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TASK BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING IN CLIL
THEORY AND APPLICATION

Trabajo Fin de Grado
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Empezar es ya más de la mitad del todo

ARISTÓTELES

Resumen

El siguiente Trabajo de Final de Grado pretende profundizar en dos metodologías de la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera: el aprendizaje mediante tareas, en inglés Task-based Language Learning, y el Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenido y Lengua Extranjera (AICLE), conocido como CLIL en inglés. Además de presentar un marco teórico completo y fiable sobre estos dos métodos, el trabajo busca combinarlos en una misma Unidad Didáctica que será llevada a la práctica y evaluada.

Resum

El següent Treball de Final de Grau pretén aprofundir en dos metodologies de l'ensenyament de l'anglès: l'aprenentatge per mitjà de tasques, en anglès Task-based Language Learning, i l' Aprenentatge Integrat de Contingut i Llengua Estrangera (AICLE), conegut com a CLIL en anglès. A més de presentar un marc teòric complet i fiable sobre aquests dos mètodes, el treball busca combinar-los en una mateixa Unitat Didàctica que serà duta a la pràctica i avaluada.

Abstract

The present Final of Degree Project tries to deepen into two foreign language teaching methodologies: Task-based Language Learning (TBL) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Apart from presenting a complete and solid theoretical framework about both methods, this project seeks to combine them in one Didactic Unit, which will be put into practice and evaluated.

Palabras claves / *Keywords*

Task – CLIL – Foreign – Language – Teaching – Methodology – English

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Introduction

I have always had a special interest for the English Language. When I decided to study the Primary Education degree, I chose to complement it with English Studies. During these years, I have had the opportunity of coming to know the methodology of Task-Based Language Learning (TBL). Also, when I was at school, I had a subject, science, that followed the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) insight. These experiences with both methods prompted in me a desire to investigate about effective and innovative ways of learning English.

In this project, I have brought together my two centres of interest: education and English. My aim is to deepen into two language learning approaches, TBL and CLIL, which I find interesting and engaging, as well as with a big practical potencial. I want to find out if the combination of both methods in a lesson is possible and effective. For this purpose, I will present their theoretical framework and evaluate their practical application in a real classroom.

My project will consist of four parts. The first three will be more theoretical. In the first part I will introduce three different approaches to language teaching, in order to set a framework for TBL and CLIL. In the following two sections, I will try to give a complete and solid explanation of the main features that compose TBL (second part) and CLIL (third part). In front of the large amount of information that can be found in the Internet, I have mostly based my account on books published by respected editorials, such as Mcmillan, Cambridge and Oxford, which assure a quality filtre.

Once the theoretical section is covered, I will present my own task design, which seeks to include the most effective characteristics of both methods, as have been presented in the theoretical frame. At first, I will provide a task description. Then, I will offer the information following the structure of the standardized Didactic Unit. Finally, I will evaluate the results. To do so, I have used a guideline (see annex) for me to follow during my observation of the task and a survey for students to express their opinion on the task.

Finally, I would like to thank my tutor, Prof. Agustina Lacarte, for her aivailability, orientation and support. Also, I would like to thank Núria and Luz, both teachers of the school Cardenal Spinola, for helping me and letting me carry out my Task-based CLIL lesson in their classroom.

1. Approaches to language teaching

1.1. Focus on Forms

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers have argued about which is the best mode of instruction in order to learn a second language (L2). Some think that it is necessary to pay conscious attention to form. This first group believes that explicit linguistic teaching is needed in order to achieve high levels of competence in L2. The syllabus of a focus on forms instruction is divided into linguistic units (collocations, grammar rules, phonemes, structures, functions…). These units are taught one at a time or in contrastive pairs (e.g. present simple vs present continuous) in teacher-centred classes. Learners assimilate them separately and step by step. For example, firstly they learn how to formulate questions and later they learn to use question tags. They are supposed to stick together the units that they have learnt separately so that they are able to communicate. Therefore, students must accumulate the different linguistic parts until the whole structure of the language has been built up, so that they internalise the system (Wilkins, 1976, p. 2). As the following image shows, we can say that the learner's role is to synthesise the different units for use in communication (Long and Robinson, 1998, p. 16).

*Figure 1*. Learner synthesising linguistic items for use in communication.

Source. Adapted from Gilabert (2014b).

The main method framed in this approach is PPP, that is, Presentation, Practise and Production. It is the methodology mostly followed by language textbooks and regular foreign language lessons. The aim of a PPP lesson is to teach a specific linguistic form.

In the presentation stage, the teacher presents the target item. Then comes the practise phase, where students do some activities related with the form. For example, matching parts of sentences, repeating dialogues, completing sentences and answering questions using pre-specified forms (Willis, 1996, p. 134). Finally, during the production stage, learners are expected to produce the previously learned language, but in very controlled situations, such as role plays.

We can object some elements of this method. Strong findings in Second Language Acquistion (SLA) show that students don't learn in one go. That is, they don't acquire language in a linear way. If we had to draw a line representing how students learn, it wouldn't be a unidirectional straight line but a zig zag or U-shaped curve. As we can see in the image below, these curves represent that students learn a structure at first but then it can temporary deteriorate or even disappear until it appears again (Gilabert, 2014b).

Figure 2. U-shaped Curve of Language Acquistion.
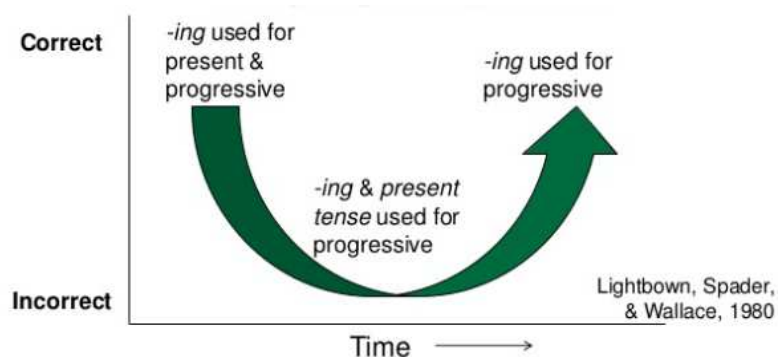
Source. Northern Virginia Community Colledge (2013).

Moreover, learners create provisional categories which they restructure as they receive more input and interact with others. For example, when a student learns to negate, it is typical that instead of using the correct form "*doesn't*" with the 3rd person singular, he uses "don't" (e.g. He don't come). In fact, students follow a number of developmental sequences when acquiring word order, interrogatives, negation, pronouns and other grammatical features (Long and Robinson, 1998, p. 17). As an evidence of these developmental sequences, we are going to present the different stages that students may follow to acquire negation in English:

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Figure 3. Developmental sequences in the acquisition of Negation

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Negative element before the verb or before the element that they want to negate. E.g. No bicycle. I not like it. Not my friend.	There is an overuse of *don't*, even when modals are used. E.g. He don't like. I don't can sing.	We can find the negative element *not* after *to be/can.* E.g. You can not go there. He was not happy. *Don't* is not analysed yet. E.g. She don't like rice.	*Do* is usually marked for tense, person and number. E.g. It doesn't work. We didn't have supper. But still they make mistakes like marking tense, person and number on both the auxiliary and the verb. E.g. I didn't went.

Source. Adapted from Lightbrown and Spada (2006).

Therefore, it usually happens that you are teaching something that they are not ready to learn because they are not in that developmental sequence. Teachers expect students to learn things straight away; but the truth is that students need time to learn and produce L2 structures because, as we have mentioned, they don't learn in one go. They learn what they are ready to learn and, unfortunately, what we teach, when we teach it, is not what they learn (Long and Robinson, 1998, p.17).

