementioned aspects, an intervention plan and instruments were designed to be used in the classroom. *The Descriptive method* made possible to describe the phenomenon and its characteristics. It means to detail explicitly what happened in the classroom when students performed listening activities through the application of task-based learning activities. By using this method, it was possible the description of students' strengths and weaknesses in their learning during the application of the intervention plan. *The Statistical method*

served to process, analyze and represent all the information gathered in figures and tables to indicate the percentages and results got in the pre-post questionnaires and pre-post tests applied in the intervention phase. And, *the Analytic/synthetic method* facilitated the researcher to analyze and interpret all the information gathered from observation sheets, field notes, pre-post questionnaires, and pre-posttest to finally reach the corresponding conclusions.

### **Techniques and instruments**

#### **Data collection**

As the present research work was based on action research, the use of quantitative and qualitative data instruments was required for gathering information. The researcher collected the quantitative data from the pre and posttest, and the qualitative data from pre-post questionnaires, observation sheets, and field notes.

#### **Tests**

Pre-test and posttest were given at the beginning and at the end of the intervention plan. The pre-test was applied to evaluate the students' performance on listening tasks, involving the process of receiving information that the speaker says and the construction and representation of the meaning of spoken texts. And, the posttest was used to evaluate students' improvement after the intervention plan. This pre and posttest contained four multiple-choice questions which aim was to test particular listening subskills as listening for gist, listening for specific information, overall understanding and inferring.

### **Questionnaires**

The participants were given a questionnaire of five multiple-choice questions related to their attitudes and feelings toward task-based learning activities to improve listening skills. The pre-questionnaire provided information about the perceptions that students had about task-based learning activities, and, the post-questionnaire given at the end of the intervention plan supplied information about the students' new perceptions, feelings, and attitudes in relation to task-based learning activities.

### **Observation Sheet**

Observation sheets were used to record students' accuracy on the development of task-based learning activities focused on listening skills. This instrument helped to describe how students performed the task-based learning activities according to the listening indicators. Based on students' work, the researcher could identify the level of competence for each indicator by putting a qualitative grade for each one of them. Additionally, the observation sheet served to give some remarks about the performance of the activities in the class.

### **Field Notes**

It was a daily activity that aimed to keep notes about what happened in each session of the intervention plan. A description of the events, activities, and participants' behavior, attitudes, and feelings toward the application of task-based learning activities to improve listening skills were documented.

## **Population**

Nineteen students of the ninth year “A” of Basic Education at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Cabrera Lozano, participated in the development of this action research. There were thirteen girls and six boys who all are about twelve and thirteen years old.

## **f. RESULTS**

The five objectives of this research work were accomplished as they are detailed below:

The first objective of this research work was achieved through the theoretical references about task-based learning activities to improve listening skills, which served to design and apply an intervention plan, tests, and questionnaires, to interpret the results gathered, and to support the recommendations.

The second objective was fulfilled through the pre-test results shown in table 1, which provided information that helped the researcher to diagnose the students' weaknesses in their listening skills in the English language.

The third objective was reached with the design of the intervention plan based on task-based learning activities to improve listening skills. The eight lesson plans for this intervention included three important phases: activation, connection, and affirming.

The fourth objective was attained through the application of the pre and post questionnaire which results showed the suitability of task-based learning activities to improve listening. The results are shown in tables from 2 to 6.

Finally, the fifth objective was brought about through the results obtained in the posttest as they are presented in table 7. These results helped to confirm the effectiveness of applying task-based learning activities in the class.

## Pre-Test Results

**Objective two:** To diagnose the issues that limit the improvement of listening skills in the English language among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year

### a. Table 1

*Pre-test Scores of Ninth Year “A” Students in Listening Skills*

Students' Code	LG	LSI	OU	I	SCORE
	/2.5	/2.5	/2.5	/2.5	/10
UEDMACL9A01	2.50	1.75	0.88	0.63	5.76
UEDMACL9A02	1.25	1.38	0.31	0.63	3.57
UEDMACL9A03	2.50	1.13	1.19	0.63	5.45
UEDMACL9A04	2.50	1.38	1.38	1.25	6.51
UEDMACL9A05	2.50	1.75	0.81	0.63	5.69
UEDMACL9A06	1.25	2.13	0.31	0.00	3.69
UEDMACL9A07	2.50	1.75	1.13	0.63	6.01
UEDMACL9A08	1.25	1.38	1.25	0.00	3.88
UEDMACL9A09	1.25	1.38	0.94	0.63	4.20
UEDMACL9A10	1.25	1.00	0.88	0.00	3.13
UEDMACL9A11	1.25	1.38	2.00	1.25	5.88
UEDMACL9A12	1.25	1.00	1.19	0.00	3.44
UEDMACL9A13	2.50	1.00	0.94	1.25	5.69
UEDMACL9A14	1.25	1.75	1.06	0.63	4.69
UEDMACL9A15	2.50	1.38	0.63	0.63	5.14
UEDMACL9A16	2.50	2.13	1.13	0.63	6.39
UEDMACL9A17	1.25	0.38	1.38	0.63	3.64
UEDMACL9A18	1.25	1.38	1.13	1.25	5.01
UEDMACL9A19	1.25	1.00	0.31	0.63	3.19
MEAN	<b>1.78</b>	<b>1.39</b>	<b>0.99</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>4.79</b>

Note. UEDMACL= Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, 01= Students' code, LG= Listening for gist, LSP=Listening for Specific Information, OU=Overall Understanding, I=Inferring.

## **b. Interpretation and analysis**

The results in Table 1 show that the general mean that students got in listening skills was 4.79 out of 10, which means that they are placed in the failing qualitative score range (see grading scale, p. 160). In listening for gist indicator, the mean that students obtained in the pre-test was 1.78/2.5, being the highest score that demonstrates that they are quite able to listen and identify the gist or the general idea for both recipes and famous characters. However, there are some aspects in which they fail, and these are related to the fact that they are not familiarized with some language forms that require listening. Also, they cannot follow the rhythm of the speed of the audio. On the other hand, the lowest score in this pre-test was in the inferring listening indicator, in which students reached 0.63 out of 2.5. This clearly exposes students' weaknesses at inferring information that is not given in the listening tracks and they cannot even grasp the meaning or draw a consequence from spoken texts.

This evidences the complications students have when listening to a variety of topics and speakers talking. And even though they can pick up a general idea from audios, they do not understand what it is said to make their own interpretations and inferences. As Rost (2016) states, listening is a process of receiving information that focuses on identifying main ideas (listening for gist), grasping specific details (listening for specific information), managing large amounts of listening input (overall understanding), and filling in missing parts of a text or adding reasoning processes to make sense of a text (inferring).

## Comparison of the Pre-Post Questionnaires Results

**Objective four:** To apply the most suitable task-based learning activities in order to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year.

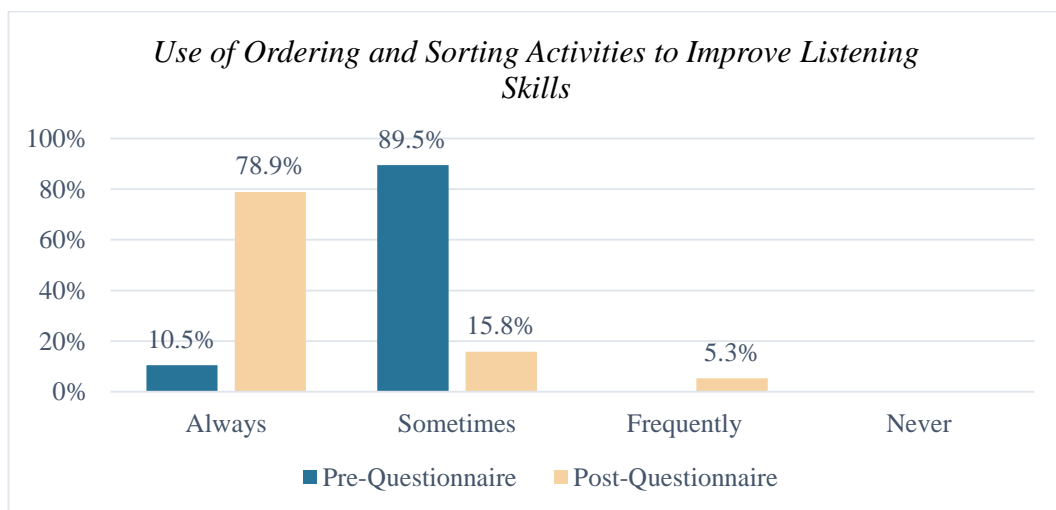
**Question 1:** How often does your teacher use ordering and sorting activities to improve your listening skills?

### a. Table 2

*Use of Ordering and Sorting Activities to Improve Listening Skills*

Options	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
Always	2	10.5	15	78.9
Sometimes	17	89.5	3	15.8
Frequently	0	0.0	1	5.3
Never	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

### b. Figure 1





### **c. Interpretation and Analysis**

The findings in Table 2 show that before the intervention, 89.5% of students expressed that ordering and sorting activities have sometimes been applied in the classroom. This indicates that students were exposed to these kind of activities a few times, which led them to be not very capable to listen and organize the information they hear by sequencing, ranking, categorizing and classifying. Nonetheless, after the application of the intervention plan, the results changed positively, many students (78.9%) stated that ordering and sorting activities were always applied in the classroom to improve their listening skills. This result demonstrates that students had more time to listen to different English language forms, understand and organize them according to the kind of ordering and sorting activity. Besides, the constant use of these activities made students to be more engaged in the listening tasks and take advantage of the cognitive processes to receive, process, understand and look for a correct organization of information.

According to Willis (2007), ordering and sorting is a closed task that involves a variety of important cognitive processes such as sequencing, ranking, categorizing and classifying, in which students listen and look for an organization of information or content of a specific topic.

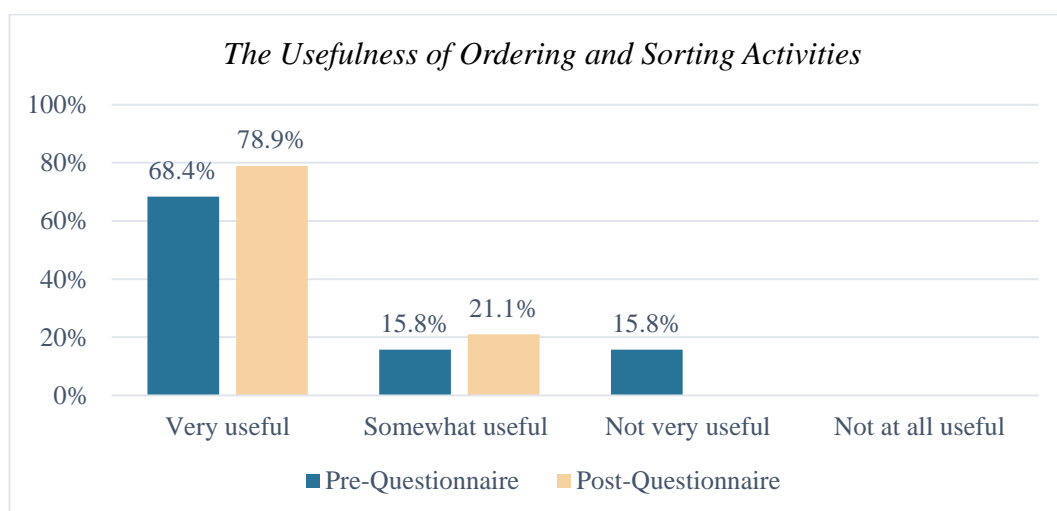
**Question 2:** How useful do you think ordering and sorting activities are to the improvement of your listening skills?

**a. Table 3**

*The Usefulness of Ordering and Sorting Activities*

Options	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
<b>Very useful</b>	13	68.4	15	78.9
<b>Somewhat useful</b>	3	15.8	4	21.1
<b>Not very useful</b>	3	15.8	0	0.0
<b>Not at all useful</b>	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

**b. Figure 2**



**c. Interpretation and Analysis**

The results presented in Table 3 show that before the intervention, more than half of students (68.4%) marked that ordering and sorting activities are very useful for the improvement of listening skills. This means that students had a lot of listening practice, in which they were actively exposed to listen and understand different

topics, dialects and English language speakers. After the intervention plan, students' perception about the usefulness of ordering and sorting activities increased to 78.9%. They considered these activities indispensable resources that helped them to have positive progress in the enrichment of their listening skills. Additionally, students stated that their participation increased day by day and they were more self-assured to use their cognitive skills and criteria to accomplish the listening tasks.

As Willis says (2007), ordering and sorting activities are very useful tasks that set students in a context where they have to use their thought and cognitive effort to accomplish the task. Thus, when organizing information, students can easily identify and place information in the corresponding place.

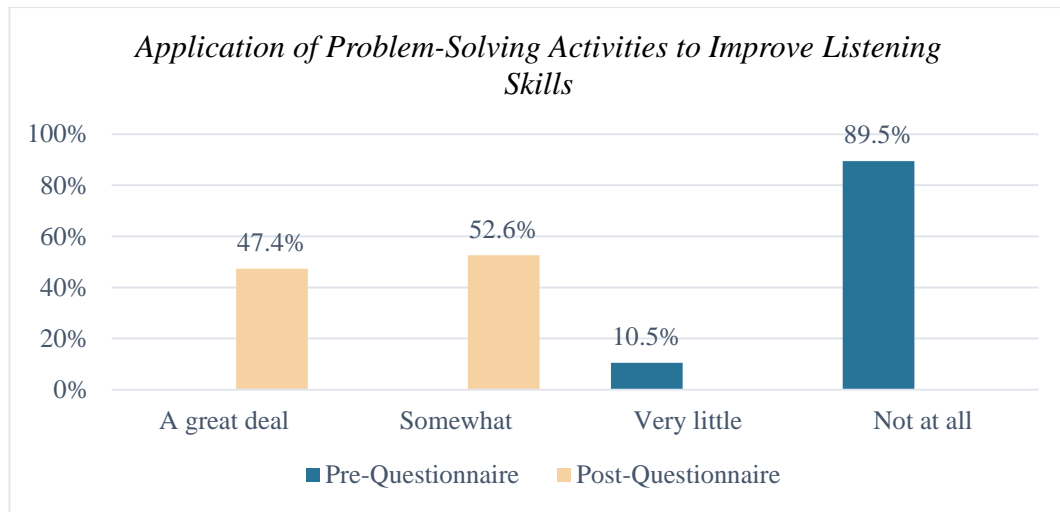
**Question 3:** How regularly does your teacher apply problem-solving activities to improve your listening skills?

**a. Table 4**

*Application of Problem-Solving Activities to Improve Listening Skills*

Options	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
<b>A great deal</b>	0	0.0	9	47.4
<b>Somewhat</b>	0	0.0	10	52.6
<b>Very little</b>	2	10.5	0	0.0
<b>Not at all</b>	17	89.5	0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

**b. Figure 3**



**c. Interpretation and Analysis**

According to the results in Table 4, before the application of the intervention plan, 89.5% of students said that problem-solving activities were not at all, applied in the classroom to improve their listening skills. This implies that students did not have the opportunity to solve real-world or contextualized problems by using their knowledge about the language, which in consequence ended in an almost imperceptible development of their listening skills. On the other hand, after applying the intervention plan, 52.6% of students answered that problem-solving activities were somewhat used in the class to improve their listening skills. This change shows that learners were more skilled to use the language for offering advice and recommendations to solve a problem they listen to. The frequent use of these activities enabled them to deepen their understanding of what they listen to and give suitable responses.

According to Willis (2007), problem-solving activities invite learners to offer advice or recommendations on problems they listen. These problems are

contextualized and can be general, such as global warming, or as specific as a neighbor causing trouble around.