Another problem of the focus on forms instruction is that it leaves little room to accommodate individual differences (Gilabert, 2014b). That happens because each student can be at a different developmental stage although you expect them to be at a certain level that you have taught. As Willis (1996) explains:

> Spending twenty minutes on presenting and practising one single structure to perfection is likely to benefit only the very few learners who happen to be ready to use it. Some may know it already and it might be beyond the grasp of the rest. For these students, such a practise is largely a waste of time (p. 15).

Then, if this approach presents so many drawbacks, why is it so popular? The linguist Skehan (1998) points out some reasons. First of all, a syllabus based on this type of approach presents clear learning goals and a well-defined evaluation system, which gives teachers a sense of professionalism. Moreover, the focus on forms syllabus are organised into units without the interference of the learner. Then, it is easier for teachers, especially for the non-native ones, because they have the control of the lesson. Finally, this approach is promoted by publishing companies because it is more economical. It is cheaper to produce a universal student's book that theoretically covers a broad range of learners than having to adapt the curriculum to different countries, communities or cultures.

To conclude, we can say that this approach presents many flaws and the practices and procedures that poses disregard what linguists tell us about how learners acquire a second language. Then, following the PPP method doesn't seem to be the best way to help learners acquire the L2.

1.2. Focus on Meaning

There are other researchers who believe that it is enough with being exposed to meaningful input and practise the language in order to acquire it. This second group supports focus on meaning instruction, which is purely communicative.

If a teacher follows this method, he organises the syllabus in subject-matter units (content units). These units are taught in teacher-centred classes, where the relation between the teacher and the learner is unidirectional. The students learn the language incidentally, without intention or awareness. They must unconsciously analyse and acquire the language figuring out the rules by themselves. Therefore, the learner's role in these lessons will be to unconsciously process the linguistic input, find the regularities of the language and then, induce the rules. That is why there is no explicit focus on the language at all (Gilabert, 2014c). In order to understand better how language is learnt through this method, we can think of a student who reads a text where the 3rd person singular –s is very present. S/he will be expected, without any guidance from the teacher, to unconsciously analyse the input, work out the rule and produce sentences according to the rule.

Another characteristic of this method is that the teacher doesn't provide negative feedback (information about what is not permissible in the language) but positive evidence (information about what is permissible) and realistic materials (White, 1989, p. 50).

However, there are some problems with this type of approach. First of all, it assumes that the learner will be able to acquire the language without error correction or any rule explanation, similar to the way babies learn their L1. Nevertheless, as we can see in the following chart, in many aspects L1 and L2 acquisition is different (Ellis, 1992).

Figure 4. Differences in L1 and L2 acquisition.

L1 Acquisition	L2 Acquisition
• Easier, requires less effort	• It's more difficult
• It's learned in an informal/ family context	• It's learned in formal contexts
• Complete mastery of the language	• Incomplete attainment (success is not guaranteed)
• It happens at a younger age	• It usually happens at older ages
• It happens without awareness/ implicitly	• It's learned explicitly, by learning rules.
• No interference from any language	• There is interference from the L1 and other languages previously learned

Source. Adapted from Ellis (1992) and Gilabert (2014a).

The TKT (Teaching Knowledge Test) course also devotes a chapter of its preparation module to outstanding the differences between L1 and L2 learning (Spratt et al., 2011, p. 48-49):

Figure 5. Differences between L1 and L2 learning.

	L1 Learning	L2 learning (in the classroom)
AGE	• Baby to young child. (L1 learning lasts into adolescence for some kinds of language and language skills, e.g. academic writing).	• Usually at primary school and/ or secondary school. It can also start or continue in adulthood.
WAYS OF LEARNING	• By exposure to and picking up language. • By waiting and needing to communicate, i.e. with strong motivation. • Through interaction with family and friends. • By talking about things present in the child's surroundings. • By listening to and taking in language for many months before using it (silent period). • By playing and experimenting with new language	• Sometimes through exposure but often by being taught specific language. • With strong, little or no motivation. • Through interaction with a teacher and sometimes with classmates. • Often by talking about life outside the classroom. • Often by needing to produce language soon after it has been taught. • Often by using language in controlled practice activities.
CONTEXT	• The child hears the language around him/her all the time.	• The learner is not exposed to the L2 very much- often no more than about three hours per week.

• Family and friends talk to and interact with the child a lot. • The child has lots of opportunities to experiment with language. • Caretakers often praise (tell the child he/she has done well) and encourage the child's use of language. • Caretakers simplify their speech to the child. • Caretakers rarely correct the form and accuracy of what the child says in an obvious way.	• Teachers usually simplify their language. • Teachers vary in the amount they praise or encourage learners. • The learner receives little individual attention from the teacher. • Teachers generally correct learners a lot.

Source: Spratt et al. (2011, p. 48-49)

Linguists have evidenced that from childhood to adulthood humans lose some innate abilities to learn language. Lightbown and Spada (2006) explain it well:

> […] there is a time in human development when the brain is predisposed for success in language learning [this time is called the critical period]. Developmental changes in the brain, it is argued, affect the nature of language acquisition, and language learning that occurs after the end of the critical period may not be based on the innate biological structures believed to contribute to first language acquisition or second language acquisition in early childhood. Rather, older learners may depend on more general learning abilities-the same ones they might use to learn other kinds of skills or information. It is argued that these general learning abilities are not as effective for language learning as the more specific, innate capacities that are available to the young child. It is most often claimed that the critical period ends somewhere around puberty, but some researchers suggest it could be even earlier (p. 68).

Therefore, it is wrong to assume that L2 learners, especially the older ones, will be able to acquire language in the same way as babies acquire their L1.

Another argument that weakens the effectiveness of this approach is that in places where meaning-focus immersion programs are successful, such as in Quebec, Canada, students have got to master English in the comprehension field but they didn't develop native-like levels in production (Swain, 1991). Finally, some studies have shown that "naturalistic" learners learn more slowly than "instructed" learners (Gilabert, 2014c).

Then, we can conclude that input alone is not enough in order to learn an L2 and some degree of instruction is necessary. Instruction will help learners to be aware of specific items of the target language that otherwise they would not have noticed. Also, instruction "can give students the opportunity to process grammatical and

lexical patterns, and to form hypotheses about their use and meaning" (Willis, 1996, p. 15). We find therefore, that some kind of focus on language structures is essential for language learning.

1.3. Focus on Form

However, Long and Robinson (1998) posed that both Focus on Forms and Focus on Meaning approaches make valuable contributions and that they should complement each other. They present the Focus on Form approach, which in their view maintains a balance between the two: language is addressed as it incidentally appears in meaning-driven activities. It is in this approach where our End of Degree Project is framed.

If a teacher follows this approach, s/he organises the units into pedagogical tasks. These are activities in which communication is involved to solve a problem. We will define them in detail in section 2.

The tasks are taught in learner-centred classes. The language is meant to be learned in context, both unconsciously and paying attention to form. In contrast with the focus on meaning approach, the learner's role is to analyse the regularities of the language actively and consciously. The student will have to focus on meaning as well as on the teacher's clarifications and corrections. Therefore, there is an incidental focus on form, since the language is addressed as it incidentally appears in meaning-oriented activities (Gilabert, 2014d). For example, a possible task could be giving directions to a person, in this case another student. The learner who is giving the directions will be focusing on the information he wants to convey (focus on meaning); however, if he suddenly doesn't remember how to say something, he will probably ask his partner for help or use other techniques to solve the conversational problem (incidental focus on form/ language).

That being said, CLIL is also a focus on form method. It integrates the teaching of curricular content with the teaching of an L2. Therefore, students will be focusing on meaning at the same time as they learn language forms and develop their linguistic skills.