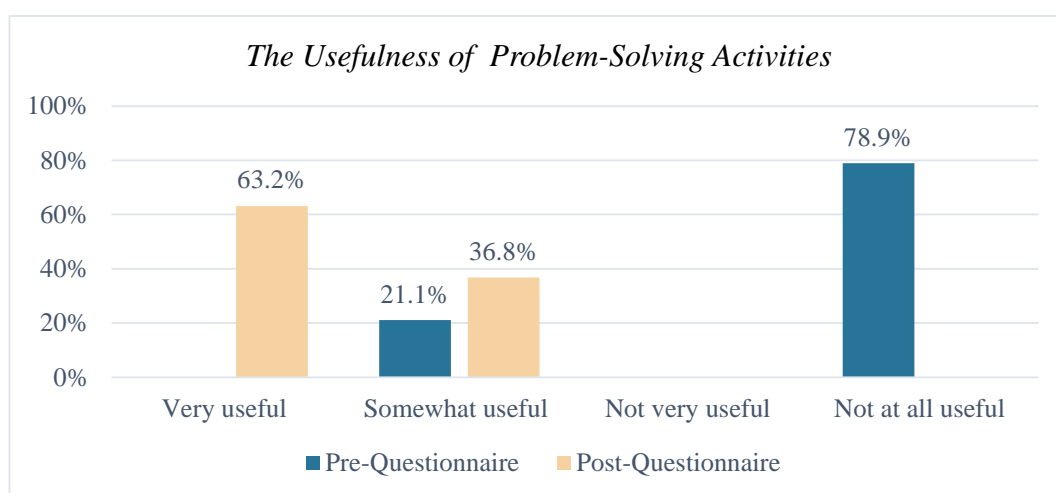
**Question 4:** How useful do you think the application of problem-solving activities in the classroom is for the improvement of your listening skills?

**a. Table 5**

*The Usefulness of Problem-Solving Activities*

Options	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
Very useful	0	0.0	12	63.2
Somewhat useful	4	21.1	7	36.8
Not very useful	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not at all useful	15	78.9	0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

**b. Figure 4**



**c. Interpretation and Analysis**

According to the information presented in table 5, 78.9% of the students found problem-solving activities, not at all useful, for the improvement of listening skills.

This is clearly linked with the fact that they have never been exposed to these activities before. Students did not know how these activities offered them listening practice to become more skilled in developing their listening abilities by using the language they had at their disposal. After the intervention, more than half of students (63.2%) affirmed that problem-solving activities are very useful for the enhancement of their listening skills. They think that problem-solving activities stimulated them to use the language, to have interactive performances and to listen to issues and propose possible solutions to them.

As Jane Willis' mentions about problem-solving activities (2007), students are better enhanced to improve their listening skills by the application of these activities that stimulate them in a wide range to have interactive performances where they listen about an issue and then finalize with proposals and solutions to it.

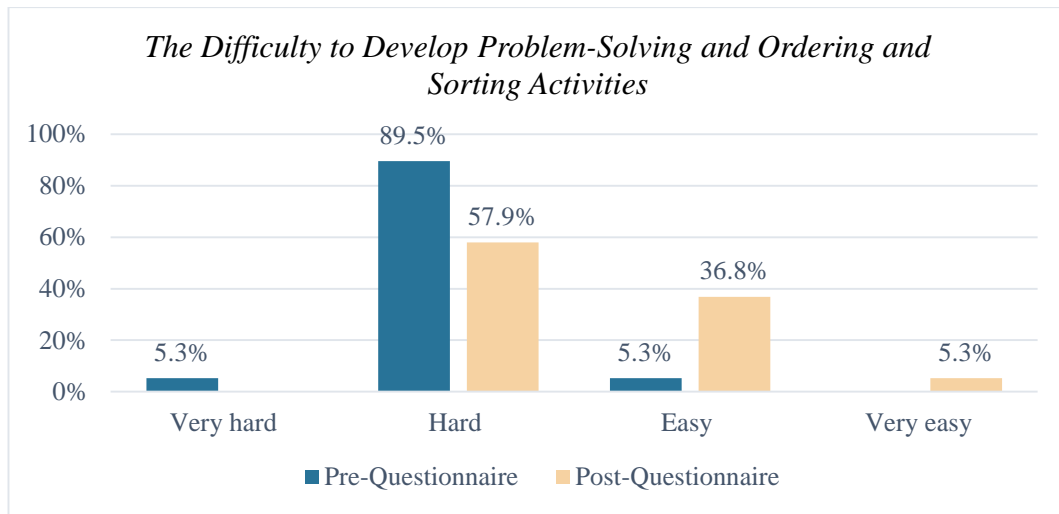
**Question 5:** How difficult do you think the development of problem-solving and ordering and sorting activities is to improve your listening skills?

**a. Table 6**

*Difficulty to Develop Problem-Solving and Ordering and Sorting Activities*

Options	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
<b>Very hard</b>	1	5.3	0	0.0
<b>Hard</b>	17	89.5	11	57.9
<b>Easy</b>	1	5.3	7	36.8
<b>Very easy</b>	0	0.0	1	5.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

**b. Figure 5**



**c. Interpretation and Analysis**

The results in Table 6 demonstrate that 89.5% of students thought that problem-solving and ordering and sorting activities are hard to develop. This data proves that students struggled in performing these activities and in enhancing their listening skills. They thought these activities are a big challenge that involves complex processes, and steps that impede to achieve effectively the outcome of the task. After the intervention, 57.9% of students continued expressing that problem-solving and ordering and sorting are hard activities to be done in class. However, 36.8% of them thought that they are easy to develop. This evidences the progress that participants had during the intervention phase. They gained strength in their listening skills due to the fact that they showed more confidence in executing a listening task and understanding the information they heard.

As Willis (2007) states, ordering and sorting is a closed task that involves activities designed for specific goals, which means that the focus on the language is strong and students' practice is well-monitored. But problem-solving is an open

task that is more freely structured and with less specific goals and allow students to use the language in the way they know.

### Post-Test Results

**Objective five:** To validate the results obtained after the application of task-based learning activities to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year.

#### a. Table 7

*Post-Test Scores of Ninth Year “A” Students in Listening Skills*

Students' Code	LG	LSI	OU	I	SCORE
	/2.5	/2.5	/2.5	/2.5	/10
UEDMACL9A01	2.50	2.13	2.50	1.25	8.38
UEDMACL9A02	2.50	1.75	0.63	1.25	6.13
UEDMACL9A03	2.50	2.13	2.19	1.25	8.07
UEDMACL9A04	2.50	2.13	2.19	1.88	8.70
UEDMACL9A05	2.50	2.13	2.19	1.25	8.07
UEDMACL9A06	1.25	1.75	1.88	1.88	6.76
UEDMACL9A07	2.50	2.50	2.50	1.25	8.75
UEDMACL9A08	2.50	1.38	2.50	1.25	7.63
UEDMACL9A09	2.50	2.50	2.19	1.88	9.07
UEDMACL9A10	2.50	2.50	1.88	1.88	8.76
UEDMACL9A11	2.50	2.50	2.50	1.25	8.75
UEDMACL9A12	2.50	2.13	0.88	0.00	5.51
UEDMACL9A13	2.50	2.50	1.38	1.25	7.63
UEDMACL9A14	2.50	2.50	1.38	1.25	7.63
UEDMACL9A15	2.50	1.75	1.75	0.63	6.63
UEDMACL9A16	2.50	2.50	2.50	1.25	8.75
UEDMACL9A17	2.50	2.50	2.19	0.63	7.82
UEDMACL9A18	2.50	2.50	2.00	1.25	8.25
UEDMACL9A19	2.50	1.38	1.44	1.88	7.20
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>2.43</b>	<b>2.17</b>	<b>1.93</b>	<b>1.28</b>	<b>7.82</b>

Note. UEDMACL= Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, 01= Students' code, LG= Listening for gist, LSP=Listening for Specific Information, OU=Overall Understanding, I=Inferring.



## **b. Interpretation and Analysis**

The findings in Table 7, show that students obtained 7.82 out of 10 as a general mean score in listening skill aspects, which indicates that students are placed in the average qualitative score range (see grading scale, p 160). The highest mean score reached by students was 2.43/2.5 in listening for gist, which reflects that students are capable to identify the general idea from spoken texts about food, famous characters, and other topics. They are familiarized with the language forms required for understanding listening material and follow the speed of the audios to recognize key information. On the other hand, the lowest mean score was 1.28 out of 2.5 in the inferring listening indicator, which reveals that when students listen, they are not completely competent to guess and determine the message and its meaning intended by the speakers' attitude and intentions.

With this evidence, it was determined that students have progressed in their abilities to listen satisfactorily. They easily take the main, specific, and meaningful information from audios, but hardly infer from listening texts. As Willis (2007) asserts, task-based learning activities are suitable resources to prime students by introducing, in a meaningful context and the language they need to process the information from listening tracks. By using a task to contextualize a spoken text, students get expectations that involve a real purpose and context for listening. This way, students are adept to receive information with a well-structured orientation that involves not only to pick words or phrases but to construct and represent meaning, negotiate it and give a response (Rost, 2016).

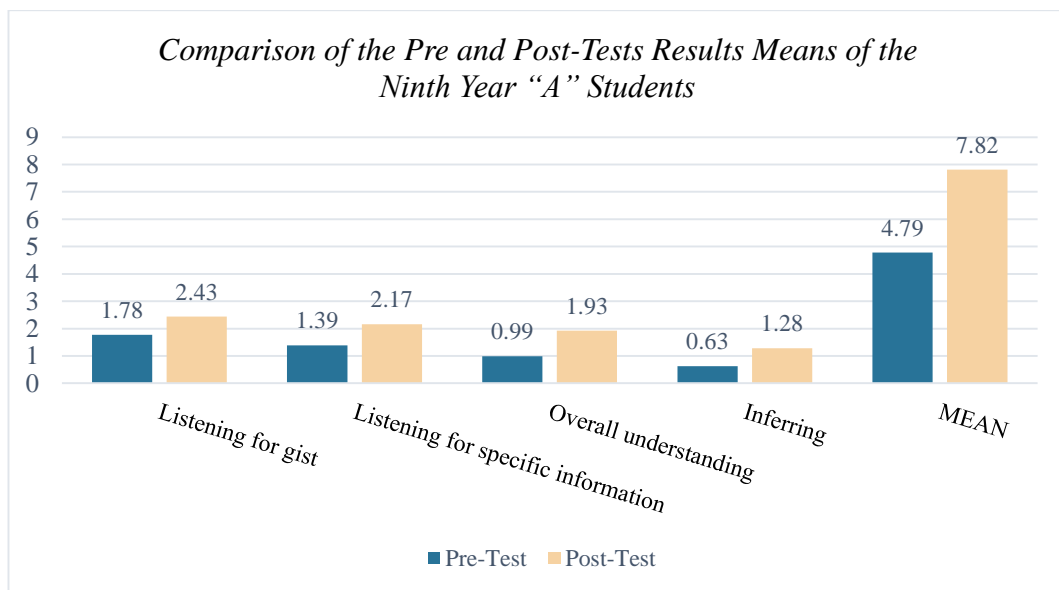
## Comparing Pre and Post-Test Means

### a. Table 8

*Comparison of the Pre and Post-Tests Results Means of the Ninth Year “A” Students*

Aspects	Pre-Test	Post-Test
<b>Listening for gist</b>	1.78	2.43
<b>Listening for specific information</b>	1.39	2.17
<b>Overall understanding</b>	0.99	1.93
<b>Inferring</b>	0.63	1.28
<b>MEAN</b>	4.79	7.82

### b. Figure 6



### c. Interpretation and Analysis

The data presented in Table 8 illustrates the hardships that students encountered in listening tasks previous to the application of the intervention plan and the advancement they had at the end of it. Formerly, students reached 4.79 out of 10 as a general mean. The mean for each of the listening aspects were 1.78/2.5 for

listening for gist, 1.39/2.5 for listening for specific information, 0.99/2.5 for overall understanding, and, 0.63/2.5 for inferring. Notwithstanding, the evident students' weaknesses in listening skills, changed positively after the intervention, in which their ability to listen and comprehend information showed progress. This is supported by the general mean of 7.82/10 that students scored in the listening aspects. The evidence makes clear that the performance of task-based learning activities was suitable and indispensable to help students to overcome their problems in listening skills.

## **g. DISCUSSION**

Task-based learning activities applied in class to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education were suitable and arouse students to use the language with communicative purposes involving the ability to listen and understand the information they receive. These activities helped students to reach a very good level in their listening skills, which enabled them to understand the connections, relations, and meaning of the messages provided by the speaker. The enhancement of listening skills through task-based learning activities is clearly exposed in the data gathered from the pre and post-test. The results demonstrate the progress students had after applying the intervention plan. In the pre-test, the mean score was 4.79/10 whilst on the other side, the post-test mean score gotten was 7.82/10. The difference between the mean scores is 3.03 points, which proves that there was an advance in the students' ability to listen and understand information. The substantial basis taken from the Willis model (1996) specifies that task-based learning involves the use of communicative and meaningful activities. Communication is more important than simply producing correct language forms. Thus, a task-based learning activity concerns an authentic language use that fosters learners to improve their communicative skills.

The four listening indicators proposed for the development of this study were: listening for gist, listening for specific information, overall understanding and inferring. With the application of the pre-test, students' limitations in their listening skills were put on evidence. Regarding the listening for gist indicator, students had

complications at identifying the main message and sound patterns from listening material about food and famous characters. In listening for specific information, it was hard for them to grasp or pick up specific pieces of information to construct meaning, and understand certain words or phrases from spoken texts. In overall understanding aspect, students struggled at comprehending all the components of a spoken text and obtaining the context and meaning of it. And finally, in inferring listening, the main obstacle students faced was to guess and interpret the meaning of the message by using contextual relevant information from the listening material. Nonetheless, subsequent to the intervention plan, students' problems aforementioned were reduced as it is shown in the post-test results. The participants' listening skills were improved in the aspects of identifying general ideas and specific details, comprehending the large amounts of information, and making logical reasoning to predict future events. After all, these improvements in English listening skill spotlight task-based learning activities as suitable resources to be used in the classroom.

At the beginning of the intervention, it was observed that the participants' attitude towards the implementation of task-based learning activities was quietly retracted. They were afraid of giving responses to what they listened because of the fear of saying wrong answers. Then, during the intervention, students' attitude changed as time went by since students' fears of participating were disappearing and their confidence grew up considerably. Students got interested in performing the task-based learning activities with the integration of the listening skill. They could make it through and subsequently, they started to show progress in their

ability to listen and understand the information provided in audio tracks. After the intervention, the participants were able to accomplish the activities with fewer complications as they had in the beginning. Students were strongly motivated to work cooperatively in spontaneous conditions where they felt free to use their background knowledge to work. Moreover, they were more attentive, interactive and secure to give a response about a specific topic or situation presented in class.

In the same way, strengths and limitations were found in the classroom. Students' strengths were to be interactive and secure when performing task-based learning activities. They were disciplined and compromised to work in the lessons imparted by the teacher. Regarding the teacher's strengths, it was found that he was a guide and supporter that assisted students in the development of their activities. He was a provider of suitable material to work properly in the tasks. Also, the teacher created an appropriate environment of work where everyone participated. The material was an important resource that guided students towards the completion of the listening activities in which they could fill and provide answers according to what they were able to hear. However, there were some negative aspects that must be mentioned. First, the classroom was not equipped with the necessary materials for a better students' learning. Second, environmental obstructions such as distracting noise in the background, unclear voices or sounds, and lack of visual support prejudiced the improvements of listening skills. Third, students' attitude towards some activities were not positive as they felt unmotivated to keep going because of the frustration of not understanding what it was said in the audios. And fourth, the length of time was really short to accomplish the activities planned in the lessons.

Task-based learning activities contributed for improving listening skills among students of ninth year “A”. These activities promoted students’ learning through the development of a series of tasks. Besides, these tasks helped students to gain strength to understand information from the listening activities. These activities increased the level of proficiency in mastering listening skills. They encouraged students to be more self-confident to perform an activity. Task-based learning activities were a useful tool that stimulated learners to process the information they receive easily and have a different way to learn. Finally, these activities provided learners with practice in using the language in tasks based on real-world contexts.

## **h. CONCLUSIONS**

The issues that led Students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education to have a low performance in the development of their listening abilities, were the complications they had locating general ideas, specific pieces of information, understanding context and meaning, and inferring the message intended by the speaker’s attitude and intentions. Moreover, the lack of practice of listening exercises through the employment of methods as task-based learning activities made them unfamiliar with the language, and their understanding of what they heard was very limited.

With the implementation of task-based learning activities, students overcame satisfactorily their listening weaknesses by understanding the gist of different types of listening topics, grasping specific details, and guessing the context and meaning of the message that the speaker tries to communicate. Students learned to get involved in listening activities and their confidence and participation rose noticeably. Their fears of using the language to accomplish the outcomes of the tasks disappeared.

Task-based learning activities were effective for the improvement of students listening skills. Students interacted spontaneously and felt comfortable using the language. Additionally, these activities contributed to build students’ confidence and become more attentive, curious and motivated to work in different tasks.