Consequently, we consider that this approach is the most complete and effective for learning a second language. Throughout this project, we will take a closer look at its characteristics, since, as we have mentioned before, the two methodologies that we are going to cover are framed in this sphere.

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1.3.1. Communicative Language Teaching

Before we start exploring TBL, it is important to mention that the methods that we will examine in this project are current trends of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This approach has been implemented since the late 1990s to the present and, as the name denotes, it aims at teaching the communicative competence (Lowes and Target, 1998, p. 2). The ten core assumptions of CLT, as stated by J. Richards (2006, p. 22-23) are:

1. Second language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication.

2. Effective classroom learning tasks and exercises provide opportunities for students to negotiate meaning, expand their language resources, notice how language is used, and take part in meaningful interpersonal exchange.

3. Meaningful communication results from students processing content that is relevant, purposeful, interesting, and engaging.

4. Communication is a holistic process that often calls upon the use of several language skills or modalities.

5. Language learning is facilitated both by activities that involve inductive or discovery learning of underlying rules of language use and organization, as well as by those involving language analysis and reflection.

6. Language learning is a gradual process that involves creative use of language, and trial and error. Although errors are a normal product of learning, the ultimate goal of learning is to be able to use the new language both accurately and fluently.

7. Learners develop their own routes to language learning, progress at different rates, and have different needs and motivations for language learning.

8. Successful language learning involves the use of effective learning and communication strategies.

9. The role of the teacher in the language classroom is that of a facilitator, who creates a classroom climate conducive to language learning and provides opportunities for students to use and practice the language and to reflect on language use and language learning.

10. The classroom is a community where learners learn through collaboration and sharing.

These characteristics are present in both Task-based Language Learning and CLIL context, as we will acknowledge throughout the project.

2. Task-based Language Learning and Teaching

2.1. What is a pedagogical task?

In literature, tasks have been defined in a wide variety of ways according to different perspectives and purposes. Long (1985) describes a task as "a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a fence, dressing a child, filling out a form… In other words, by "task" is meant the hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between" (p. 89). Then, we can say that the word "task", as a concept, is any activity carried out with a specific goal.

However, these descriptions are very general and, for the purpose of this project, we will need to narrow the scope to education. What do we understand by "tasks" in the educational field? Again, the definitions are broad and linguists differ on them. In the following chart we present the three definitions that we find more enlightening and useful for this project.

Skehan (1998, p. 95)	"An activity in which meaning is primary; there is some kind of communication problem to solve; there is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities; task completion has some priority; the assessment of the task is in terms of outcome".
R. Gilabert (2014d)	"A differentiated goal-oriented process, with a number of steps, which draws on a series of cognitive and communicative procedures, and that has a defined outcome. Additionally, tasks are sequenceable and can be subjected to pedagogical intervention".
Ellis (2003, p. 16)	"A workplan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task my predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can

	engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills, and also various cognitive processes".

From these definitions we can point out the main features that a task has:

1) There is a primary focus on meaning. When learners perform a task, their attention is primarily on meaning, since they want to convey some sort of information that is vital to solve a problem.

2) There is a need to communicate in order to close some kind of gap. This gap will motivate the learners to use language and all their resources to try to close it. The gap creates the need to communicate, because there is a gap or problem to solve.

3) Language is used as the means to convey meaning. As Ellis (2003) puts it, "a task seeks to engage learners in using language pragmatically rather than displaying language" (p. 9). Then, language is the means to reach the goal of the task. It is used in a functional way, as an instrument for communication and not as the object of the activity. Students have to rely on their own resources, whether they are linguistic or non-linguistic, in order to complete the task. Therefore, the materials that the teacher provides don't dictate the linguistic structures that learners have to use (Ellis, 2012, p. 18).

4) There is a clear communicative outcome. Learners are expected to complete the task and close the information/opinion gap. They are expected to reach the goal, which is non-linguistic.

5) There is a relation with real world language use. A task can require learners to engage in a real world activity such as giving directions. However, the task can also be artificial such as ordering a story. Whether it is one case or another, the language used to perform the task will reflect the one in real world communication (Ellis, 2003, p. 10). Then, although the activity or its content may not be realistic, the language involved will be.

Now we will present an example of a task, based on Ellis (2012, p. 18), in order to illustrate these characteristics. The task consists of spotting the difference. The class is organised in pairs and each student is given a picture. The teacher tells the learners that the two pictures are almost identical but that there are seven differences. Without showing the pictures to each other, they have to identify them.

If we analyse the task, we can see:

1) There is a primary focus on meaning, since students have to understand each other to spot the differences.

2) There is a need to communicate because each student has a different picture (information gap).

3) Language is used as a means to spot the differences. Students will use any strategies that they have (linguistic or non-linguistic) to make themselves understood.

4) There is a clear outcome, which is the list of differences.

5) Although the activity is clearly artificial, the language that elicits may resemble the one that we can find in real world communication. For example, trying to give clear information so that someone can identify the thing we are talking about.

Then, we can say that this "spot the difference" activity is a task because it meets the five requirements that we stated before. Still, we may wonder how different tasks are to exercises. Hereafter we will explain two language activities in order to make this difference more evident.

Activity 1: Chunks on cards (Thornbury, 2005, p. 74). Learners work in pairs or groups of three to work on a dialogue. Each one will have a card with some expressions, such as *it seems that, by the way, I tend to,* etc. Students will try to include as many expressions as they can in their conversation. Whenever they use one of the given expressions, they will put the card in a discard pile. Also, this can be turned into a game when the first person to discard all their cards becomes the winner.

Activity 2: Candidates for a job (Ellis, 2012, p. 20). Learners are presented a work-sheet

with different applicants for a job, for example, as a teacher in the school. They work in small groups and discuss which person they would choose.

Figure 6. "Candidates for a job" task.

Candidates for a job

Imagine you are a student in a private language school. Consider the following four applications for a job as a teacher in your school. Which of the applicants would you hope would be chosen for the job? Discuss with the other student in your group.

> ➤ JOCK, aged 30

B.A. in social studies.

Has spent a year working his way round the world.

Has spent six years teaching economics in state school.

Has written a highly successful novel about teachers.

Has lived in a back-to-nature commune for two years.

Has been married twice- now divorced. Two children.

Has been running local youth group for three years.

> ➤ BETTY, aged 45

Has been married for 24 years, three children.

Has not worked most of that time.

Has done evening courses in youth guidance.

Has spent the last year teaching pupils privately for state exams - with good results.

Has been constantly active in local government- has been elected to local council twice.

> ➤ ROBERT, aged 27

Has never been married, no children.

Has served a term in prison - killed a man in a drunken fight; but has committed no further crimes since release two years ago.

Has recently become a Catholic, regularly goes to church.

Has been working in school for mentally retarded in poor area – has been recommended by principal of the school.

Has followed no course of formal study.

> ➤ CLAIRE, aged 60

Has been married, husband now dead, no children.

Has been a teacher for 35 years, mostly teaching English abroad.

Has lived many years in the Far East (husband was diplomat).

Has taught English in British Council school in Singapore and Hong Kong.

Has been Principal of British School for girls in Kuala Lumpur.

Husband died two years ago; since then has been in this country, doing voluntary youth work; has recently completed Diploma in Youth Counselling.

Source: Ellis (2012, p. 20)

To see to which extent these two activities can be considered tasks, we will evaluate them in terms of the five criteria mentioned above.

CRITERIA	CHUNKS ON CARDS	CANDIDATES FOR A JOB
1.Primary focus on meaning	No	Yes
2.Gap	No	Yes
3.Language as a means	No	Yes
4.Communicative outcome	No	Yes
5.Real world language use	No	Yes

As we can see in the table, "Chunks on cards" doesn't meet the first criteria because the focus is not primarily in meaning but in the expressions or grammatical structures that learners have to use. Moreover, there is no need to communicate because there is no problem/gap to solve. Students will have the conversation for the sole purpose of discarding the expressions, not because they have a meaning to convey. Then, it doesn't fulfil the second requirement. Also, language is the object of the activity and learners can't choose the linguistic resources that they want to use. So, the third criteria is not satisfied either and neither is the fourth one. There is no communicative outcome since students don't have to reach any conclusion in their conversation. They just have to practice language for its own sake and the only outcome is the performance of the activity itself. Finally, the language use doesn't resemble the one used in the real world. When people communicate in their everyday life, they do it for a purpose that isn't practising and discarding certain expressions. Therefore, we can conclude that the activity "Chunks on cards" is an exercise. Although it may be valuable for practising language, it is not a task.

On the contrary, the activity "Candidates for a job" meets all the five characteristics of tasks. First of all, there is a primary focus on meaning because learners are mainly concerned about choosing the best applicant for the job. Secondly, there is an opinion gap because each student may think differently and have a different choice for the teacher job. Third, language is the tool used to express their opinion. They are not given any linguistic forms to be used, although the design of the task may predispose them to use some (for example, the present perfect). As to the fourth criteria, there is a communicative outcome which is the chosen applicant. Then, we can establish a separate outcome other than using the language. The task will be completed when students choose a suitable applicant for the teacher's job. Finally, the language that is produced is authentic and realistic because it involves processes of language use that can be found in real world, such as giving and justifying opinions. Therefore, in conclusion, the activity "Candidates for a job" is a task because it meets all the required criteria, opposite to the exercise "Chunks on cards".

However, this differentiation between tasks and exercises may not be as radical as we have shown in the examples. It can happen that a given activity presents characteristics of a task and an exercise. Also, we think that it is important to mention that with these distinctions we are not disregarding the value of exercises as pedagogical activities. As Ellis (2012) says, "both [exercises and tasks] may have a place in a language course as they cater to different aspects of language learning". However, he continues, "a course that consists only of 'exercises' is unlikely to develop the kinds of communicative skills that students need in order to cope with the exigencies of real-life communication outside the classroom" (p. 19).

2.2. Classification of tasks

There is a wide variety of task types, and therefore, different approaches to task classification. In this section we will present a general classification posed by Ellis. Also, we will use this classification to introduce the types of tasks that we can find.

Ellis' task framework draws on three approaches to task classification: the rhetorical, the cognitive and the psycholinguistic. He develops this organisation as a check-list of task-types in order to aid teachers in the process of task selection (Ellis, 2003, p. 211). Establishing an accurate classification of tasks is important because it presents the diverse types of tasks that exist so that teachers can experiment with them in their classrooms. They can try out the different types and choose the ones that work best for their students. In this way, teachers can consider from a range of tasks the features that match their learners' needs and preferences and select and combine them to create personalised tasks for their particular learners.

In order to design a task, the starting point will be choosing a pedagogic task type. To do so, we can rely on Willis (1996, p. 149-54) classification of tasks. She explains that depending on the type of operation that the task involves, it can be a:

1) Listing task: when the outcome is a list.

2) Ordering and sorting task: when it requires learners to sequence and classify items.

3) Comparing task: when it entails finding similarities and differences.

4) Problem-solving task: when it requires some kind of intellectual activity as in puzzles or logic problems (Ellis, 2003, p. 212).

5) Sharing personal experiences: when learners can talk freely about their personal experiences.

6) Creative tasks: when it involves a project or carrying out some kind of research.

Once we have decided the pedagogical task type, we can narrow the task design by choosing the key dimensions that we want it to have. For this step, we can use the general task framework posed by Ellis.

Figure 7. A general task framework.

Design feature	Key dimensions

Input, i.e. the nature of the input provided in the task	1. Medium
	   a. Pictorial
	   b. Oral
	   c. Written
	2. Organization
	   a. Tight structure
	   b. Loose structure

Conditions, i.e. way in which the information is presented to the learners and the way in which it is to be used	1. Information configuration
	   a. Split
	   b. Shared
	2. Interactant relationship
	   a. One- way
	   b. Two- way
	3. Interaction requirements
	   a. Required
	   b. Optional
	4. Orientation
	   a. Convergent
	   b. Divergent

Processes, i.e. the nature of the cognitive operations and the discourse the task requires	1. Cognitive
	   a. Exchanging information
	   b. Exchanging opinions
	   c. Explaining/reasoning
	2. Discourse mode
	   a. Monologic
	   b. Dialogic

Outcomes, i.e. the nature of the product that results from performing the task	1. Medium
	   a. Pictorial
	   b. Oral
	   c. Written
	2. Discourse domain/ genre, e.g. description, argument; recipes,

	political speeches.	
	3. Scope	
	a. Closed	
	b. Open	

Source: Ellis (2003, p. 217).

The first design feature that Ellis presents is the input, that is, the data that the learner is exposed to. As the table shows, it can be pictorial (visual), oral (entails listening) or written. This input can be also organised depending on its structure. If it is very clearly defined and precise, we will talk about a tight structure (for example, the candidates for a job input). However, if it is vaguer and imprecise, we will have a task with a loose structure (for example, an open debate).

The next task variable is the conditions. These have to do with how information is presented. Ellis emphasizes that input and conditions are two different task components. He makes this distinction clear when he says:

> […] A task may have the same input, for example, a set of pictures telling a story, but different conditions, for example, the pictures could be seen by all the participants or they could be divided up among them. Likewise, a task could have different input, for example, a set of pictures vs. a written story, but the same condition, for example, the information was split (Ellis, 2003, p. 19).

As we can see in the table above, conditions can be categorised into four dimensions. The first one is information configuration. This concerns who has the information in the task. If all participants have access to it, it will be "shared" (for example, candidates for a job task); while if it is divided among the learners, it will be "split" (for example, spot the difference task). Shared information tasks invite learners to discuss, debate and reach a consensus. On the other hand, split information tasks force interlocutors to exchange data with one another to complete the activity. Newton and Kennedy (1996) state that split information tasks ensure more balanced participation and generate more talk, although less complex language; while in shared information tasks learners tend to produce more complex grammar.

The second dimension is interactant relationship. This has to do with who requests and supplies the information. When data flows in only one direction and there is only one learner supplying information, the interactant relationship will be one-way. However, if the data flow is bidirectional, with both students supplying and requesting information, the interactant relationship will be two-way. An example of a one-way task is giving instructions. Only one student knows the instructions and he or she transmits them to the other student. Then, information flows from learner A to learner

B but not vice versa. Instead, in the spot the difference task, both learners provide and request information. This activity is an example of a two-way task.

The third dimension is interaction requirement. This concerns whether learners have to interact or if it is optional. For example, the task spot the difference requires learners to describe their pictures to one another, ask for information and negotiate meaning (required interaction). However, in the giving instructions task interaction is optional because one of the learners can simply listen to the directions without requesting any extra information (optional interaction).

The last dimension is orientation. This refers to the goal of the task, whether participants have to agree on a single outcome (convergent) or they can disagree (divergent). The task is convergent when students have to collaborate and agree on a solution to a problem, for example, what items to take on to a desert island. This contrasts with divergent tasks, where students don't have to agree with one solution. For example, a debate where each student is assigned a viewpoint and has to refute his or her partner's (Ellis, 2003, p. 90).

One may notice that these four dimensions are closely linked to one another and that selecting one may imply the others. For example, a task where information is split will require learners to interact more than if the information was shared. Teachers should be aware of that so that they can choose wisely the features of their tasks.

We believe that the other key dimensions presented in Ellis' table are self-explanatory. However, the scope feature needs a clarification. It has to do with the outcome options of a task. When there is only one correct solution, it will be a closed task. Instead, if there is more than one possible outcome, it will be an open task. For example, the spot the difference task is closed because there is just one right answer: the list of differences. Instead, in a debate, students can reach several different conclusions. Therefore, it will be an open task.