## **i. RECOMMENDATIONS**

To determine students' level in listening skills and thus identify positive aspects as well as things to be improved, it is important that teachers employ different types of listening assessments such as discrete item tests, task-based tests, integrative tests, and communicative tests. All of these assessment forms aim to get relevant information about learners' performance. Then, the teacher should design their lesson plans that address the limitations of learners in their listening skills. Also, when the weaknesses are already detected, the educator should search for different methods, strategies or techniques that can help to overcome those negative aspects.

Task-based learning activities do provide support to students to enhance their listening abilities, and educators should include them as part of their lessons. These activities set students in a context where the priority is the meaning before the form. The frequent use of these activities would help learners to comprehend, manipulate, produce, and interact in the target language through the use of background knowledge. Moreover, task-based learning activities motivate students to work cooperatively, provide opportunities to engage in meaning-focused interaction, increase their confidence to participate in class by giving opinions and ideas about what they listen.

Teachers should employ task-based learning activities because of the remarkable benefits these activities provide students in order to better their performance in listening tasks. Task-based learning activities provide learners with natural exposure (input), chances to use language to express what they want to mean

(output), to focus on improving their own language and to analyze and practice forms. Additionally, learners can be actively engaged throughout the task cycle, and have the opportunity to think for themselves and express themselves in the security of their group. They become more independent and feel empowered, gaining satisfaction from successfully achieving things using English.

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## k. ANNEXES



### **UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**

**FACULTAD DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

#### **THEME**

**TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS OF NINTH YEAR “A” OF BASIC EDUCATION, AFTERNOON SESSION AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA DR. MANUEL AGUSTÍN CABRERA LOZANO IN THE CITY OF LOJA DURING THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR.**

Thesis Project as a previous requirement to obtain the Bachelor’s Degree in Science of Education, English Language Major

#### **AUTHOR**

**JHONY ARMANDO PÉREZ VIÑANZACA**

**LOJA – ECUADOR  
2019**

**a. THEME**

TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS OF NINTH YEAR “A” OF BASIC EDUCATION, AFTERNOON SESSION AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA DR. MANUEL AGUSTÍN CABRERA LOZANO IN THE CITY OF LOJA DURING THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR.

## **b. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **Background**

The present research work will be carried out at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, during the 2018 – 2019 school year. Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano was created by the Honorable Consejo Universitario of the Universidad Nacional de Loja on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 1971. Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, is an educational institution that offers the Initial 2, Basic Elementary, Middle, Upper and High School levels of education. It is an institution focused on providing good quality of education in scientific and technological fields with a strong work to foment values among students and teachers.

The ministry of education through Ministerial agreement N° 002 – 20 – 07 – 11, on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011, created the Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, annexed to the Universidad Nacional de Loja.

The high school is located on John F. Kennedy and Jose. J. Palacios streets in the city of Loja. The buildings of the 27 de Febrero high school are the facilities of this institution, in which the academic functions are performed in the afternoon session. There are about 41 teachers for the different subjects, and, 878 students that assist to receive classes in this institution. This prestigious educational institution is led by the Mg.sc. Angel Hurtado Luzuriaga, principal of the Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano.

The vision of Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano is to be an integral, social, and humanistic educational institution, where there is a



development of democracy and respect to cultural identity, with a solid academic formation.

The mission is to promote the development of the abilities and potential of the students to have an active performance in society. For Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, it is important to develop a social and humanistic scientific formation of quality and warmth that help students to acquire knowledge and understanding about the different labor fields into the society.

### **Current situation of the research problem**

English language is becoming more and more widely used in areas of knowledge and human development. It can be said that it is the language of the modern world. But, why do people consider English to be an important language? Do people around the world take advantage of it? And how does it influence the academic field? These are just a few of many questions that people have when talking about English. In the current days, English is in the era of globalization, a great international language also known as the *lingua franca* which has had repercussions on all fields and professions, having begun to acquire importance during the colonial era and now being the language which is most spoken as a second language (V.M. Smokotin, 2013). For instance, when you travel, you see English signs and advertisements in many places. Whenever an individual enters a hotel or restaurant in a foreign city, you will hear English, and there will be an English menu. The rapid spread of English has created a big impact on people around the world. The influence of music, films, TV programs, series, books, and web pages in English has helped to increase its use and its acceptance by different cultures.

Additionally, according to Crystal (2003, p.4), there is no doubt that English dominates as a global language because there are strong links between language dominance and economic, technological, and cultural power. And the key for this success as a global language is that it has a strong power-base that has helped it to make progress as an international medium of communication.

Based on the preceding statement, English is a language that is taught as a subject in many countries around the world. One of those countries is Ecuador, in which there is a multilingual context for language teaching and learning. There is a diversity of ethnicities that have their own identity, own language, own costumes, traditions, etc. Thus, when students are required to learn English as a second language, they struggle because they do not know how to get immersed in a new culture. Students find complications in all the four English skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Listening is maybe the most difficult skill to be developed among students. The unclear tasks and the lack of practice have led them to forget this skill or consider this as irrelevant in comparison with the others.

It has been shown that secondary students in Ecuador do not make significant progress in the acquisition of English as other secondary students in the different Latin American school systems (Education First [EF], 2018). In a global ranking of 88 countries and regions, Ecuador is ranked 65th with the low - English language acquisition at a high-tech level. In regard to Latin America, English skills in Ecuador are 48, 52 and are placed in the last five positions of countries with scores below the regional average. The regional average in Latin America is around 50, 33.

The Ecuadorian English Curriculum is designed for students in Educación General Básica (2nd to 10th) and Bachillerato General Unificado (1st to 3rd), whose mother tongue is not English. Since the Ecuadorian population consists of groups from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, this curriculum recognizes that not all Ecuadorian students speak L1 Spanish and that there are varying degrees of bilingualism in different communities. This curriculum presents a rationale and framework for learning English in line with the needs of a linguistically and culturally diverse population while recognizing authentic, culturally relevant production and practices in order to facilitate the inclusion of students in education regardless of their L1. The curriculum also supports the general educational objectives of justice, innovation, and solidarity through the development of thought, social and creative skills in language learning. These skills must be successfully engaged by Ecuadorian students in the 21st century in local and international communities (Ministerio de Educación, 2016).

It is reported that there is no significant improvement in English skills in students in primary, secondary and university education, and from year to year there is little noticeable improvement (Education First [EF], 2018). Taking into account the survey conducted in 26 countries worldwide among 15-year-old students in listening and reading skills, Ecuador has an approximate score of 38 out of 100 in listening and a score of 36 out of 100 in reading. These results are equivalent to an A2 level for both skills. It is noticeable that the listening skills of students are growing rapidly over the reading skills of students.

As regards listening skills, the Ecuadorian curriculum for English as a foreign language for Educación General Básica and Bachillerato (2016) has developed some goals that require learners to understand expressions, words and sentences related to the personal and educational background of the learner (e.g. personal information, home, daily activities, curriculum subjects, equipment for the classroom, commands for the classroom, etc.), (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2014). In addition, students upon their graduation from third of Bachillerato are expected to reach at least level B1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Therefore, the ninth- grade students are expected to reach the A.1.2 level of the CEFR.

With respect to the situation in the province and city of Loja, English as a foreign language is crucial and mandatory. Students have had problems learning English in the past, since most of the lessons focused on grammar development rather than listening, speaking, reading and writing (the four skills). In addition, the use of traditional English teaching methods and lack of motivation have been barriers to English learning. The English teaching and learning in Ecuador is focused on a CLIL framework, which is expressed as the 4Cs: communication, culture, cognition, and content. With this model, the process of learning integrates contents with cultural and cognitive aspects of learning a foreign language (English). In the same way, this program includes the communicative language approach that aims to use the four communicative skills instead of learning content or knowledge in a traditional way.

In Ecuador, for both school levels, Educación General Básica (EGB) and Bachillerato General Unificado (BGU), the English Language Teaching has been organized into five threads: Communication and Cultural Awareness; Oral Communication which involves Listening and Speaking; Reading; Writing; and Language through the Arts (Ministerio de Educación, 2016).

In Ecuador, education in public schools focuses on the admission of all students without discrimination. Public schools are supported by the government, books are delivered to the various public schools taking into account grade students, and school breakfast and uniforms are also facilitated, especially for those with low financial resources. On the other hand, registration is requested in private schools and a selective admission process is used. Students are placed according to their level of English in these schools. Due to limited funds and lack of mandates, teachers in private schools find fewer students with special needs than in public schools.

The class size is another differential factor. In public schools, students are distributed in big groups even if there is not enough space in the classroom. The learning process may be affected because of overcrowded groups. In private schools, these complications do not happen since students are divided into small groups.

Under those circumstances, the current educational system in the Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Cabrera Lozano is seen as a traditional one due to the fact that English teaching is based on various parameters established by the Ministry of Education. The references for teaching are taken from the designed EFL curriculum

and the different CLIL models, as well as in the Communicative Approach. However, the teaching-learning process is focused on grammar structures and does not pay attention to the performance of listening tasks or other activities that can promote the development of communicative skills among students.

Based on the issues of public educational institutions, it has been thought convenient to develop a research work about the listening difficulties students of ninth-year “A” of Basic Education of Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano.

Unfortunately, ninth-year students currently do not demonstrate good comprehension of simple spoken texts and communicating while using English as a foreign language turns out to be complicated. The researcher realized through a non-participant observation that students have problems at listening for gist (general idea), listening for specific information, overall understanding and inferring. This is due to the lack of practice of listening tasks. Students do not show competence at understanding the main points of clear, standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in informal situations at school, work, leisure, etc.; and the comprehension of the main point of many radio or television programs on topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is clear.

In response to this problem, this research project proposes to investigate several options for making the ninth-year students aware of the importance of practicing listening based on different contexts and settings which will help them to understand the general idea, specific information, words related to vocabulary and grammar, an overall understanding of a script and the ability to make inferences

based on clues provided by a previous listening. The researcher will consider some effective teaching activities such as task-based learning activities that will improve student's listening skills. According to Lee (2000), a task is an activity developed in the classroom that involves interaction among students, in which the main focus is the meaning and how this is exchanged.

It is believed that for a good performance of a task in language learning, students are required to comprehend and manage the information they receive when they work on the target language (Lee, 2000, p. 32). Therefore, in the development of listening skills, task-based learning activities provide more understanding of the content that you are teaching. Also, task-based activities help students to get involved in real situations where they associate their background knowledge to solve the different tasks and at the end reach a conclusion. Thus, students are more likely to learn in a real-world context. Additionally, authentic materials are also important sources for the development of this process, in which students perform innovative activities. These materials are based on real things that may be found in contexts that students are involved in. Through this focus, the tasks become more interesting and catch the attention of students in a way that makes them want to participate in any activity without any imposition by the teacher.

### **Research problem**

Considering the issues mentioned above, it is crucial to research the following problem:

HOW DOES THE TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS OF NINTH YEAR "A" OF BASIC

EDUCATION AFTERNOON SESSION AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA DR. MANUEL AGUSTÍN CABRERA LOZANO IN THE CITY OF LOJA DURING THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR?

### **Delimitation of the research problem**

#### **Timing**

The research will be developed during the academic year 2018 – 2019.

#### **Location**

The research project will be applied at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Cabrera Lozano, which is a public high school located in the city of Loja on Pablo Palacios Street.

#### **Participants**

The participants are the students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education of the Unidad Educativa “Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano” and the teacher candidate.

#### **Subproblems**

- What theoretical and methodological references about task-based learning activities are adequate to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year?
- What are the issues that limit the improvement of listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year?



- What are the phases of the intervention plan that help to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year?
- Which task-based learning activities are applied to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year?
- How effective is the application of task-based learning activities in improving listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year?

### **c. JUSTIFICATION**

The purpose of this research work is to improve listening skills through task-based learning activities among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year. Based on observations and personal experiences, it has been thought convenient to work on the improvement of listening skills because students of basic education are not developing communication skills in the English language. It is said that in language learning, there is a process of input and output, which means that listening skills cover a large part of the input process. Thus, output and input depend on each other. That assumption determines that listening skills are crucial in the output process, and in this way, listening becomes a significant agent of oral production by establishing a background for communication (Yavuz & Celik, 2017).

The English language is included in the curriculum as an additional language to learn at many levels: a preprimary, primary, secondary school and higher education (Daniel & Burgin, 2017, p. 109). In secondary school, there is a demand to accomplish all the activities established in the macro curriculum planning. This creates complications for English teachers since they have to go quickly through with the activities in the classroom. For this reason, there is not enough emphasis on listening activities and students do not develop communicative skills. Listening is considered a very complex skill and there is interdependence with the other skills. Also, it is important to clarify that listening is not the same as hearing because it involves that students pay attention to the message that is said by the speaker and

not just to simple sounds or other features of spoken texts (Rixon, 1986). This causes teachers to place their attention on other skills such as grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing and speaking. When students are required to perform a listening activity, they struggle from the first second the audio is played. As they do not understand the words and phrases that are said, they prefer to put their attention on other things but not on the main task. This lack of concentration and attention leads teachers to avoid doing these kinds of tasks. Moreover, it has been determined that students show a deficiency in listening because there is a lack of prior knowledge and proficiency. According to (Anderson & Lynch, 1988), it is necessary to have previous background knowledge about the socio-cultural, factual, or the contextual knowledge of the target language. However, students are not immersed in this background of non-linguistic clues which are very important to help students to understand the target language and its support as a mean to express aspects about their own culture. Another important factor for the poor performance of listening tasks among the class is the structure of the tasks and their coherence. For example, the content of a good listening task must be organized in a chronological and logical way. In the case that a task does not follow an order, students struggle to comprehend what the topic is about, and any disruption creates difficulties with understanding the information (Anderson & Lynch, 1988).

For the purpose of improving listening skills among students, it has been proposed the application of the task-based approach, with a framework divided into sections that aim learners to use the language for communicative means. According to (Nunan, 1999, p. 25), a task can be defined as “A piece of classroom work that

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". These activities are seen as strong authentic resources that support students by enabling them to understand the connections and relations between a set of information, terms, and facts with a real context in daily life. In the framework of TBLL, Nunan (2004) places emphasis on three different stages in the task process. These steps are: 1) pre-task stage (the introduction to the topic and to the task); 2) during task stage (the completion of the task depending on the type of activity); and 3) language focus stage (reviewing the task and highlighting relevant parts for the students to analyze). In language teaching, there has been a change, in which the communicative competence has become as important as linguistic competence. In this way, listening is an active skill that can be developed through task-based learning activities that focus on communicative purposes of language and the final outcome of the tasks is associated with everyday life contexts (Chastain, 1988).

Task-based learning activities provide students the opportunity to use the language. Students are strongly motivated to work cooperatively. They are able to try out different communication activities involving listening tasks. Also, task-based learning creates conditions that spontaneously enhance language learning and prepare learners to use language in a real-world context (Andon, 2010). By applying task-based activities, students are set in a context where they work first on meaning and then on form. For instance, in listening tasks, students pay attention to the

message and its meaning in order to give a response after. Also, there is a student-centred approach that allows learners to have lots of interpersonal communication and lots of tasks that encourage them to participate.

Task-based activities involve an outcome at the end of the task, therefore, students have a purpose that motivates them to accomplish the task. During the task process, students are not forced or obliged to develop the task in a specific way. This is an organic and experimental process that can be flexible. Thus, students are free to do the task by using their background knowledge about the topic and the new information that they receive when they perform the task (Lackman, K, n.d., p. 13).

On the other hand, the application of this project will help the teacher candidate to gain experience with the management of a class by using the correct methodological resources. Moreover, it will benefit the candidate's future development as a professional educator by increasing his ability to teach English language through the use of task-based listening activities. Though the execution of actions such as teaching, communicating, socializing experiences, reflecting on everyday life, evaluating cognitive processes and relating to the educational community, the teacher candidate will get prepared to play an important role in society. Finally, this investigation is a previous requirement of the Universidad Nacional de Loja to obtain the Bachelor's Degree in Sciences of Education, English Language Major.

## **d. OBJECTIVES**

### **General**

- To improve listening skills through task-based learning activities among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year.

### **Specific**

- To research the theoretical and methodological references about task-based learning activities and their application to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year
- To diagnose the issues that limit the improvement of listening skills in the English language among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year
- To design an intervention plan based on task-based learning activities in order to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year
- To apply the most suitable task-based learning activities in order to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education,

afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year

- To validate the results obtained after the application of task-based learning activities to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year

## **e. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

#### **Task-based learning**

Task-based learning is an approach that involves the use of communicative and meaningful tasks during language learning. In this approach, the process of using language in communication is more important than simply producing correct language forms. Because of this, task-based learning is considered as a communicative approach that concerns real and meaningful communication as the main goal of language learning. When a task is developed in the classroom, there is authentic language use that fosters a learning environment in which learners have their own say and improve their communicative skills with their own sense of the defined goals in task-based learning approach (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Willis, 1996).

Task-based learning approach aims students to learn by using the language in real-world contexts. Apart from the development of communicative competence, emphasis to form is necessary for language learning. In spite of the strong attention on meaning, a focus on form has coextending importance in the language learning process (Bygate, Skehan, & Swain, 2001). Additionally, Richards and Rodgers (2001) evoke that task-based approach implies an input and output process in which learners negotiate meaning in transactionally focused conversation.

Communication in the Task-based learning approach gives the same relevance to the process of comprehensible input and production of comprehensible output. In task-based learning, students have the chance to arrange meaning in order to



identify and solve a problem that occurs in their communication (Ellis, 2003). When learner negotiate meaning, they make adjustments, rephrase and practice with the language. As negotiating meaning plays an important role in communicating in real life, conversations have become an important feature in which learner is able to request for clarification, confirmation and comprehension checks, and self-repetitions make input comprehensible. In such a way, interactions to negotiate meaning in a conversation are surely a good way to have improvements in the comprehensible input and consequently, the language acquisition can be promoted (Seedhouse, 1999).

### **Defining a task**

What is it exactly a task? How does it work? And how it differs from other terms like activity, exercise, drill, etc. It is important to mention that until the current days, there has not been a total agreement on what a task represents, what it involves and which are its main components. All of those aspects create some complications at the moment to define this term (Crookes, 1986). However, it is very important to answer these questions for two main reasons. The first one is because there are much inconsistency and confusion about what a task is at present. Secondly, a suitable definition is necessary and essential to the discussion of how the use of tasks should be able to promote learning among students. Having stated these points, there are three definitions of task stated below that will help to clarify the doubts about this term and most importantly, it will provide a clear understanding that is needed for future activities related to this aspect.

In this way, according to Crookes (1986), a task is an activity or workpiece that has a specified objective designed for an educational course or work. Added to this, Willis (1990), stated that a task focuses on the language, but its priority is the result of the activity rather than the language used to achieve that result. A task collects all those aspects of an activity designed and planned to involve students in the use of the language in a communicative and reflective way in order to achieve the result, which is essential in the learning process and a specific feature of the L2 (Ellis, 1994).

These concepts define what is the task in the pedagogical context, which is the main purpose of this theoretical framework. Due to this context and the definitions provided, a task can be defined in a few words as a language learning activity focused on a specific outcome and its completion. Tasks are meaningful and therefore the defining features mentioned above are very important conditions that a class activity must cover to be considered as a task. Besides that, a task uses language as the main media for communication, which means that in the learning context, students and teacher know whether or not the communication is taking place or a change in the task is needed. Similarly, a task contains a specified start and endpoint to be regarded as a complete and independent activity. In addition, a task typically has a set of procedures that the instructor usually predetermines for the students to follow.

As a task is an activity that emphasizes on communication, Nunan (1989) expresses that a communicative task is a piece of classroom work, which engage learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target

language while their attention is mainly focused on meaning rather than form. Because of this, tasks are seen as activities where the target language is used by the learners for a communicative purpose in order to achieve a specified outcome (Willis, 1996)

Once the term *task* has been already defined, it is important to point out that there are two forms of the task-based approach, a strong, and a weak form. A strong form details tasks as the basic unit of teaching that drives the acquisition process. On the other hand, the weak form shows tasks as a vital part of language instruction and is structured in a more complex pedagogical context (Skehan, 1996).

### **Background of Task-based approach in language learning**

The task-based approach is the result of what is known as the “Bangalore Project” that started in 1979 and completed in 1984. The word *task* is often used here to refer to the special type of classroom activities. Such activities are distinguished among other features, the emphasis placed on the meaning and irrelevance of the process of doing things (how) vs. the prevailing role of content (cognition) in the teaching practice of the decade. In essence, the aim of the project was to search for new ways of teaching that emerged from a strongly felt pedagogical intuition, which generally arose from experience, but became concrete in India during the professional debate. The points made at the time stated that the development of second language skills does not require the systematization of language inputs or the maximization of planned practice, but rather the creation of conditions in which learners strive to communicate (Prabliu, 1987).

The emphasis lay on competence and communication: grammatical competence and communication. Communicative competence was to develop 'in the course of meaning-focused activity' where teachers were required to create the conditions for the learners to engage in meaningful situations. Any prior regulation of what had to be learned according to a predefined formal or grammatical syllabus was to be excluded. Teachers and learners emphasize the meaning and authenticity of communication through the use of language. However, the transmission of meaning cannot be separated from the formal 'vehicle' through which it is transmitted. The role of each of these elements in communication and their mutual relationships is at the root of an unresolved problem. Most methods are strongly based on linguistic theories, learning theories or theoretical assumptions about the nature of linguistic communication. Therefore, when there is a study of the communicative approach, it is mandatory to make strong links with personalities such as Vygotsky (1962; 1978), Austin (1962) or Halliday (1973; 1978), or Krashen (1983), among others. Each one of them was significant precursors of the development of the communicative approach into the educational field (Sanchez, 2004, p. 41)

From the perspective of Vygotsky (as cited in Sanchez, 2004), language can be regarded as a social event, a shared social activity through which people develop their personality in a community. This means that language is not based on 'isolated' learning but goes beyond where a social basis is needed and linguistic ability to communicate with the outside world is built into our minds. Vygotsky, for instance, believes that thought takes root when the interaction becomes a monologue. When children communicate with themselves in this way, they use words or phrases that

others may find difficult or impossible to understand. While this *inner speech* consolidates and strengthens linguistic thinking, communicative interaction allows the social dimension of *speakers* as human beings to be consolidated. It can be concluded from Vygotskian assumptions that interaction is part of the very nature of language since language is socially based. Content is an important part of the process, but still more important is interaction.

Moreover, according to Krashen (1985), in the process of language acquisition, the students' role is central and decisive. As opposed to learning, the acquisition is the main goal in language learning, but it only happens if there is a strong connection between the individual, the language to be used and set of values and idiosyncrasy and if a linguistic system is built. However, the *acquisition* may not be easy for students to reach, but the challenge has already been stated. As Long and Crookes (1992) said, "language learning is more psycholinguistic than a linguistic process"

### **Task-Based Language Learning Process**

In Task-Based Language Learning (TBL), learning is promoted through the development of a series of activities as steps towards successful completion of tasks. The approach of these tasks goes from learning language items in a non-contextualized vacuum to using language as a way to meet authentic and real-world needs. Through the realization of a task, learners use the language immediately in a real-world context, which makes learning authentic. In a TBL framework, the language needed is not pre-determined and given to the learners. Learners by themselves practice it, by working with the support of the facilitator and meeting

the demands of a task and the series of activities that it includes (Curran, Deguent, Williams, Miletto, & Van der Straeten, 2000)

### **Task-Based Methodology Framework**

One of the advantages for both teachers and learners in the task-based approach is the access to a well-designed framework for the development of a task-based lesson. For teachers, the simple fact of developing this kind of task provides experiences that help them to rise and achieve improvement during the process, and for that purpose is important to plan your teaching and execute it as it demands to do (Richards, 1996). In addition, the task-based approach is thought to foster the necessity to be creative and variate in teaching, this specifically for those novice teachers that are at a starting point. A framework such as the one outlined below caters to both needs (Numrich, 1996). It provides a clear structure for a lesson and it also allows for creativity and variety in the choice of options in each phase.

#### **The Pre-task**

As the first step, a pre-task is a phase with the only purpose of preparing students to perform the task in ways that will promote acquisition. Lee (2000) states how important it is to frame the task to be performed and indicates that one way of doing this is to provide an advance organizer of what students need to do and the nature of the outcome they will arrive at the end of the task. Also, the way of how a task is presented plays an important role in the students' motivation reflects what is the purpose and utility of the task (Dörnyei, 2001).

Willis (1996) suggests that the teacher (facilitator) explores the topic with the group and highlights useful words and phrases. At this stage, it is the right time

when the facilitator needs to take advantage and exploit materials to create a close relation to the task to be performed. Besides, the facilitator is required to consider and pre-visualize how the chosen materials will be exploited.

Clear examples of exploring the topic could be through the exploitation of a piece of information by listening to an audio script, or by hearing to a set of sounds as associate them to background knowledge. The material to be exploited can be used for topic content as a springboard or to highlight key vocabulary. All of this depends on how much the facilitator manages to work on language and which aspects are more relevant to be worked by the learners. However, it is important to point out that the goal of using a piece of material is as a pre-task lead-in, for example: material exploitation by using songs/videos etc. to lead into the topic, brainstorming by making a list, comparing ideas, sharing experiences and activating language by eliciting and providing vocabulary (Curran et al, 2000).

### **Task cycle**

In the task phase, students are expected to be as close as possible immersed into the task realization in the different ways a task could be performed, displayed, recorded, conducted as a group or in small groups, but the main focus is always directed to the successful completion of the task. At this stage, students are required to use the language for doing the task with a communicative and students-centred approach where they are the target during the whole process. The task must be established in a real-world context where there is not needed to make a strong emphasis on grammatical accuracy but on communicative skills (Willis, 1996). Inside this cycle, there is the planning stage in which the learners have to work on

preparing a report for the rest of the class about what they have done in the task phase. This report could be in a spoken or written way and the purpose of it is that the learners gain experience *with public* speaking or writing. In addition, the teacher is in charge of monitoring students' work and help them in any aspect of the language they need (Lackman, K, n.d., p. 3).

After the reports have been planned, it is time to reflect them orally or in a written way. With the purpose of sharing the report to the whole class, students should stick charts on the wall if they wrote what they have done in the task. If it is an oral report, the leader of each group has the responsibility of delivering it to the rest of the class. It is important to mention that whether the report is oral or written, the students in all the groups should develop a reading or listening task during exposure to the other groups' reports. In this way, the students could be asked to listen for suggestions from the ones, and, teacher can take notes of all the errors that were made by students during the reading of the reports.

### **The post-task**

At this stage, students focus on language and analyze their performance in the task they have done. This focus could be worked by having students listening to (or reading) a sample of native speakers developing the same task that they did. The facilitator (teacher) makes the students to listen for language (words, expressions) that they could have included in their task. Considering that the students only used their previous background language knowledge, it is more probable that they notice some words and useful expressions in the sample they are listening to. With this activity, students will get new valuable knowledge that can be used in future tasks.



For example, students can write down the expressions they hear in the recording and then compare them with a partner, and the teacher must play the audio track twice if it is needed. Then, the teacher and students must deal with form, meaning, and, where necessary, the pronunciation of the new words and expressions that they identified (Ellis, 2003)

In the end, the Language Focus finishes with a controlled practice. This practice is designed to use the target language correctly and students are required to demonstrate their skill in the language. A good controlled practice could be the substitution drill, where students have to substitute words in a structure.

Pre-task		
<b>Introduction to topic and tasks</b>		
Teacher explores the topic with the class, highlights useful words and phrases. Learners may be exposed to examples.		
Task cycle		
Task	Planning	Report
Students do the task in pairs or small groups. Teacher monitors; mistakes do not matter.	Students prepare to report. Accuracy is important, so the teacher stands by and gives advice.	Students exchange or present report. Teacher listens and then comments.
Language focus		
Analysis	Practice	
Students examine then discuss.	Teacher conducts practice of new words	

*(TBL Framework by Willis, 1996)*

### **Timing**

The amount of time assigned for the task is an important factor to take into account (Skehan, 1996), especially for L2 learners who are at the beginning and low intermediate levels. In the case of task speed, there is only a certain amount of time to complete it, it could become more difficult for some students. On the other

hand, when students take all the time to complete the task, the pressure is not even noticed during the process. In the classroom, each task has a time limit to be done, although, based on the task type and the outcomes of them, some tasks can be developed as homework if the amount of time was not enough.

### **Types of tasks**

According to Willis (1996), there are closed and open tasks. The closed tasks are designed for specific goals that may be established by the teacher, which means that the focus on the language is much stronger than the open tasks, which are more freely structured and with less specific goals.

Willis (1996) mentions seven different types of tasks: listing, ordering, and sorting, comparing, matching, problem-solving, sharing personal experiences, and creative tasks.

### **Closed tasks**

#### **Listing task**

Listing is a task that may be seen as an unimaginative resource in the context of a task in the classroom. But listing generates a lot of reaction from the students, a lot of talk takes place among the class where everyone is explaining their ideas. In this process, brainstorming is an important aspect where students use their background knowledge and experience. Also, fact-finding, in which students try to find out specific things by asking each other, making reference to books, etc., (Willis, 1996).

### **Listing activities**

**Brainstorming:** Brainstorming's main purpose is to generate as many ideas as possible within the time frame specified in the classroom. It encourages people to come up with ideas and thoughts that may seem a little crazy at first. Some of these ideas can be developed into original, creative solutions to a problem, while others can give rise to even more ideas. Teachers may use brainstorming to encourage students to share their ideas on a specific topic or question with each other (Bearing & Unin, 2015).

**Fact-finding:** In this kind of activity, students employ research, meetings, interviews, questionnaires, sampling, and other techniques to collect information about something related to the topic. The answers for this activity may be developed by using different sources to get information and answers about aspects such as qualities or features about a specific thing.

### **Ordering and sorting task**

Ordering and sorting is a closed task type designed with specific goals and it involves different activities in which students look for an organization of information and content of a specific topic. By developing this kind of task, the teacher can set some specific goals focused on using the language as a mean of communication and for analyzing key language forms that may be used during the task. In ordering and sorting tasks, students are involved in four main processes: sequencing items, actions or events in a logical chronological way; ranking items based on a specified criteria or personal values; categorizing items by grouping them

in their corresponding headings; and classifying items when the categories are not given, so, they could be set in different ways (Willis, 1996)

### **Ordering and sorting activities**

**Sequencing items:** students are required to put actions or events in a logical or chronological order. For example, in a listening activity about a famous artist, students may order the events about the artist's career in a sequence according to the audio that they listen to.

**Ranking items:** students sort items or information that they are provided by the teacher based on personal values or specified criteria. For example, students can rank some food items from the healthiest to the less healthy.

**Categorizing items:** students put the items in given groups or by groping them in their corresponding headings. Example: with the same topic about food, students can put the items into countable or uncountable nouns. Then, they can listen to an audio to verify the items grouped.

**Classifying items:** when the categories are not given; students classify the information in different ways.

### **Comparing task**

To reflect on what the students have done or what they are doing, comparing appears as a task to review and identify the common points and/or differences among the tasks, taking into account the different sources that are used to the completion of the task (Willis, 1996).

### **Comparing activities**

**“Would You Rather” questions:** It can be used as a fun way for students to compare and contrast. Learner must make a choice between two options when answering the question "Would You Rather." His / her mind will automatically compare and contrast the two options, weighing both pros and cons.

**Using rankings:** By ranking things, students can compare and contrast them using a certain set of criteria (usually deciding which one is the best or the worst). This activity can give students the opportunity to compare and contrast in a fun way. However, the most important part of this activity is having students explain their reasoning, justify it or defend it. However, the most important part of this activity is having students explain their reasoning, justify it or defend it. When students explain why one item received a higher ranking than another, they compare and contrast at a much higher level than just telling how something is the same or different

**The Venn diagram:** This is an activity that is used when students are asked to compare and contrast. By using this activity, students can add differences and similarities by writing them on index cards or small pieces of paper (e.g. comparing two characters of a film).

### **Matching task**

By developing this closed task, students use their receptive skills (listening) to identify key features that the task requires. Also, by doing alternative tasks such as listen and do, students can follow instructions and do things in English taking into account the interpretations of meaning (e.g. gestures). The main goal of this task is

to link or two items that are related (e.g. match phrases/descriptions to pictures, match directions to maps) (Willis, 1996).

### **Matching activities**

**Listen and identify:** Students listen to an audio with this activity to collect specific or relevant information and match it to its appropriate location. Students are not required to understand all the information provided, only important details need to be collected.

**Listen and Do:** The activity helps students develop their understanding of listening by offering opportunities for a physical response (TPR) to the input provided. By listening to and following instructions, learners make the most of their input and intake stages before beginning language production. These activities encourage learners to do things, so the motivation to complete each activity should be high (Švecová, 2007 ).