It is important to distinguish between the open/close feature with the divergent/convergent feature. For example, before, we mentioned a convergent task where students had to agree on what items to take on to a desert island. This task is convergent because they have to agree but it is open, since there is not one correct solution and depending on the students they will solve it in one way or another. However, when students debate on the pros and cons of television, the task is open (there is no correct answer) and divergent (they don't have to agree) (Ellis, 2003, p. 90). Then, we have to say that the divergent/convergent distinction is a subcategory of open tasks because both convergent and divergent tasks are open in nature.

2.3. Design of a task-based lesson

In addition to deciding the task features, teachers have to decide what method they will follow to execute the task work plan in their classroom. The most common methodological procedure in task-based instruction has three main parts: the pre-task, the during task or task, and the post-task. These three phases configure the stages of a task-based lesson. However, although the structure of these lessons is quite settled, teachers can choose the way in which they want to carry out each phase. This means that within the established framework, there is room for the teacher's creativity in the arrangement of the task components.
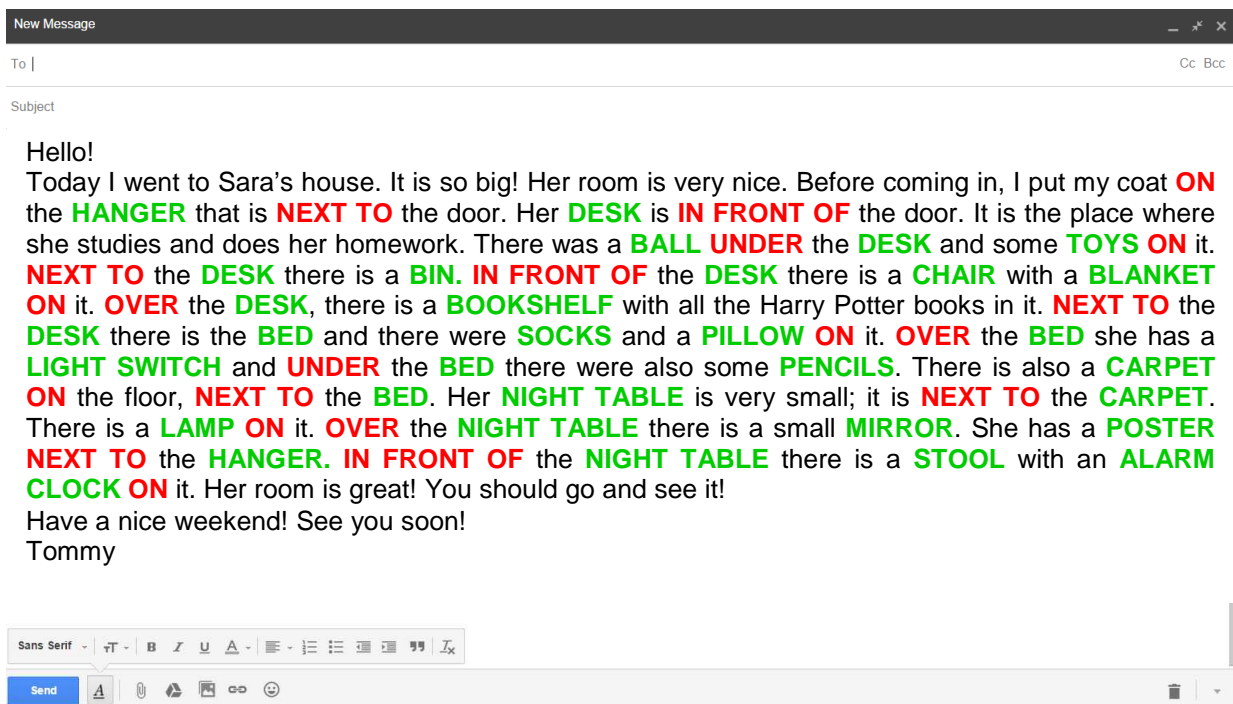
2.3.1. Pre-task phase

The first phase in a task-based lesson is the pre-task. As Ellis says, its purpose is "to prepare students to perform the task in ways that will promote acquisition" (2003, p. 244). This preparation can be carried out in four different ways (Ellis, 2003, p. 244-262):

1) Performing a similar task.

The students will complete a task of the same kind and with similar content to the task that they will perform in the during-task phase. Ellis (2003) presents the following example: "if the main task involved working out a class timetable form the timetables of individual teachers, then the pre-task would be the same but with different information in the teacher's timetables" (p. 245).

We have designed another example to illustrate this pre-task option. The task is called *Objects in a room.* Students will be in pairs. Student A will describe to Student B the picture of a bedroom and Student B will have to place the objects in an empty room following Student's A instructions. After that, they will change roles to give both students the opportunity to use the target language. To prepare this task, we have thought of the following pre-task. The students will listen to the teacher describing the room and they will have to put the objects in the correct place. Then, they will be doing a very similar task to the one that they will later perform with their partner. Another pre-task activity which can be done is asking students to place the objects in the correct place following written instructions. Learners have to read a mail describing a room and then put he objects in the room according to the description given in the email. In this way, teachers can enhance the input that they want learners to be aware of.

To | Cc   Bcc

Subject

Hello!

Today I went to Sara's house. It is so big! Her room is very nice. Before coming in, I put my coat **ON** the **HANGER** that is **NEXT TO** the door. Her **DESK** is **IN FRONT OF** the door. It is the place where she studies and does her homework. There was a **BALL UNDER** the **DESK** and some **TOYS ON** it. **NEXT TO** the **DESK** there is a **BIN. IN FRONT OF** the **DESK** there is a **CHAIR** with a **BLANKET ON** it. **OVER** the **DESK**, there is a **BOOKSHELF** with all the Harry Potter books in it. **NEXT TO** the **DESK** there is the **BED** and there were **SOCKS** and a **PILLOW ON** it. **OVER** the **BED** she has a **LIGHT SWITCH** and **UNDER** the **BED** there were also some **PENCILS**. There is also a **CARPET ON** the floor, **NEXT TO** the **BED**. Her **NIGHT TABLE** is very small; it is **NEXT TO** the **CARPET**. There is a **LAMP ON** it. **OVER** the **NIGHT TABLE** there is a small **MIRROR**. She has a **POSTER NEXT TO** the **HANGER. IN FRONT OF** the **NIGHT TABLE** there is a **STOOL** with an **ALARM CLOCK ON** it. Her room is great! You should go and see it!

Have a nice weekend! See you soon!

Tommy

Sans Serif   ┬T   B   I   U   A | ☰   ☷   ☰   ☶   ☶   99   Tx

Send   A   🔗   🖼   ⛓   ☺   🗑

2) Providing a model.

If teachers choose this alternative, they will ask students "to observe a model of how the task can be performed without requiring them to undertake a trial performance of the task" (Ellis, 2003, p. 245).

Again, when providing this model, teachers have many options. For example, they can do a demonstration of the task, or part of the task, with a good student. Also, learners can watch a pair of good students do a similar task (Willis, 1996, p. 45). Another possibility is to present them a text or recording of a good performance of the task. Moreover, teachers can ask students to do some activities that will raise their consciousness on the features of a good task performance. For example, teachers can invite learners to pay special attention to the strategies used to overcome communication problems (Ellis, 2003, p. 246).

3) Non-task preparation activities.

These activities aim at "reducing the cognitive or the linguistic demands placed on the learner" (Ellis, 2003, p. 246). This means that they will provide students with words, phrases and background information useful for the task performance. Also, it is important to bear in mind that the point of these activities is not to pre-teach lots of new words or a particular grammatical structure, but to build up students' confidence and give them something to fall back on if necessary (Willis, 1996, p. 43). We believe that this pre-task option can be particularly helpful for beginners.