### **Open tasks**

#### **Problem-solving task**

In the real-world context, problem-solving is a task that challenges people to solve real problems or at list closely related. It includes simple activities like logic problems and more complex like case studies that are focused on students with a high language level (Nunan, 2004). The problem-solving task has a purpose beyond correct speech production, is one of the most preferable communicative activities.

#### **Problem-solving activities**

**Information-gap:** According to Larsen & Freeman, an information gap task is an activity in which students lack information to complete a task and have to

communicate with their classmates to fill the gaps. This means that learners must work with each other and exchange useful information that may help to complete a task (Larsen-Freeman, 2001, p. 148).

**Reasoning-gap:** This activity is based on drawing a conclusion based on given information. Students are basically trained to infer a possible ending or next event that may happen in the context of a task. This task aims to encourage students to engage more deeply with meaning even if the task is characterized by some connection with predictable aspect at the moment to use the language.

**Comparing:** To reflect on what the students have done or what they are doing, comparing appears as a task to review and identify the common points and/or differences among the tasks, taking into account the different sources that are used to the completion of the task. (Willis J., 1996).

**Clue me in:** This is a fun detective game encourages problem-solving, critical thinking and cognitive development. Collect a number of items that are associated with a specific profession, social trend, place, public figure, historical event, animal, etc. Assemble actual items (or pictures of items) that are commonly associated with the target answer. Place them all in a bag (five-10 clues should be sufficient.) Then have a student reach into the bag and one by one pull out clues. Choose a minimum number of clues they must draw out before making their first guess (two-three). After this, the student must venture a guess after each clue pulled until they guess correctly.

**Survivor scenarios:** Create a pretend scenario for students that requires them to think creatively to make it through. An example might be getting stranded on an

island, knowing that help will not arrive for three days.

**Moral dilemma:** Create a number of possible moral dilemmas your students might encounter in life, write them down, and place each item folded up in a bowl or bag. Some of the items might include things like, “I saw a good friend of mine shoplifting. What should I do?” or “The cashier gave me an extra \$1.50 in change after I bought candy at the store. What should I do?” Have each student draw an item from the bag one by one, read it aloud, then tell the class their answer on the spot as to how they would handle the situation.

### **Sharing personal experiences task**

In sharing personal experience tasks, learners are engaged in talking about themselves and sharing their own experiences. For instance, students can develop activities like doing reporting a survey, producing a class newspaper, planning a radio show, designing a brochure.

### **Sharing personal experiences activities**

**Story-telling:** Storytelling is an activity where people access, express and retain information and knowledge. When students perform this activity, they share something related to their own real-context and it is not strictly based on the content of the book (Eck, 2006). Some of the variations of story-telling are to express anecdotes, reminiscences (e.g. early schooldays, terrible journeys, embarrassing moments, personality quizzes, etc.) and show some reactions and express opinions about what just have been told by another speaker.



## **Creative task**

Creative tasks are often considered as projects in which learners, in pairs or groups, can create their own imaginative products. Groups could create short stories, works of art, videos, magazines, etc. Creative projects often involve a combination of task types such as listing, ordering, sorting, comparing, and problem-solving. Some examples of activities that can be applied in the classroom are: story-telling, anecdotes, opinions, reactions (e.g. early schooldays, terrible journeys, embarrassing moments, personality quizzes), (Willis, 1996).

### **Creative activities**

**Doing and reporting a survey:** This is a good activity to encourage students to write and study on a research topic. Students summarize existing studies in an organized manner in a survey report.

**Producing a class newspaper:** Creating a Classroom Newspaper allows students to combine reading and writing activities in the classroom every day. The creativity of students is challenged by the production of a newspaper in the classroom.

**Planning a radio show:** Students plan how to structure a well-designed radio show by doing this activity. After planning, they can execute every single step (including scripts, setting, topic, time, resources, etc.) and put their input and output skills into practice.

**Designing a brochure:** A brochure is an informative advertising paper document that can be folded into a template, pamphlet or leaflet. Students can use their creativity to create a brochure to promote something from their local area. By

doing so, students not only develop their language skills but also do something related to a real situation that actually happens in their context.

### **Teacher Roles and Characteristics**

In TBLL, teachers play different roles that are all focused on language meaning. In this way, the task roles for teachers are: selector/sequencer of tasks, the preparer of learners for task, pre-task consciousness-raiser about form, guide, nurturer, strategy-instructor, and provider of assistance (Richards, 1996).

### **Learner Roles and Characteristics**

The roles for learners start from being a group participant, risk-taker/innovator strategy-user, goal setter, self-evaluator and more (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The learner is the individual that takes control of the task and deals with it. This is responsible for his or her performance on the task and its completion, by taking into account the task requirements and making use of learning activities to accomplish the task efficiently and effectively. Moreover, learning styles also play a role in the development of tasks, in this aspect, tasks may be perceived as difficult by individual learners. For instance, when a task of face-to-face communication is determined in the class, the ones who have an extroverted learning style will have a better performance than the ones with an introverted learning style. Because of this, tasks must be well-structured for learners according to what they can prove by using their learning styles (Oxford, 2006)

### **Strengths of Task-based language learning**

Task-based language learning is an approach that provides many advantages to the learning process as it is based on communication and allows the students to

connect their previously acquired knowledge to new communicative (Nunan, 1989). It fosters the students to rise as a language user. It intends to engage the language learner in meaning-focused language usage (Ganta, 2015).

Task-based learning is a way that provides students the opportunity to interact spontaneously. Students are comfortable to use the language in the way they know by using background knowledge and experiences and a clear example is when students are required to perform a role play that permits them to use language freely. It helps to build builds students' level with confidence and with security since through the development of tasks they reinforce their basis and continue rising thanks to a well-established context. But not only communicative competence is developed, cognitive competence is also worked at the moment students perform a task. The motivation for doing a task is also an advantage of this approach because of the context the learners are immersed, they become curious and pay attention to each part of the process.

Another positive aspect is the automaticity for language learning, which according to Ridder (2007) is a more efficient, more accurate and more stable performance focus. In consequence, it leads to a near-native performance with more real experiences.

## **LISTENING**

In normal daily life, listening to a second language (L2) has been regarded as the most widely used language skill (Rost, 2002). Thus, listening is characterized for its complex process that allows students to understand, retain and interpret the spoken messages in real-time through the usage of a variety of sources like

phonetic, phonological, prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic (Lynch, 2002). Given this complexity among the tasks, listening is considered as one the most difficult skills to learn out. This factor has conducted to a wrong way to manage and determine the listening tasks in the classroom, since the students feel frustrated and lose the interest to practice and develop this skill and teachers give a non-sense focus to the activities that involve listening.

To a person who is not immersed in the educational context, the terms listening and hearing mean the same. However, an educator understands hearing as a passive, innate physical skill inborn in all non-handicapped people. Meanwhile, listening is considered as an active, interactive skill, in which there is a learning process that incorporates aspects of comprehension and response to a stimulus. Listening is an activity that requires paying attention to the speaker and try to understand the context of what is heard (Underwood, 1989).

Listening can be defined as a process of receiving information that the speaker actually says, with a well-structured orientation (receptive orientation), a construction and representation of meaning (constructive orientation), negotiating meaning and give a response to the speaker (collaborative orientation), and, the last but not less important, the development of meaning through the involvement, imagination and empathy with the other individual (transformative orientation) (Rost, 2002).

### **Listening Process**

As listening is a complex process, it can be divided into four levels of progress since the starting to point to the final part.

## **Hearing**

Hearing is the physical act of receiving the sound that comes from the speaker. In this level, the student recognizes the sounds as simple words, phrases or thoughts (Promruang, 2012). Although hearing is not the same as listening, this is an essential component of the process in which listeners read the message or information by hearing.

## **Understanding**

In this part of the process, the listener's brain is trying to comprehend the meaning of the message received. Complications may be found at this stage since the receptor interprets or give wrong meaning to words or phrases, which causes the information given to become something totally different. This step help learner to understand the patterns by making association to something that has been heard and perceived before, not only words, it could be sounds and any stimuli that can help to find the meaning that the speaker is trying to send (Tyagi, 2013)

## **Remembering**

According to Babita (2013), "remembering is an important listening process because it means that an individual has not only received and interpreted a message but has also added it to the mind's storage bank". Also, it is important to point out that the information that is remembered at the moment could quietly differ from what was heard at the beginning.

## **Evaluating**

The fourth stage in the listening process is evaluating, in which listeners judge the value of the message. It means that they analyze the sense of the message.

Everything may be seen from different perspectives and diverse life experiences, and because of this evaluation of the same message can be totally different (Whench, 2012)

### **Responding**

Finally, to complete the process, the receiver of the message reacts through verbal and/or nonverbal feedback. This stage is important because it helps to the speaker to verify whether the message was received or not by the listener. Through this stage, the speaker is able to determine how much of the message was understood by the receptor (Tyagi, 2013).

### **Differences between Hearing and Listening**

Many people confuse listening and hearing since both of them demand the use of the ears to establish the fact of receiving information from spoken forms. However, they have different purposes. Hearing happens when the subject experiences sounds of waves and the noise by ears and that is the reason why it is considered an ability. On the other hand, listening happens in a conscious way, when the individual receives the sounds and understand them, it happens when the person pays attention to the words or phrases of the speaker and interpret the message received, for that reason listening is considered a skill (Surbhi, 2016)

### **Approaches of listening**

Rost (2016) explains two main approaches that are used in the listening process. These two approaches are detailed below:

### **Bottom-Up**

When listeners use their linguistic knowledge clues such as phonemes, syllables, words, phrases, and sentences to understand, it means that they are using a bottom-up approach (Vandergrift, 2007). Thus, the listeners use the incoming input as the basis for understanding the message (Richards, 2008). The Bottom-up approach is text-based, which means that it all depends on the message of the language that is the combination of words, sounds and grammar structures that create meaning. It includes recognizing cognates, listening for specific details and identify word-order patterns.

The benefits of the bottom-up approach are that it provides the necessary support to students to deal with lexical and pronunciation features to understand the spoken text. Also, bottom-up exercises are beneficial for lower-level students who need to expand their language repertoire.

### **Top-Down**

When students use context and prior knowledge such as topic, genre, culture and other schema knowledge stored in long term memory to decide the meaning, they use a top-down approach (Vandergrift, 2007). Basically, students use their background knowledge to understand the meaning of the message. While the bottom-up approach is focused from language to meaning, the top-down goes from meaning to language. Students are required to use all their previous knowledge about the topic or context, for example, knowledge about the dialogue or conversation that they are about to listen. The top-down approach is focused on the background of the topic knowledge, the context, the content, and type of text and

the language student owns. With this support, students can interpret what they listen to and anticipate what is next. The Top-Down approach includes: looking and identifying the main idea and summarize (Richards, 2008).

### **Stages of listening**

The listening sequences during the development of a task help to improve students' metacognitive abilities, especially in the first two years of language learning (Vandergrift, 2007). These listening sequences may be divided into three stages as pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening and each of the three stages has its own specific purpose (Underwood, 1989).

### **Pre-listening**

Pre-listening activities set students into the context of the main task, it is a tool to guide them to the things they need to know before they listen. For instance, the way a speaker talks, the duration of the text, the listener's role, clear information about the topic, vocabulary, and the relationship between listener and speaker. Pre-listening activities help students to activate their prior knowledge and predict what they will hear. These activities might include brainstorming, visuals, realia, text and words, situations and opinions, ideas and facts (Wilson, 2008).

### **While-Listening**

While-listening activities are the core of the process of listening and they are performed during the listening task or they can be completed immediately after the listening. Therefore, the teacher has to provide the instructions clearly with a specified goal to be accomplished and also base the task on the students' level. At this stage, learners are expected to understand the message while they listen.



Examples of while listening activities can be: making/checking items in picture, putting pictures in order, true/false, form/chart completion, completing grids, predicting and making inferences, multiple-choice completion, etc. (Underwood, 1989).

The benefit of a well-designed while-listening activity is that it helps listeners to understand the spoken text, retain the information and subsequently find the clues to give a response. Also, it helps to provide a focus, to emphasize the important parts while listening, to stay alert and to allow them to understand the structure of the texts (Wilson, 2008).

### **Post-Listening**

Underwood (1989) explains that the post-listening task is an activity developed after listening, and it involves the whole work performed during the process. These post-listening activities can be strongly or weakly related to pre- and while-listening activities. In addition, as students deal with thinking, discussing, reflecting and writing processes, the post-listening tasks require more time than the other ones. To work properly in these tasks, students work in detail, and they are able to use both top-down and bottom-up approaches to make a connection between the classroom activities and their real lives (Wilson, 2008).

### **Listening subskills**

There are a number of sub-skills that students need to develop into the classroom. Thus, there were selected the most appropriate for students who take part in this research project. Each one of the sub-skills is thought to help students to improve their level and become more familiar with the language by communicating.

### **Listening for gist**

In this listening, students have to grasp the main ideas without worrying about the details. They try to understand what is happening even if he or she does not understand every phrase or sentence in the audio. There are not detailed questions to answer, students are just required to pick up keywords, phrases, take references from intonation, and other clues to guess at the meaning of the whole text.

Richards (1990, p.62) states that this task is focused on identifying the gist or main points instead of focusing on specific words. Listening for gist is an activity that allows students to develop a top-down approach rather than a bottom-up approach to listening. It is beneficial for those students who are stuck on finding details such as words or phrases that they do not understand that prevent them from seeing the bigger picture.

### **Listening for Specific Information**

The purpose of this listening is to train students to grasp specific information, details that are relevant, important or necessary. This type of task can train the students about how to extract specific information.

According to Harmer (1991), this task can be seen as a simple one, but the learner can find some complications at the moment to construct the meaning and understand the listening extract. Fortunately, the pre-task activities provide the necessary support to make it easy and the learners can easily identify and extract the specific information from the spoken text. In the end, students will be able to obtain without any problem.

### **Overall understanding**

In this listening sub-skill, students are challenged to understand the spoken text as detailed as possible. Overall understanding verifies students' comprehension at a high level. At this stage, it is necessary to get more than isolated details or the main idea, it is required to identify all the components of the text and obtain the context and meaning of it. This listening requires a lot of effort, in which students have to be concentrated, pay attention to every single word and phrase, use their background knowledge and experiences to make associations and be closely related to the topic of the task. Difficulties may be found in the process, and for that reason, it is advisable that the teacher repeats the audio the times that are necessary until students can complete the task.

### **Inferring**

Inferring in listening can be defined as a strategy through which the listener uses acoustic, vocal, lexical or contextual relevant information from the listening material, and also the previous knowledge to guess the meaning of the message or to compensate for missing information (Guo, 2015, p. 319)

In listening to make inferences, students make guesses to understand the message of the text. As it requires to pay the total attention, students have to base their inferences in many details such as the speaker's attitude, intentions, implications, thought, motivation, purpose to finally expect and predict what he or she will say next.

Inferring involves that the listener establishes relations and identifies a social and cultural setting. Moreover, to make a good inference, students should recognize

the variation of style, tone, forms of speech, situation, purpose, and topic that the listening involves.

### **Difficulties in listening**

Without any doubt, listening has become one of the most difficult skills in learning because of its complexity and demanding practice. According to Rixon (1986), listening is a complex process that needs the interdependence and application of different skills. She considers that listening is not the same as hearing that involves the *recognition of sounds*, she believes that listening implies to pay conscious attention to the message that is given by the speaker. Also, she states three important aspects that listening has in its process and these are the global message, grammar, and vocabulary and finally the sound system.

Considering the aforementioned, listening is a process that demands the ability to understand phonology, syntax, lexis and information content in real-time. Students find problems because of time pressure, stemming from inexplicit information given by the speaker, environmental obstructions such as distracting noise in the background, unclear voices or sounds, and lack of visual support that may help to identify more details in the listening (Alam, 2009).

Students' attitude is another factor that complicates the listening process in the classroom. For instance, the lack of motivation towards the topic or context of the task, a negative reaction to the speaker or to what it says, anxiety to know the next part of the conversation, frustration because of missing a part of what the speaker said, distraction among the class or by the content itself due to wrong association

with other topics that are not related. If students are not familiar with the topic, it is also probable that they mishear or misunderstand the listening (Hedge, 2000).

### **The importance of listening in language learning**

Listening is a skill that plays an important role in communication and people's daily lives. It is a medium through which people can develop themselves. A large part of their education, information, understanding of the world and human affairs, ideals and sense of values come from listening skills (Yıldırım, 2016).