Here are some non-task preparation activities proposed by Willis (1996).

1. Classifying words and phrases: write words on the blackboard related with the topic, talk about them as you write and classify them in categories.

2. Odd one out: write a series of words and phrases including one that doesn't fit. Students will have to discuss which one is different and explain why.

3. Matching phrases to pictures: write words and phrases in the blackboard. Then show students two pictures. They will have to relate the words with the pictures.

4. Brainstorming and mind-maps: write the task topic in the centre of the board and encourage students to think of words and phrases related to it.

4) Strategic planning

This option involves giving learners access to the task so that they can plan the forms and strategies that they will need to perform the task. Teachers can simply let students decide what to plan. If this is the case, probably it will result in a focus on content over form, since learners tend to find vocabulary more helpful for the successful execution of the task. However, teachers can choose to guide the students' planning by orienting their attention on form, content or both. As an example, we propose one given by Skehan (1998). The task that he mentions involves asking someone to go to your house and turn off the oven that you have left on. To plan content, the teacher can ask students to "think about what problems your listener could have and how might you help him/her". In order to plan form, teachers can ask students to "think what grammar you need to do the task". It is important to notice that we are not pre-teaching any language items but directing students' attention to certain aspects of the task in order to reduce the cognitive demands placed on the learner.

This planning can be carried out in groups, individually or with the help of the teacher. Also, strategic planning should last a maximum of ten minutes.

2.3.2. During-task phase

Once the pre-task is completed, students will perform the task. In this phase learners will use language and other resources to achieve the goals of the task. Here it is important to consider one variable: time. Teachers can set a time limit or let students execute the task in their own time. However, they should know that the option they take may influence the kind of language that students will produce. If they choose to give learners unlimited time, the language will probably be more accurate and complex (Yuan and Ellis, 2003). On the other hand, if teachers establish a time limit,

they will be encouraging fluency. We will talk about more methodological indications for this phase in section 2.4.

2.3.3. Post task phase

This phase concludes the task cycle and allows learners to reflect on the task. Teachers can ask students to present a report on the outcome of the task, that is, on what they have discovered or decided. The report can be oral or written. It is important to explain to students which is the purpose of the report so that they have an active attitude. For example, we can think of a task where students have to find out how many women/girls and men/boys their partner's family has. During the oral report, teachers can tell learners to listen and write down the numbers for each family and at the end, add up the totals to complete a class survey (Willis, 1996, p. 59). If the report is written, teachers can organise it in many ways: students can remain seated while they read their partner's work or they can get up, hang their writings on the wall and then walk around reading each other's.

Also, in the post-task phases teachers can invite students to comment on their performance of the task, explain the communicative problems that they encountered and how they dealt with them. Moreover, students can be encouraged to think about how they could improve their performance or even consider what language they have learned (Ellis, 2003, p. 259).

After the report, teachers have the opportunity to focus more explicitly on language. As Ellis (2003) explains, this stage will "counter the danger that students will develop fluency at the expense of accuracy" (p. 260). This means that it will allow learners to identify and think about particular language items that they have already processed for meaning (Willis, 1996, p. 101). The language practise, then, should be on forms that students have encountered during their task performance or on language features that have been used incorrectly and present a difficulty for students. To do so, teachers have many options (Ellis, 2003, p. 260-262).

1) Activities that revise learner's errors. During the task execution, teachers can move around and note down the errors that students make. Then in the post-task they can address these difficulties with the whole class through specific exercises. One option is to write down on the blackboard the sentences with errors and then invite learners to correct them. After this, teachers can provide a short explanation about the error. These kind of activities raise students' consciousness on specific forms that they used incorrectly or failed to use in the during-task phase.

2) Production- practice activities. These can help learners to automatize language features and gain more control over them. They can consist of simple repetition activities like dialogue readings or more complex exercises. Willis (1996, p. 101) provides some examples. One possibility can be to play a recording and press the pause button in the middle of a phrase. The first pair or team to complete it wins a point. Another option is "progressive deleiton". In this activity, teachers write on the board phrases and number them. Then, they call out numbers in the order they want and ask students to read each example out loud. While they read, they can delete parts of the phrases and continue to ask students to read them. They can even end up with a clean board, with only the numbers on it, and still challenge students to "read" the phrases that were there. Teachers can also design exercises where students have to use the dictionary to match words with definitions, find out collocations or write sentences with words that they don't know exactly how to use. Finally, another possibility is computer games that address the language feature that the teacher wants students to master.

3) Traditional language-focus activities. These activities can be the ones that textbooks provide, such as fill in the gaps, match the sentence halves, find synonyms for words in a text, say if a sentence is true or false...

Then, we can conclude that this last phase provides the opportunity to draw more explicitly students' attention to the accurate use of language features. In this way, learners focus on the forms that they used to convey the meanings. We can say that the post-task helps them systematise their knowledge and understanding of the forms that they encountered during the task cycle. Also, this stage ensures that students will recognise similar words, phrases and patterns in future exposure so that they can carry on learning outside the classroom context (Willis, 1996, p. 114).

2.4. The role of the teacher [1]

Task-based teaching moves away from traditional language pedagogy where the teacher has full control over the topic, regulates the turn-taking and directs language use. This kind of classroom conditions makes it difficult for students to learn a language for the purpose of communication. They have few chances of using language in a realistic and meaningful way because their role in the classroom reduces to responding (most of the time by repeating a pattern or saying a simple

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[1] The indications in this section are taken from Willis (1996).

word or phrase) or doing exercises where they just practise selected forms and display their knowledge. In contrast with this learning environment, task-based learning prompts teachers "to change typical teaching routines to give learners a fairer share of the interaction with more opportunities to acquire discourse skills and to experiment with the target language themselves" (Willis, 1996, p. 17).

It can be hard for teachers to let learners get on with the task on their own, step aside and just give advice. This doesn't imply that the role of the teacher in task-based pedagogy is of less importance. They should remember that "being in control of what is happening does not always have to mean being the centre of attention. If we accept that it is the students' job to learn and the teacher's job to help them do this, the focus in the classroom shifts from the teacher to the students" (Lowes and Target, 1998, p. 13). Teachers should think of themselves as facilitators of language learning (see section 2.5). In this way, they will be able to focus more closely on students and their pupils will benefit from this change of focus because they will have a much more active role in the classroom.

Apart from being language learning facilitators, they have the responsibility of keeping four essential conditions in the classroom setting.

These conditions are (Willis, 1996, p. 11):

1) Exposure to rich and comprehensible input.

2) Use of the language to exchange meanings.

3) Motivation to listen, read, speak and write the language.

4) Chances to focus on form

Moreover, to a greater or lesser extent, every task phase requires the teacher's intervention and guidance. During the pre-task phase, teachers should set the task and give clear instructions so that learners know what they have to do. Also, if there is a limited time, they can remind students when there is little time left. Sometimes they may observe that there are learners who don't participate or others that tend to do all the work. In this case, it is a good idea to set specific roles within the groups so that interaction is more balanced. While students are doing their planning, teachers can go around, checking if they are doing okay. If the teacher has a large class, it can be difficult to monitor all the groups. Then, what he or she can do is to decide which groups she or he will check up on and make a note to help others next time. Moreover, it is important to bear in mind that students learn best when they have to work out things by themselves rather than when they are told the answer straightaway. For this reason, teachers should wait until they are asked before they

offer help. When they do, they can help learners shape their meanings and express themselves better. Also, in this way they will make sure that they are answering to the learners' needs. Finally, to end the pre-task phase, teachers can comment on good aspects that they have observed and compliment the creative language that they have noticed.