In the educational field, students can build an awareness of the relations of language systems at different levels and subsequently establish a base for more fluent productive skills. In classroom settings, teacher and students develop communicative skills by applying listening tasks such as audios of conversations, interviews, speeches, songs, etc. through the constant practice, students will become more familiar with the language and understand different components of it.

Productive skills like writing and speaking are very important for good communication and correct use of the language. However, if there are no efficient listening skills, it is not possible to communicate effectively.

In conclusion, listening is important in both daily life and in academic contexts. Thanks to it, people can communicate effectively and get involved in society since listening is the way to receive, understand and interpret the information that can be useful for gaining knowledge, giving meaning to something, discover new patterns that help to comprehend what is happening around you.

### **Task-based listening**

Listening is one of the four skills of the language, as receptive skill, listening has been considered one of the most difficult at the moment to practice into the classroom. These factors have led to an underestimation by students and educators in the field of learning English as a foreign language because effective listening skills are developed over time with constant practice but it seems limited and most of the time the activities are decontextualized or inappropriate for students. In addition, with the only purpose of accomplishing the activities established in the syllabus, teachers work fast in the listening activities without making reinforcement or deep works to develop the skill (Herron, 1991).

At some point, there was a demanding of communicative competence into the classroom context. Then, the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the changing of developing linguistic competence by communicative competence was the first step in which listening skills started to be considered as an active skill. In this way, task-based language learning is focused on communication by using the language and the final outcome of the tasks as they are based on real contexts. Considering that listening is a skill with communicative purposes, the suitable tasks to accomplish that goal must be designed with emphasis on the responses that students are able to give based on what they hear and how good they understood the subject of the audio script The tasks detailed below are some of the ways of working on listening skill among students with a high emphasis on understanding (Najmeh Maghsoudi, 2017).

- **Matching:** a task with a set of options in which students have to listen to a text and then match a numbered list of items. With this task, students are tested to identify how good they are at retaining details.
- **Labeling:** a task that requires students to select the labels from a list that best matches the blank parts of a visual task. The purpose is to assess students' ability to understand descriptions of something.
- **Selecting (multiple choice):** in this task, students are given some questions with three or four choices. They have to listen to a text and answer by selecting the right answer. This task aims to check the learners' detailed or general understanding of the main points of the listening text and their ability to answer some questions.
- **Form-filling:** in this task students' ability to evaluate and related details are assessed, in which they have to listen to a text and complete the information requested.
- **Sentence completion:** with this task, students' ability to focus on the main point of the text is assessed. They have to listen to sentences and then complete a gap in each sentence using information from the listening text.
- **Short-answer questions:** this listening task requires students to listen to a text and answer a set of related questions. The purpose is to evaluate students' ability to listen for specific facts in the context of the listening text.

## **f. METHODOLOGY**

### **Design of the research**

Action research in education is a process of discovering ways or prompt arrangements for certain educating learning situations. According to Kitchen & Stevens (2008), action research specifically refers to a well-conducted teacher inquiry in which participants systematically and carefully analyze their own educational performance using research techniques. In action research, the participants aim to question, clarify, understand and give meaning to a current situation. Action research involves a self - reflective, systematic and critical approach to the investigation of participants who are simultaneously members of the research community (Burns, 2015, p. 188). In this way, action research can be assumed to investigate a social situation and to seek democratic change and collaborative participation in a given community.

Action research is a worthwhile pursuit for teachers and researchers. Learning is a constant in the educational field, and through action research teachers and researchers look for new ways of expanding upon their current knowledge (Ferrance, 2000). Action research assists teachers and researchers in the acquisition of a specialized set of skills and competencies, particularly to the educational field. The action research process, therefore, empowers teachers and researchers with new knowledge and understanding of how to improve educational practices or resolve major problems in classrooms and schools (Hine, 2013).

Action research takes into account a systematic and sequenced structure from beginning to end. First, teacher and researchers identify a thematic of concern that



may be happening in the classroom during the teaching-learning process. The researcher is required to pose a question based on the identified educational issue. Next, the researcher utilizes data gathering instruments such as interviews, questionnaires, or attitude scales to collect information quantitatively and qualitatively and find out the answer about the current situation to be solved. Then, the researcher analyzes the gathered information by making some discussions among participants, where they identify a shared concern, problem or result and the outcomes of the solutions to be implemented. Eventually, an action plan is designed and applied to create changes in the situation that has been analyzed. Basically, the action plan is the solution that the researcher has thought it convenient to be implemented to solve the issues in the classroom (Creswell, 2012).

This research study is based on an Action Research work with the aim of improving listening skills through task-based learning activities. As a preservice teacher from the Universidad Nacional de Loja, the main purpose of this action research is to create improvements on students' communicative competence by working on listening skills through the application of tasks that aim to use the language focused on meaning instead of form. Thus, during the intervention plan phase, the researcher is required to observe how students start using the language and interact spontaneously by using their background knowledge, experiences, and real-world-context activities. It will be observed if students feel more comfortable at the moment to use the language, without any pressure over them. At the end of the action plan, the researcher will determine the final results of the application of task-based learning activities to improve listening skills among students of ninth

year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year.

## **Methods, Techniques and Instruments**

### **Methods**

In this research work the researcher will use different methods which will help her to carry out this project. The following general methods will be applied along with the descriptive research:

**The Scientific Method** through which the researcher is able to explore the observations and answer questions that appear when gathering information. The aim of the scientific method for research is to be conducted in a fair, unbiased and repeatable manner. It helps to prove or disprove something in a way that will lead to unbiased answers. The scientific method involves a series of sequential steps, these are: identify a possible issue or phenomenon in the educational field; create a hypothesis in which the researcher develops an educating guess; perform an action plan to see how the hypothesis work on; and finally create a statement based on the analysis and interpretation of the information gathered in which the researcher determines if his/her hypothesis worked or not on solving the problem. In the implementation of task-based learning activities, the scientific method will serve as a tool for verifying if the improvement of listening skills among students was possible through the use of the mentioned strategy. It helps the researcher to develop the phases in the observations before and during the intervention. When some issues appear during the process, the scientific method helps to make predictions of

possible solutions. By gathering data, the researcher is more able to make his predictions about solutions stronger and relevant.

**The Descriptive Method** will help the researcher to describe the phenomenon and its characteristics. The information is gathered qualitatively or quantitatively, in which there is a deep analysis of the stages of the study. Through questioning, the descriptive method approaches to describe, explain, and validate findings from the intervention stage. The information may be collected through data review, surveys, interviews or observations. The descriptive method follows a creative exploration, and serves to organize the findings in order to fit them with explanations, and then test or validate those explanations. During the application of task-based learning activities to improve listening skills, the descriptive method will serve as a tool to correlate these two variables, to see if they fit together, to see if they work or not for making improvements among the classroom, and to analyze and explain how they differ at the moment to be applied during the action plan.

**The Statistical Method** will help the researcher to collect, analyze and represents all the gathered information in graphics to indicate the percentages and results got in the questionnaires, checklist, and tests applied to students. Then, based on the theoretical reference about task-based learning activities and listening skills, the researcher makes the corresponding analysis and interpretation quantitatively and qualitatively. After that, the researcher is required to state a conclusion based on the results of the analysis. To get proper results and logic conclusion, the researcher needs to set the context of study in a correct way by selecting an appropriate study sample and a suitable statistical test to analyze the results.

**The Analytic/Synthetic Method** will help the researcher to analyze all the information found through of the observation checklist, questionnaires, and the pre and posttest, and then to make the interpretation and logical analysis of the data and to draw up the conclusions. During the execution of the action plan, the researcher has the responsibility to apply different observation tools to gather all the possible information. In this way, there will be findings focused on the application of task-based activities to improve listening skills among the group of students. Basically, the analysis and interpretation through this method are to see how students react to the application of a new method to learn the language, how it has changed the perception of learning and how it has helped them to improve their level during the process.

## **Techniques and Instruments**

### **Data Collection**

As the present research work is based on action research, the use of quantitative and qualitative analysis tools is required for gathering information. Quantitative analysis considers variables associated with statistics whereas qualitative analysis considers an understanding of a certain phenomenon. Qualitative and quantitative instruments are self-developed by the research taking into consideration the principles of structuring questions. The researcher will collect the required information data from paper and pencil methods (tests) which are quantitative and qualitative data instruments will come from questionnaires and observation sheets.

**Tests:** The test that will be applied to the students is focused on performing communicative tasks in relation to listening competence. Therefore, tests will yield

a numerical score based on the input performance of the students. The researcher will calculate the mean to compare the pre and post-test results.

**Pre-test / Post-test:** Pre-test and Post-test will be given at the beginning and at the end of the intervention plan; at the beginning it will be given to measure the students' performance at listening tasks, involving the process of receiving information that the speaker says and the construction and representation of meaning; and, at the end, to measure the performance of listening tasks achieved by the students after the intervention plan designed in this research project with activities applied with task-based learning activities in order to make a pre-test-post-test comparison of the communicative dimension of the performance of listening of the participants (ninth-year "A" students at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano) being treated.

**Questionnaires** will be given to the participants (ninth-year "A" students at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano) to answer questions related to their attitudes and feelings toward task-based learning activities to improve listening skills. The pre-questionnaire will provide information about the perceptions that students have about task-based learning activities and it will inform whether or not this method was used before among the class. The Post-questionnaire that is taken at the end of the intervention plan will provide information about the new perceptions that students have about task-based learning activities after being exposed to it. In the end, there will a comparison between the results of the pre and post questionnaire. Furthermore, the data collected by the questionnaires will support the test results.

**Observation** will let the researcher know the facts in a participative and non-participative way. These facts are based on the different reactions that students have about the implementation of a method to perform listening tasks during the class. The observation will be developed through an observation sheet and a field note sheet, in which the researcher has to include details about every event that occurs in the classroom. The observation will be during a natural environment as lived by the ninth-year “A” students at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano. There will be two types of observation as detailed below.

**Non-participant Observation** *in nonparticipant observation*, the researcher is not involved in the situation being observed. The researcher observes and records behaviors but does not interact or participate in the setting under study. The objective of this nonparticipant observation is to identify and understand a phenomenon by entering the classroom involved while staying separate from the activities being observed (Liu & Maitlis, 2010). In the non-participant observation, the researcher identifies the problem that will be supported through participant observation. The instrument for the nonparticipant observation is the observation sheet.

**Observation Sheet.** During the nonparticipant observation, the researcher will need an observation sheet to record the participants’ behaviors shown on the performance of listening task. This observation sheet is a self-developed instrument that describes accurately and comprehensively the indicators and all the relevant aspects of the dependent variable.

**Participant observation.** In the participant observation, the researcher will become a part and a participant in the situation being observed. The researcher will participate deliberately in the problematic situation by means of task-based learning activities in order to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano, in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year. The instrument of this participant observation is the field note sheet.

**Field Notes.** It is a daily activity that aims to keep notes about what happens in each session of the intervention plan. The researcher will record a description of the events, activities, and people (e.g., what happened). The researcher will record the participants’ behaviors, attitudes and feelings toward the treatment to improve listening skills (the issue), that is task-based learning activities.

### **Population**

The students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Cabrera Lozano, will participate in the development of this action research. The participants of the research are nineteen students, thirteen girls and six boys who are all about between twelve and thirteen years old.

### **Intervention Plan**

The intervention plan is designed based on a lesson plan model that contains three basic stages: Activation (before), Connection (during), and Affirmation (after). These lesson plans consist of giving 40 hours of class during 8 academic weeks.





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Key Words</b></li> </ul> <p>Pear, cheese, beans, rice, apple, chicken, carrot, bread, fish, milk, banana, tomato, pasta, yogurt, lettuce, oatmeal, butter, oil, potato, beef, orange, spinach, egg, veggies, vegetables, yummy.</p>	<p>whenever someone in the group needs to know a new word, the student who has it, reads the description for the others to guess the word.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students listen to vocabulary about food. Students are given some papers with a list of words. Through <i>ordering and sorting activities</i>, students listen carefully and classify the words about food into the categories of countable and uncountable nouns.</li> <li>Students listen to an audio track that indicates the process and the ingredients that a recipe need. Through <i>problem-solving activities</i>, students have to identify the specific ingredients needed for the recipe. Moreover, students identify the words some and any to indicate an undetermined quantity.</li> </ul> <p><b>AFFIRMING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are given a short quiz in which they demonstrate their competence to develop listening task-focused key information about food. The goal is to listen to a series of audio track and classify food items into the correct group (countable and uncountable nouns). In addition, students are required to add some and any to indicate undetermined quantities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pictures and cards about food ingredients</li> <li>Task-Based Listening Book</li> <li>Projector</li> <li>Speakers</li> <li>Computer</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worksheets</li> </ul>
<p><b>MONITORING PLAN:</b>  Data Source 1: Pres test – Pre-written questionnaire    Date Source 2: Observation field notes    Data Source 2: Worksheet 1, Worksheet 2, Worksheet 3</p>		
<p><b>SUPPORT:</b> Coaching and guidance from our thesis advisor.</p>		
<p><b>TIME:</b> May 6th to May 10th, 2019</p>		

*Adapted from Murry, K. G., Herrera, S. G., Miller, S. S., Fanning, C. A., Kavimandan, S. K., & Holmes, M. A. (2015). Effect of Transnational Standards on U.S. Teacher Education. FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education). Syakur. (2007). The Components of Speaking Ability*



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**INTERVENTION AND OBSERVATION PLAN WEEK N° 2**

**INFORMATIVE DATA**

**Institution:** Unidad Educativa “Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano”

**Teacher:** Lic. Jorge Ortiz

**Teacher Candidate:** Jhony Armando Perez Viñanzaca

**Participants:** 9th EGB

**School Year:** 2018-2019

**Topic:** Healthy recipes

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM:</b> How does the use of task-based learning activities improve listening skills among students of ninth grade “A” of basic education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018- 2019 school year?		
<b>GOAL:</b> By the end of the intervention plan students will be able to develop their listening skill using task-based learning activities focused in the following aspects: Listening for gist, listening for specific information, overall understanding and inferring		
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b> At the end of this lesson students will be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To distinguish food items in terms by using problem-solving and ordering and sorting activities.</li> </ul>		
CONTENTS	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES AVAILABLE / NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Idioms and Colloquial Expressions</b></li> </ul> <p>Hold on a second</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Structures</b></li> </ul> <p><i>How much:</i> A lot, some, a little, two cups  <i>How many:</i> A lot, some, a few, two</p>	<p><b>ACTIVATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher starts the class by developing some pre-task activities that help students to understand the context of the content based on specific. As the first activity, students play the game <i>the 10 seconds rule</i>, in which students identify the food items in ten seconds. Also, students perform a jigsaw activity focused to fill gaps about food ingredients in a recipe. And finally, students play a game that consist on finding the ingredients for a recipe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pictures and cards about food ingredients</li> <li>Cards</li> </ul>





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**INTERVENTION AND OBSERVATION PLAN WEEK N° 3**

**INFORMATIVE DATA**

**Institution:** Unidad Educativa “Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano”

**Teacher:** Lic. Jorge Ortiz

**Teacher Candidate:** Jhony Armando Perez Viñanzaca

**Participants:** 9th EGB

**School Year:** 2018-2019

**Topic:** Famous Characters

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM:</b> How does the use of task-based learning activities improve listening skills among students of ninth grade “A” of basic education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018- 2019 school year?		
<b>GOAL:</b> By the end of the intervention plan students will be able to develop their listening skill using task-based learning activities focused in the following aspects: Listening for gist, listening for specific information, overall understanding and inferring.		
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b> At the end of this lesson students will be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify main details in terms of personality and values about famous characters from the past by problem-solving and ordering and sorting activities.</li> </ul>		
CONTENTS	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES AVAILABLE / NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Structures</b></li> </ul> <p>Simple Past tense with the verb to be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Key Words</b></li> </ul> <p>Successful, passionate, brave, compassionate, intelligent, hardworking, adventurous,</p>	<p><b>ACTIVATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As intro tasks, teacher applies some activities to activate students’ knowledge related to history and famous character from the past. First, students label some names of historical singers with their pictures. Students also participate in an interactive game in which they have to guess the character the other student has. In addition, students are tested to see their capacity to retain information by passing a message among the group and at the end find out the same message without significant changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pictures of famous people from the past</li> <li>Quiz buzzer</li> </ul>