During the task phase, teachers should make sure that students are doing the task right and that they are aware of the outcome they have to achieve. Moreover, it is the role of the teacher to encourage all learners to participate and engage with the task, no matter how poor their language is. If they notice that there are students who monopolize communication, they should bear it in mind for next time to do some group rearrangements and, in this way, ensure a more balanced interaction. Another thing that teachers should do is try not to go around correcting every wrong utterance but just intervene when there is a major communication breakdown. For example, if students' use their mother tongues, teachers should step in and encourage them to use the target language. Also, when they observe that a pair is stuck, they can help them get back on track and after that is achieved, withdraw again. As they did during the pre-task, in the during-task phase teachers can act as time keepers and stop the task when they see most of the students have finished. It is better to stop the task on time before some learners get bored. To conclude this phase, teachers can comment on the way students did the task. As Lowes and Target (1998) point out, "if the teacher shows appreciation for the students' contributions and encourages them to participate, then the students will develop in self-confidence and take more risks -an essential step for any language learner" (p. 16).

Once students finish the task, it is time for the report. Now teachers will introduce the presentations, set a purpose for listening, establish the turns and sum up at the end. It can be useful to make notes while listening to the presentations in order to give feedback at the end. Teachers should try to give this feedback tactfully and positively, reacting first at content and then at form, since it is more natural. When they correct, they should do it, if possible, anonymously because public correction can be discouraging. Moreover, they can include samples of good expressions as well as the ones that need clarification or correction. Also, they should try to make their comments at the end and not interrupt the report because otherwise it can dishearten learners. In large classes, they should stop the reports before they become repetitive. Then, they can ask if there are any pairs who have something different or special to add to the previous reports. Another thing that can be done to avoid repetitive reports is to select the pairs or groups that will report and remember

to give the opportunity to others in the next task. Obviously, teachers won't say which will be the chosen groups, so that all students will be motivated and try their best.

At the end of the task cycle, we said we could focus more explicitly on language. Before doing the exercises, teachers can give an example or two or even do the beginning of the activity with the whole class. Then, they can go around and see how they are doing. If they ask for help, teachers should avoid giving the answer straightaway. Instead, they can guide their reasoning so that they reach the solution. For example, if they ask "*is it he gives or he give?",* instead of saying the correct form directly, teachers can say "*which person do we have?".* Another way of handling individual questions is by referring learners to a dictionary or to a section on the book. However, it is true that sometimes a quick answer works best in order to keep the focus on the activity. Once they finish, teachers can ask pairs to write examples on the board, discuss them with the whole class and practise pronunciation.

2.5. How do tasks contribute to language learning?

According to the *Interaction Hypothesis*, exposure to the language (input), production of the language (output), interaction and feedback are basic constructs for second language learning (Gass and Mackey, 2006, p. 3). Now we will see how these elements are present in task-based learning.

The first factor that we have mentioned is input. Gass and Mackey (2006) explain that it "refers to language that is available to the learner through any medium (listening, reading, or gestural in the case of sign language)" (p. 5). In other words, input is any language the learner is exposed to. Also, they continue, "all theories of second language learning recognize input as a basic component in the acquisition process" (p. 5). It is so important because thanks to it learners can formulate their own hypothesis about the target language and discover the rules underlying it. In task-based pedagogy, we can provide learners with texts, dialogues, videos, recordings and other rich materials that will help acquisition. It is fundamental that teachers select thoughtfully the elements of the task in order to give students rich input that favours language learning.

Feedback is another important component for language acquisition. It allows learners to focus on their linguistic problems and notice the gaps between their production and the L2. Moreover, it facilitates learning because the student can identify an error and find the correct form. Therefore, thanks to feedback, learners can focus on language and improve it in a communicative context. In task-based learning, feedback is generally provided in an implicit way although it can become explicit if the

teacher considers it necessary. Teachers, in their role of language facilitators, give feedback during the whole task-cycle.

The third basic construct for language learning is output. As Gass and Mackey (2006) put it, "output refers to the language that learners produce" (p. 13). It is essential because it provides learners with a testing ground for using the language they already know. Students can test their hypotheses about the target language and see if they work (Swain 1995). Also, the importance of output lies in the fact that it "provides a forum for receiving feedback, which pushes learners to produce more accurate, appropriate, complex, and comprehensible forms" (Gass and Mackey, 2006, p. 14[2]). That said, what place does output have in task-based instruction? Output is central to this language pedagogy. As Willis (1996) expresses, throughout the task cycle, learners have the chance to gain confidence and "try out whatever language they know, or think they know, in the relative privacy of a pair or small group, without fear of being wrong or of being corrected in front of the class" (p. 35). They can formulate what they want to say spontaneously and in real time. Basically, tasks give the opportunity for learners to use language purposefully, not just for display purposes (Willis, 1996, p. 35).

Interaction is the fourth necessary element for second language acquisition. It leads to learning because feedback is provided. Learners can receive feedback and then modify their incorrect utterances into correct ones. Moreover, during interaction, there are moments when participants don't understand each other and negotiate meaning. Long (1996) defines negotiation of meaning as follows:

> The process in which, in an effort to communicate, learners and competent speakers provide and interpret signals of their own and their interlocutor's perceived comprehension, thus provoking adjustments to linguistic form, conversational structure, message content, or all three, until an acceptable level of understanding is achieved (p. 418).

In other words, negotiation of meaning happens when learners notice there is a communication problem and they modify their output to make themselves understood. In task-based learning, it can happen in multiple ways:

1) Confirmation check: any expressions "immediately following an utterance by the interlocutor which are designed to elicit confirmation that the utterance has been correctly heard or understood by the speaker" (Long, 1983, p. 137).

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[2] Gass and Mackey state that this idea is claimed by many researchers: Swain 1993, 2005; Swain and Lapkin 1995; Gass 1988, 1997; Long 1996; Pica 1994.

Example:

      S1: She is in the kitchen.

      S2: *In the kitchen?* [confirmation check]

      S1: Yes.

2) Clarification request: any expression "designed to elicit clarification of the interlocutor's preceding utterance(s)" (Long, 1983, p. 137). It is as if the student were asking "what do you mean by....?."

Example (Lightbrown and Spada, 2006, p. 126):

      T: How often do you wash the dishes?

      S1: Fourteen.

      T: *Fourteen what?* [clarification request]

      S1: Fourteen for a week.

3) Comprehension check: is an attempt "to anticipate and prevent a breakdown in communication" (Long, 1983, p. 136). It could consist of expressions such as "do you know what I mean?" or "do you understand?".

Example (Gass and Mackey, 2006, p. 8):

      S1: Avenue Seven goes in one direction towards the north from Street Seven to Street Eight. *Do you want me to repeat?* [comprehension check]

      S2: Please.

4) Recast: it is a "modification of the original erroneous utterance without a concomitant change in meaning" (Gass and Mackey, 2006, p. 8). During task performance, teachers and students can use this technique to focus on form without obstructing the conversation flow.

Example:

      S1: We went to the beach and we take the sun.

      S2: Ah, *you sunbathed* [recast].

5) Language-related episodes: "any part of a dialogue in which students talk about the language that they are producing, question their language use, or other- or self-correct" (Swain and Lapkin, 1998, p. 326). In the following examples we can see how S1 notices a gap in his language knowledge and

negotiates it with S2. Teachers can also intervene and help during language-related episodes.

Example 1:

> S1: They have a… *cuchillo?*

> S2: A knife.

> S1: Yes, a knife.

Example 2:

> S1: And the man go… goes… go or goes?

> S2: Goes because is a man.

> S1: Yes, third person.

> S2: Yes.