<p>courageous, eccentric, determined, generous, helpful, ruthless, dynamic, confident, honest, ambitious, romantic, charismatic, aggressive, dedicated, emotional, spiritual, science, politics, religion, arts</p>	<p><b>CONNECTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students listen to a person talking about Mother Teresa. Next, by using <i>information-gap task activities</i>, students must identify the most relevant information from the audio. The most relevant aspects include details of personality and values.</li> <li>• Students listen to the descriptions of four famous people. Next, teacher gives to his students a paper in which they have to match each character to the section they belonged to (Politics, arts, music, etc.). In addition, students must underline the adjective of personality and values for each famous character.</li> <li>• Teacher sets a context in which students have to take the role of detectives to discover the murderer (problem-solving) of a famous singer. Next, students listen to a series of audios that are the evidence will help them to solve the case.</li> </ul> <p><b>AFFIRMING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students listen to some descriptions about famous characters of the past. By using information-gap task activities, students identify main details in terms of personality and values about each character. In addition, students have to identify details of real-world cases to determine causes and find solutions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening Tracks</li> <li>• Cards</li> <li>• Task-Based Listening Book</li> <li>• Boards</li> <li>• Projector</li> <li>• Speakers</li> <li>• Computer</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheets</li> </ul>
<p><b>MONITORING PLAN:</b>  Data Source 1: Observation Field Notes</p> <p>Data Source 2: Worksheets</p>		
<p><b>SUPPORT:</b> Coaching and guidance from our thesis advisor.</p>		
<p><b>TIME:</b> May 20th to May 24th, 2019</p>		

Adapted from Murry, K. G., Herrera, S. G., Miller, S. S., Fanning, C. A., Kavimandan, S. K., & Holmes, M. A. (2015). *Effect of Transnational Standards on U.S. Teacher Education. FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education*). Syakur. (2007). *The Components of Speaking Ability*



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**INTERVENTION AND OBSERVATION PLAN WEEK N° 4**

**INFORMATIVE DATA**

**Institution:** Unidad Educativa “Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano”

**Teacher:** Lic. Jorge Ortiz

**Teacher Candidate:** Jhony Armando Perez Viñanzaca

**Participants:** 9th EGB

**School Year:** 2018-2019

**Topic:** World History

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM:</b> How does the use of task-based learning activities improve listening skills among students of ninth grade “A” of basic education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018- 2019 school year?		
<b>GOAL:</b> By the end of the intervention plan students will be able to develop their listening skill using task-based learning activities focused in the following aspects: Listening for gist, listening for specific information, overall understanding and inferring.		
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b> At the end of this lesson students will be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify main ideas about famous characters by using information-gap task activities.</li> <li>• To recognize the context of a story and indicate the main description of historical characters by using problem-solving activities.</li> </ul>		
CONTENTS	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES AVAILABLE / NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Idioms and Colloquial expressions</b></li> </ul> <p>Sorry?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Structures</b></li> </ul> <p>Questions in the Simple Past tense Yes / No and Wh-question</p>	<p><b>ACTIVATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher applies pre-tasks-based game activities with the objective of activating prior knowledge about vocabulary and phrases to refer to historical events. One of the activities is focused on providing clues about historical figures in order to guess the personality. Also, students watch a video clip in and identify the main idea about it. In addition, teacher request students to identify specific features about a character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pictures about historical figures</li> <li>• Clip scene of a movie</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Key Words</b></li> </ul> <p>Successful, passionate, brave, compassionate, intelligent, hardworking, adventurous, courageous, eccentric, determined, generous, helpful, ruthless, dynamic, confident, honest, ambitious, romantic, charismatic, aggressive, dedicated, emotional, spiritual, science, politics, religion, arts. Smart: intelligent Actually, no: not really, origin, achievement, conqueror, navigator, and explorer.</p>	<p><b>CONNECTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students listen to descriptions of famous characters. Then, by using ordering and sorting activities, students identify main points about each person and make a close relation to their personal experiences.</li> <li>• Teacher plays and audio in which the speaker talks about four people; about their personality, activities they used to perform and about achievements. Then, by using problem-solving activities, students write down features about each character. At the end, they have to determine the main description that cover all the aspects about each character.</li> <li>• Teacher gives to the students some cards with some topics. Students analyze them and think about some additional information (problem-solving). Then, students watch and listen to a video in which a person talks about the achievements of some historical characters. What they have to do after is to associate and make relations between the ideas in the cards and the video they already saw.</li> </ul> <p><b>AFFIRMING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students listen to the descriptions of five famous characters. By using information-gap task activities, students identify main ideas that best describe each personality.</li> <li>• Students listen about people’s origins and achievements. Then, through the use of problem-solving activities, students have indicated the main idea that summarizes the story of each personality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening Tracks</li> <li>• Cards</li> <li>• Sounds</li> <li>• Task-Based Listening Book</li> <li>• Projector</li> <li>• Speakers</li> <li>• Computer</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheets</li> </ul>
<p><b>MONITORING PLAN:</b> Data Source 1: Observation Field Notes</p> <p>Data Source 2: Worksheets</p>		
<p><b>SUPPORT:</b> Coaching and guidance from our thesis advisor.</p>		
<p><b>TIME:</b> May 27th to May 31st, 2019</p>		

*Adapted from Murry, K. G., Herrera, S. G., Miller, S. S., Fanning, C. A., Kavimandan, S. K., & Holmes, M. A. (2015). Effect of Transnational Standards on U.S. Teacher Education. FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education). Syakur. (2007). The Components of Speaking Ability*



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**INTERVENTION AND OBSERVATION PLAN WEEK N° 5**

**INFORMATIVE DATA**

**Institution:** Unidad Educativa “Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano”

**Teacher:** Lic. Jorge Ortiz

**Teacher Candidate:** Jhony Armando Perez Viñanzaca

**Participants:** 9th EGB

**School Year:** 2018-2019

**Topic:** Origins and achievements

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM:</b> How does the use of task-based learning activities improve listening skills among students of ninth grade “A” of basic education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018- 2019 school year?		
<b>GOAL:</b> By the end of the intervention plan students will be able to develop their listening skill using task-based learning activities focused in the following aspects: Listening for gist, listening for specific information, overall understanding and inferring		
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b> At the end of this lesson students will be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand the origins, activities and achievements of a famous figure by using ordering and sorting activities.</li> <li>• To indicate the main idea for describing people’s origins and achievements by using problem-solving activities.</li> </ul>		
CONTENTS	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES AVAILABLE / NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Idioms and Colloquial expressions</b></li> </ul> <p>Sorry?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Structures</b></li> </ul> <p>Questions in the Simple Past tense Yes / No and Wh-question</p>	<p><b>ACTIVATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To get started, teacher activates students’ prior knowledge related to origins and achievements of famous people. Firstly, students are set in a game called catchphrase that aims them to identify ideas by using spoken clues. Following the sequence, students work on guessing the main idea about a famous character. The main idea is based on aspect of personality and values.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening Tracks</li> <li>• Cards</li> <li>• Sounds</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Key Words</b></li> </ul> <p>Successful, passionate, brave, compassionate, intelligent, hardworking, adventurous, courageous, eccentric, determined, generous, helpful, ruthless, dynamic, confident, honest, ambitious, romantic, charismatic, aggressive, dedicated, emotional, spiritual, science, politics, religion, arts. Smart: intelligent Actually, no: not really, origin, achievements, conqueror, navigator, and explorer.</p>	<p><b>CONNECTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students listen to descriptions of six historical figures in a chronological order. Students have to pay attention to every single detail in audio in order to select the correct answer for each character. By using ordering and sorting activities, students identify the origins, activities and achievements that each character has done.</li> <li>Student listen to descriptions of famous people in terms of personality, activities and achievements. Then, by using problem-solving activities, students write down the main idea (description) about each character.</li> <li>The teacher presents a situation for students to provide the best solution using their previous knowledge. The situation is about deciding or not to take one historical figure from the past to present days. For doing this task, students use problem-solving skill to fix pieces and make the right decision at the end.</li> </ul> <p><b>AFFIRMING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students listen about a historical figure (Lionel Messi). By the use of ordering and sorting activities, students comprehend the origins, activities, and achievements of the character and put sentences into the correct order.</li> <li>Students listen to three historical famous people. Then, students apply problem-solving activities to identify the main idea of each character's background.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task-Based Listening Book</li> <li>Projector</li> <li>Speakers</li> <li>Computer</li> <li>Clip scenes</li> <li>Buzzer alarm</li> <li>Pictures of historical characters</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worksheets</li> </ul>
<p><b>MONITORING PLAN:</b> Data Source 1: Observation Field Notes</p> <p>Data Source 2: Worksheet 1, Worksheet 2, Worksheet 3</p>		
<p><b>SUPPORT:</b> Coaching and guidance from our thesis advisor.</p>		
<p><b>TIME:</b> June 3rd to June 7th, 2019</p>		

*Adapted from Murry, K. G., Herrera, S. G., Miller, S. S., Fanning, C. A., Kavimandan, S. K., & Holmes, M. A. (2015). Effect of Transnational Standards on U.S. Teacher Education. FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education). Syakur. (2007). The Components of Speaking Ability*



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**INTERVENTION AND OBSERVATION PLAN WEEK N° 6**

**INFORMATIVE DATA**

**Institution:** Unidad Educativa “Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano”

**Teacher:** Lic. Jorge Ortiz

**Teacher Candidate:** Jhony Armando Perez Viñanzaca

**Participants:** 9th EGB

**School Year:** 2018-2019

**Topic:** Inspirational Lives

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM:</b> How does the use of task-based learning activities improve listening skills among students of ninth grade “A” of basic education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018- 2019 school year?		
<b>GOAL:</b> By the end of the intervention plan students will be able to develop their listening skill using task-based learning activities focused in the following aspects: Listening for gist, listening for specific information, overall understanding and inferring		
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b> At the end of this lesson students will be able:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To assemble pieces of information about inspirational lives in a chronological way by using problem-solving and ordering and sorting activities.</li> </ul>		
CONTENTS	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES AVAILABLE / NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Structures</b></li> </ul> <p>Simple Past tense with the verb to be            Questions in the Simple Past tense            Time-related expressions to organize events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Key Words</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTIVATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher starts the class by working with some activities to get students involved the new topic to be developed in the next tasks. For activating knowledge about inspirational lives, teacher work with picture intros that help students to learn more about a character and remember useful vocabulary. Next, by watching a video about a crime, students try to identify the role of each character. Additionally, students work in pairs to ask each other for an explanation of meaning about words or expressions to be used in future tasks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cards</li> <li>Table</li> <li>Picture stories</li> </ul>

<p>Successful, passionate, brave, compassionate, intelligent, hardworking, adventurous, courageous, eccentric, determined, generous, helpful, ruthless, dynamic, confident, honest, ambitious, romantic, charismatic, aggressive, dedicated, emotional, spiritual, science, politics, religion, arts, homeland, be involved, British rule, civil rights, colored, Legal adviser</p>	<p><b>CONNECTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students to get in pairs to talk about the people who inspire them the most. Then, they listen to a short bio about Martin Luther King Jr and put all the events about the story in a chronological order. For this task, students use <i>ordering and sorting activities</i>.</li> <li>• Students are set in a circle for a game. The game aims to help students to develop their reasoning skills by making them think and try to discover clues to arrive at a conclusion or solve a case (<i>problem-solving</i>). For this purpose, students have to listen carefully to every single aspect that the moderator provides.</li> <li>• Students are given a table with a series of pictures in a disordered way. The pictures express a story about a famous character. Next, in groups of five, students listen to the put the pictures in a chronological way. In addition, students must add the time-related order words below each picture.</li> </ul> <p><b>AFFIRMING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students listen to a series of events about historical events. Through the use of ordering and sorting activities, students are required to assemble pieces of information about inspirational lives in a chronological way. For these tasks, students have to use word-related expressions to indicate order in a story.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening Tracks</li> <li>• Task-Based Listening Book</li> <li>• Projector</li> <li>• Speakers</li> <li>• Computer</li> <li>• Buzzer alarm</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheets</li> </ul>
<p><b>MONITORING PLAN:</b>  Data Source 1: Observation Field Notes</p> <p>Data Source 2: Worksheets</p>		
<p><b>SUPPORT:</b> Coaching and guidance from our thesis advisor.</p>		
<p><b>TIME:</b> June 10th to June 14th, 2019</p>		

Adapted from Murry, K. G., Herrera, S. G., Miller, S. S., Fanning, C. A., Kavimandan, S. K., & Holmes, M. A. (2015). *Effect of Transnational Standards on U.S. Teacher Education. FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education*). Syukur. (2007). *The Components of Speaking Ability*



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**INTERVENTION AND OBSERVATION PLAN WEEK N° 7**

**INFORMATIVE DATA**

**Institution:** Unidad Educativa “Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano”

**Teacher:** Lic. Jorge Ortiz

**Teacher Candidate:** Jhony Armando Perez Viñanzaca

**Participants:** 9th EGB

**School Year:** 2018-2019

**Topic:** It’s Finger-Licking Good!

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM:</b> How does the use of task-based learning activities improve listening skills among students of ninth grade “A” of basic education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018- 2019 school year?		
<b>GOAL:</b> By the end of the intervention plan students will be able to develop their listening skill using task-based learning activities focused in the following aspects: Listening for gist, listening for specific information, overall understanding and inferring.		
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b> At the end of this lesson students will be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To combine pieces of information about tips for eating healthy in a chronological way by using ordering and sorting activities.</li> <li>• To construct meaning based on spoken clues about feeling and opinions about food by using Reasoning-gap activities.</li> </ul>		
CONTENTS	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES AVAILABLE / NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Idioms and Colloquial Expressions</b></li> </ul> <p>It is not my cup of tea  It makes my mouth water  It’s finger-licking good  Hold on a second</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Key Words</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTIVATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students perform pre-activities that aim to find out an opinion or feeling about certain food. In this way, student looks around to find the answer that will be a stick in a wall. Then, students listen to a person talking about the benefits of eating healthy to then identify the benefits in the human body. Finally, the bingo game starts among the class, in which, students are in charge of identifying food items in the table game. The one who fills all the cards wins the game.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flashcards: colloquial expressions</li> <li>• Bingo: table game</li> <li>• Beans</li> <li>• Pictures about food</li> </ul>

<p>It's not my favorite  It looks or smells really good.  It's very delicious  Pizza  Hamburger  Chocolate cake  papaya juice  Strawberry cake  milkshake  Mmm, Yuck (reaction sounds)</p>	<p><b>CONNECTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students listen to a conversation. Then, based on the audio, students must infer the expression that each speaker means with his/her attitude. As the expression is not said in the audio, students are required to infer and decide which colloquial expression would fit with each attitude.</li> <li>▪ Teacher gives a chart to for organizing information in a sequential way. Then, students listen to a person talking about the benefits of eating healthy. While listening, students have to order each the information according to the audio. By using ordering and sorting activities, students look for ways for understanding almost all the information mentioned by the speaker.</li> <li>▪ Students listen to people talking about a specific kind of food. Then, by using Reasoning-gap activities, students have to analyze and match each speaker with the type of food he/she was talking about and also with the opinions that are expressed as colloquial expressions.</li> </ul> <p><b>AFFIRMING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students listen to a person talking about the benefits of eating healthy. Then, by using ordering and sorting activities, students match each healthy food tip with its corresponding part of the body that get benefited.</li> <li>• Students employ reasoning gap task activities to infer the meaning of expressions and reactions sounds from spoken texts about food.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening Tracks</li> <li>• Cards</li> <li>• Task-Based Listening Book</li> <li>• Projector</li> <li>• Speakers</li> <li>• Computer</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheets</li> </ul>
<p><b>MONITORING PLAN:</b>  Data Source 1: Observation Field Notes</p> <p>Data Source 2: Worksheets</p>		
<p><b>SUPPORT:</b> Coaching and guidance from our thesis advisor.</p>		
<p><b>TIME:</b> June 17th to June 21st, 2019</p>		

*Adapted from Murry, K. G., Herrera, S. G., Miller, S. S., Fanning, C. A., Kavimandan, S. K., & Holmes, M. A. (2015). Effect of Transnational Standards on U.S. Teacher Education. FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education). Syakur. (2007). The Components of Speaking Ability*



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**  
**FACULTAD DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

**INTERVENTION AND OBSERVATION PLAN WEEK N° 8**

**INFORMATIVE DATA**

**Institution:** Unidad Educativa “Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano”

**Teacher:** Lic. Jorge Ortiz

**Teacher Candidate:** Jhony Armando Perez Viñanzaca

**Participants:** 9th EGB

**School Year:** 2018-2019

**Topic:** Success Against All Odds!

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM:</b> How does the use of task-based learning activities improve listening skills among students of ninth grade “A” of basic education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018- 2019 school year?		
<b>GOAL:</b> By the end of the intervention plan students will be able to develop their listening skill using task-based learning activities focused in the following aspects: Listening for gist, listening for specific information, overall understanding and inferring.		
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b> At the end of this lesson students will be able:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To infer the personality and values of historical characters by using Reasoning-gap activities.</li> </ul>		
CONTENTS	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES AVAILABLE / NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Idioms and Colloquial Expressions</b></li> </ul> <p>The sky was the limit            Against all odds            A losing battle            Look up to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Key Words</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTIVATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher provides students some pre-task activities to support them in the development of listening skills by inferring from spoke texts. For this purpose, teacher starts by asking students to give sense to a disordered story and by adding a missing ending though inferences. Then, students watch a video about the success and failures of people. Finally, students pre-practice words and phrases to be applied in the next tasks by singing along.</li> </ul> <p><b>CONNECTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students watch and listen a bio about Freddie Mercury and his career as a singer. The final part of the story is missing. Then, by using Reasoning-gap</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listening Tracks</li> <li>Cards</li>   <li>Task-Based Listening Book</li> </ul>

<p>An effort is destined to fail          You can't do anything to win          To be successful despite the difficulties          You can do whatever you want.          Successful, leader, Difficult – hard, victorious, persistent, real genius, architect, painter, engineer, poet</p>	<p>task (problem-solving activities), students infer the ending of the story and write it down in a sheet of paper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher provides students a sheet of paper with pictures of about people expressing something. Below the pictures, there are three colloquial expressions. Then, students listen and by using problem-solving activities, students infer and match the phrases with the right picture.</li> <li>• Students listen to a description about Diego Armando Maradona in which the speaker talks about his success but also about his failures that led him to have some controversies. Then, by using reasoning-gap activities, students look for words or expression that can help them to define Diego's personality among good and bad times during his career as soccer player.</li> </ul> <p><b>AFFIRMING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students listen about different famous people. Then, teacher asks students to perform a task that aims to demonstrate their skills to infer the personality and values of each character by the use of reasoning-gap activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projector</li> <li>• Speakers</li> <li>• Computer</li> <li>• Pictures</li> <li>• Lyrics song</li> <li>• Card clues</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheets</li> </ul>
<p><b>MONITORING PLAN:</b>          Data Source 1: Observation Field Notes</p> <p>Data Source 2: Worksheets</p> <p>Data source 3: Post test – Post questionnaire</p>		
<p><b>SUPPORT:</b> Coaching and guidance from our thesis advisor.</p>		
<p><b>TIME:</b> June 24th to June 28th, 2019</p>		

*Adapted from Murry, K. G., Herrera, S. G., Miller, S. S., Fanning, C. A., Kavimandan, S. K., & Holmes, M. A. (2015). Effect of Transnational Standards on U.S. Teacher Education. FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education). Syakur. (2007). The Components of Speaking Ability*





## **h. BUDGET AND FINANCING**

### **Budget**

<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>COST</b>
Internet connection	\$150.00
Print of reports	\$ 80.00
Print of the project	\$ 50.00
Print of the report and thesis	\$250.00
Unexpected expenses	\$400.00
Total	\$930,00

### **Financing**

The financing of the expenses derived from the present research work will be assumed by the research author. All expenses related to the present work will be assumed entirely by the researcher conducting the investigation.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Human**

- The researcher
- The 9<sup>th</sup> year of Basic Education
- The teacher
- The thesis advisor

### **Material**

- Task-based listening book
- Listening tracks

- Scripts
- Paper
- Tape
- Cardboard and flashcard

### **Technical**

- Computer
- Projector
- Printer
- Speakers
- Internet
- USB-pen drive

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## ANNEXES

### Annex 1: Observation sheet



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**  
**FACULTAD DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

**RESEARCHER:**

**DATA COLLECTION SOURCE: OBSERVATION SHEET**

OBSERVATION SHEET					
<b>Observation #:</b>	<b>Date/Time:</b>			<b>Role of the researcher:</b> Nonparticipant observer	
<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Participants:</b> Ninth-year students A & The researcher			<b>Duration of the observation:</b>	
<b>Objective of the session:</b>					
<b>Things to be observed (Indicators)</b>	Levels of Acceptability				Remarks
	Perfectly Acceptable	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Totally Unacceptable	
Listening for gist					
Listening for specific information					
Overall understanding					
Inferring					

**Annex 2: Field notes**



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**

**FACULTAD DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARMENT**

**DATA COLLECTION SOURCE: FIELD NOTES**

**RESEARCHER:**

<b>FIELD NOTES</b>		
<b>Observation #:</b> <b>Topic:</b> <b>Objective of the session:</b>	<b>Date/Time:</b> <b>Class size:</b> <b>Participants:</b> Ninth-year students A & The researcher	<b>Role of the researcher:</b> <b>Participant observer</b> <b>Duration of the observation:</b>
<b>Description of the event</b>		<b>Reflective Notes</b>

**Annex 3: Pre and Post-test & Scoring Guide**







**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA ÁREA DE LA  
EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT  
DATA COLLECTION SOURCE: PRE TEST / POST TEST**

**Student's code:** .....

**Date:** .....

**1. Listen and answer the following questions. (Listening for gist). (2,5. p)**

- a. Listen to a person talking about the dish he is going to prepare. Then, based on what you hear, select the name of the dish the person is going to prepare.

<b>1. Beef noodle soup</b>	<b>2. Pizza</b>	<b>3. Chicken Salad</b>	<b>4. Chocolate cake</b>
			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- b. Listen to the description about William Shakespeare. Then, circle the letter that best summarizes the topic (Gist).

**William Shakespeare**

- a. *William Shakespeare was a poet and a play write. He wrote about 37 plays including Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, Hamlet and King Lear. He also introduced about 2000 words into the English dictionary.*
- b. *William Shakespeare was an actor. He played about 68 roles in movies including Romeo and Juliet, Titanic, The Green Mile, etc. He also introduced about 2000 words into the English dictionary.*
- c. *William Shakespeare was a painter. He created the Mona Lisa, one of the most famous paintings of all time. Some of his masterpieces include: The last supper, the Vitruvian Man, Salvador Mundi, and many others.*

**2. Listen to two audios about food and famous people. Then, select the corresponding answer for each item. (Specific information). (2,5. p)**

a. Listen to the ingredients for preparing the following dish. Then, mark an X in A or B according to the ingredients mentioned by the speaker.

**COOB SALAD**



A	<input type="radio"/>	B	<input type="radio"/>
1. <u>Four</u> Eggs		1. <u>Three</u> Eggs	
2. <u>Two</u> Tomatoes		2. <u>Seven</u> Carrots	
3. <u>2 cups of cooked</u> chicken		3. <u>Some</u> Lettuce	
4. <u>Eight</u> advocado slices		4. <u>Two glasses</u> beans	
5. <u>4 slices of cooked</u> bacon		5. <u>Some</u> Fish	

b. Listen to the description of five important famous characters. Then, in the table, select the correct adjective of personality that best describes each character.

Famous characters	Descriptions			
E.g. Albert Einstein	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Passionate	<input type="checkbox"/> Brave	<input type="checkbox"/> Hardworking
1. Princess Diana 	<input type="checkbox"/> Generous	<input type="checkbox"/> Brave	<input type="checkbox"/> Helpful	<input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate
2. Kurt Cobain 	<input type="checkbox"/> Aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated	<input type="checkbox"/> Brave	<input type="checkbox"/> Emotional
3. Michael Jackson 	<input type="checkbox"/> Adventurous	<input type="checkbox"/> Courageous	<input type="checkbox"/> Dynamic	<input type="checkbox"/> Determined
4. Nelson Mandela 	<input type="checkbox"/> Courageous	<input type="checkbox"/> Charismatic	<input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual	<input type="checkbox"/> Brave

**3. Listen and select the corresponding answers for each item. (Overall Understanding). (2,5. p)**

- a. Listen to a short biography about John Lennon. Then circle the correct option to complete the following sentences.

**John Lennon**

**1. John Lennon is known in history as a famous...**

- a. Singer, actor and political activist.
- b. Painter, writer, and politician
- c. Orator and philosopher

**2. John was born on...**

- a. November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1895, London, England
- b. October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1940, Liverpool, England
- c. May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1920, Washington, Dc.

**3. At the age of 16 he met...**

- a. Elvis Presley
- b. Kurt Cobain
- c. Paul McCartney

**4. John Lennon created the band...**

- a. The Beatles
- b. The rolling stones
- c. The Queen

- b. Listen about Eminem's life. Then order the events in chronological order according to the audio.

**The life of Marshall Matters III**

\_\_\_ a. Eminem became popular in 1999 with his album The Slim Shady LP which won a Grammy Award for Best Rap Album.

\_\_\_ b. He won the Academy Award for Best Original Song for a song in the film 8 Mile.

\_\_\_ c. Marshall Bruce Mathers, known as Eminem was born on October 17, 1972, in Kansas, Missouri, USA.

\_\_\_ d. Eminem is also ranked in the 100 Greatest Artists of All Time by Rolling Stone magazine.

\_\_\_ e. The Marshall Mathers LP and his third album, The Eminem Show, also won Grammy Awards, and in 2002.

**4. Listen and infer the suitable answer for each of the following statements. (Making inferences).**

- a. Listen to an audio about eating food manners. Then, circle the correct answer for the following announcements.

**1. In Europe, it considered a bad eating manner to...**

- a. To touch the meal with the hands
- b. To make noise when eating soup
- c. To use the cellphone while eating

**2. Children .....table manners from parents.**

- a. teach
- b. consider
- c. learn

- b. Listen to the second part about eating food manners and match each statement with its corresponding answer to complete the idea.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1. In Arab countries, it is normal to...</b></p> | <p>a. Put the fork in the left hand</p> <p>b. Touch food with hands.</p> <p>c. Make a noise when</p> <p>a. Good table manners.</p> |
| <p><b>2. The best title for this passage is...</b></p> | <p>b. Food in Palestine.</p> <p>c. Restaurants around the world.</p>   |

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COLLABORATION**



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**  
**FACULTAD DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

**Pre- Post Test Scoring Guide**

**QUESTION 1**

**GIST**

LITERAL	ANSWER	SCORE
A	Chicken Salad	1.25
B	Letter A	1.25

**QUESTION 2**

**SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

LITERAL	OPTION	ANSWER	SCORE
A	Letter A and B	Letter A	1.00
B	Prince Diana	Compasionate	0.375
	Kurt Cobain	Emotional	0.375
	Michael Jackson	Dynamic	0.375
	Nelson Mandela	Courageous	0.375

**QUESTION 3**

**OVERALL UNDERSTANDING**

LITERAL	OPTION	ANSWER	SCORE
A	One	Letter A	0.3125
	Two	Letter B	0.3125
	Three	Letter C	0.3125
	Four	Letter A	0.3125
B	A	Number two	0.25
	B	Number four	0.25
	C	Number One	0.25
	D	Number Five	0.25
	E	Number Three	0.25

**QUESTION 4**  
**INFERRING**

<b>LITERAL</b>	<b>OPTION</b>	<b>ANSWER</b>	<b>SCORE</b>
A	One	Letter A	0.625
	Two	Letter C	0.625
B	One	Letter B	0.625
	Two	Letter A	0.625



#### Annex 4. Pre and Post Questionnaire



## UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

**DATA COLLECTION SOURCE: PRE / POST QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Dear student,** answer the following questionnaire with sincerity about the English subject. Your answers will be anonymous and confidential.

**Student's code:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Instruction:** Mark with an X the answer that best reflects your personal opinion.

**1. How often does your teacher use ordering and sorting activities to improve your listening skills?**

Always ( )

Sometimes ( )

Frequently ( )

Never ( )

**2. How useful do you think ordering and sorting activities are to the improvement of your listening skills?**

Very useful ( )

Somewhat useful ( )

Not very useful ( )

Not at all useful ( )

**3. How regularly does your teacher apply problem-solving activities to improve your listening skills?**

A great deal ( )

Somewhat ( )

Very little ( )

Not at all ( )

**4. How useful do you think the application of problem-solving activities in the classroom is for the improvement of your listening skills?**

Very useful ( )

Somewhat useful ( )

Not very useful ( )

Not at all useful ( )

**5. How difficult do you think the development of problem-solving and ordering and sorting activities is to improve your listening skills?**

Very hard ( )

Hard ( )

Easy ( )

Very easy ( )

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COLLABORATION**

**Annex 5: Research Matrix**

**Theme: TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS OF NINTH YEAR “A” OF BASIC EDUCATION, AFTERNOON SESSION AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA DR. MANUEL AGUSTÍN CABRERA LOZANO IN THE CITY OF LOJA DURING THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR.**

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Theoretical Frame</b>	<b>Methodological design (Action Research)</b>	<b>Techniques and instruments</b>
<p><b>General</b> How does the task-based learning activities improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 School Year?</p> <p><b>Specific</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What theoretical and methodological references about task-based learning activities are adequate to improve listening skills among</li> </ul>	<p><b>General</b> To improve listening skills through task-based learning activities among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year.</p> <p><b>Specific</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To research the theoretical and methodological references about task-based learning</li> </ul>	<p><b>Independent variable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Task-based learning activities</li> <li>▪ Task-based learning</li> <li>▪ Defining a task</li> <li>▪ Background of task-based language learning</li> <li>▪ Task-based methodology framework</li> <li>▪ Timing</li> <li>▪ Types of tasks</li> <li>▪ Teachers and students’ roles</li> </ul>	<p><b>Preliminary investigation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Observing the English classes</li> <li>▪ Stating the background of the problem</li> <li>▪ Describing the current situation</li> <li>▪ Locating and reviewing the literature</li> <li>▪ Creating a methodological framework for research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Observation sheet</li> <li>▪ Pre and post-test</li> <li>▪ Pre and post questionnaire.</li> <li>▪ Field notes</li> </ul>

<p>students on ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are the issues that limit the improvement of listening skills among students on ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year?</li> <li>▪ What are the phases of the intervention plan that help the current issues to achieve a satisfactory outcome on to improve listening skills among students on</li> </ul>	<p>activities and their application on listening skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To diagnose the issues that limit the improvement of listening skills in the English language among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year</li> <li>▪ To design an intervention plan based on task-based learning activities in order to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengths of Task-based language learning</li> </ul> <p><b>Dependent variable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Listening (Process)</li> <li>▪ Differences between hearing and listening</li> <li>▪ Approaches of listening</li> <li>▪ Stages of listening skill</li> <li>▪ Listening subskills</li> <li>▪ Difficulties in listening</li> <li>▪ The importance of listening in language learning</li> <li>▪ Task-based listening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Designing an intervention plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Intervention and observation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Administering test and questionnaires.</li> <li>▪ Observing and monitoring students’ performance according to the intervention plan</li> <li>▪ Presentation of research findings</li> <li>▪ Reflecting, analyzing and answering the proposed inquires</li> <li>▪ Organizing the final report</li> </ul>	
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<p>ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Which task-based learning activities are implemented to improve listening skills among students on ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year?</li> <li>▪ How effective is the application of task-based learning activities in improving listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic</li> </ul>	<p>Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To apply the most suitable task-based learning activities in order to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year</li> <li>▪ To validate the results obtained after the application of task-based learning activities to improve listening skills among students of ninth year “A” of Basic Education, afternoon session at Unidad</li> </ul>			
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<p>Education afternoon session at Unidad Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year?</p>	<p>Educativa Dr. Manuel Agustín Cabrera Lozano in the city of Loja during the 2018-2019 school year</p>			
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## Annex 6. Grading Scales

### Listening Skills

<b>Quantitative score range</b>	<b>Qualitative score range</b>
10	Superior
9	Excellent
7-8	Average
5-6	Below average
4	Failing

### TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

<b>Quantitative score range</b>	<b>Qualitative score range</b>
81-100	High level of effectiveness of task-based learning activities
61-80	Expected level of effectiveness of task-based learning activities
41-60	Moderate level of effectiveness of task-based learning activities
21-40	Unexpected level of effectiveness of task-based learning activities
01-20	Low level of effectiveness of task-based learning activities

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