As we have just seen, interaction provides opportunities to negotiate meaning and focus on form. During the task cycle, these chances are also present, especially when tasks are carefully thought and planned by teachers. Willis (1996) explains that through task performance learners can "practise negotiating turns to speak, initiating as well as responding to questions, and reacting to other's contributions (whereas in teacher-led interaction, they only have a responding role)" (p. 35). Moreover, she continues by saying that tasks make students "participate in complete interaction, not just one-off sentences" (p. 35). They can use communication strategies, such as the five mentioned before, which allow them progress and build their language knowledge.

Then, we can conclude that tasks are very helpful to learn a language. Summarising, this happens because, first of all, input (pictorial, oral, written) is promoted. Also, we are giving context to the input so we expect that it will be easier for students to process and learn it. Secondly, the feedback element is also present because during interaction problems will arise. This will give learners the opportunity to obtain feedback and ask for meanings or language forms that are not clear to them. First they will notice a problem and then they will try to find a solution using the strategies available to them. Third, in task-based learning, students have the chance to produce language and compose meaning (output) in a realistic way. Finally, interaction is also promoted because a gap is created and learners have to communicate and help each other to reach an agreement. Therefore, we can conclude that tasks are a good device for language learning.

3. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

3.*1. What is CLIL?*

CLIL, like Task-based Language Learning, is a method that is framed inside the focus on form approach. The term was adopted in 1996 by the European Network of Administrators, Researchers and Practitioners (EUROCLIC) to refer to "a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for learning and teaching of both content and language" (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010, p. 1). In words of the Eurydice European Unit, CLIL comprises "all types of provision in which a second language is used to teach certain subjects in the curriculum other than language lessons themselves" (2006:8). That is to say that CLIL combines and integrates the teaching of content with the teaching of a non-native language (Bentley, 2010, p. 5).

CLIL methodology is based on the idea "learning to use a language and using language to learn" (Coyle et al., 2009, p. 14). This means that in CLIL contexts learners will discuss, explain and justify their ideas using the foreign language, both orally and in writing. In other words, they will learn new content through the target language (using language to learn*).* At the same time, "the CLIL environment demands a level of talking and interaction that is different to that of the traditional language classroom" (Coyle, 2007, p. 11). Students will progress in their linguistic competence as a result of the exposure to rich input and the engagement in meaningful interaction (learning to use a language*).*

Then, language (linguistic forms) and content (meaning) go hand in hand, with no emphasis on one over the other. This is an important aspect to bear in mind, since sometimes CLIL is confused with immersion or focus on meaning approaches. As we mentioned in the section 1.2 of this project, in focus on meaning instruction teachers transmit the content of a subject with no specific attention to language. They just teach as they would teach if the subject were in the students' mother tongue. However, in CLIL methodology, the focus in the foreign language is essential.

Moreover, CLIL is a very flexible term and it can be applied to describe different models. Some schools may choose to implement CLIL inside the language course and teach specific topics in the target language. This model is known as soft CLIL. The opposite extreme is hard CLIL, where 50% of the school curriculum is taught in the target language. There is a mid-way possibility between soft and hard CLIL. Schools that choose to follow this option teach a particular subject, like science or

art, in the foreign language (Bentley, 2010, p. 6). Also, CLIL can be done at any level of education.

3.2. CLIL aims

As stated in the TKT CLIL Course, a Cambridge ESOL module to train teachers who impart curricular subjects through the medium of English and for those English language teachers who use content in their teaching, the aims of CLIL are (Bentley, 2010, p. 6):

1) To introduce learners to new concepts through studying the curriculum in a non-native language.

2) To improve learners' production of the language of curricular subjects.

3) To improve learners' performance in both curricular subjects and the target language.

4) To increase learners' confidence in the target language and the L1.

5) To provide materials which develop thinking skills from the start.

6) To encourage stronger links with values of community and citizenship.

7) To make the curricular subject the main focus of classroom materials.

Also, CLIL can be seen as a means to achieve the European recommendations on plurilingualism. As it is stated in *The Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe*:

> "Policies for language education should therefore promote the learning of several languages for all individuals in the course of their lives, so that Europeans actually become plurilingual and intercultural citizens, able to interact with other Europeans in all aspects of their lives." (Council of Europe, 2007, p. 7)

Another instance of the European support for CLIL is the Council Resolution of 1995, where it expresses the importance of promoting "the teaching of classes in a foreign language for disciplines other than languages, providing bilingual teaching" (p. 3).

Then, CLIL is presented as an innovative method with the potential to integrate European states, foster intercommunication and develop "intercultural understanding and global citizenship" (Coyle et al., 2010, p. 41).

3.3. The 4Cs Conceptual Framework

Coyle (1999) presents four major components which are essential for a good CLIL practice. These are content, communication, cognition and culture (known as the 4Cs). Then, according to Coyle, efficient CLIL results from the interrelation between the subject matter (content), the target language (communication), thinking skills (cognition) and intercultural awareness (culture).

Figure 8: The 4Cs Conceptual Framework
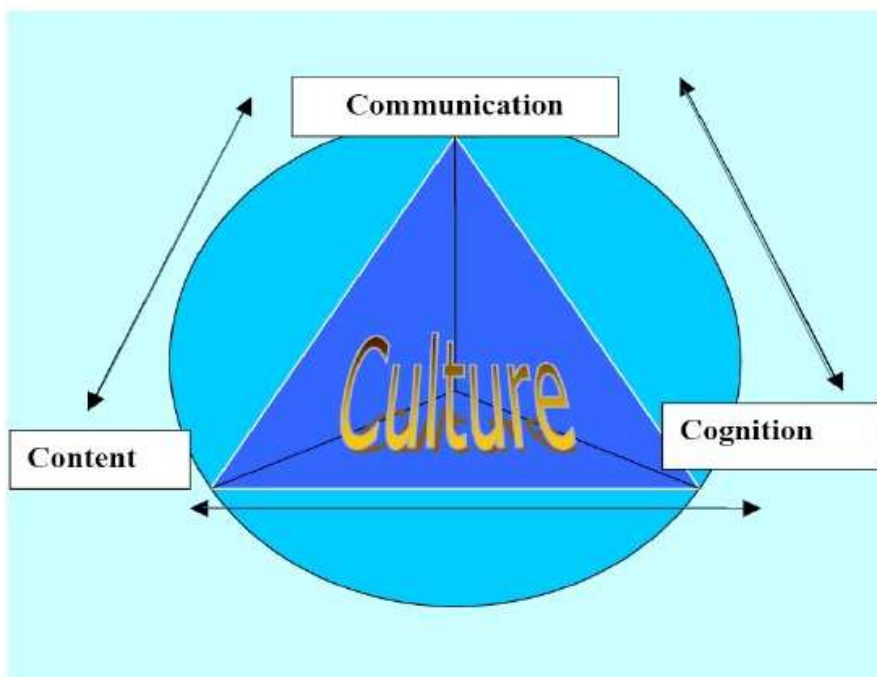
Source. Coyle (1999). Retrieved from Rodríguez, S. (2015)

In the following quotation, she explains how these 4Cs constitute CLIL as an innovative and valuable pedagogical method:

> The 4Cs Framework suggests that it is through progression in knowledge, skills and understanding of the content [content], engagement in associated cognitive processing [cognition], interaction in the communicative context, developing appropriate language knowledge and skills [communication] as well as acquiring a deepening intercultural awareness through the positioning of self and 'otherness' [culture], that effective CLIL takes place. (Coyle, 2007, p. 9)

The content "C" refers to the construction of knowledge and the understanding of concepts, principles and procedures. There are many curricular subjects that can be taught in CLIL, such as art, science, history, geography, mathematics and technology, among others. Also, teachers can develop cross-curricular links among subjects. (Bentley, 2010, p. 7). For example, they can relate particular historical moments in the history of a country with specific artistic movements.
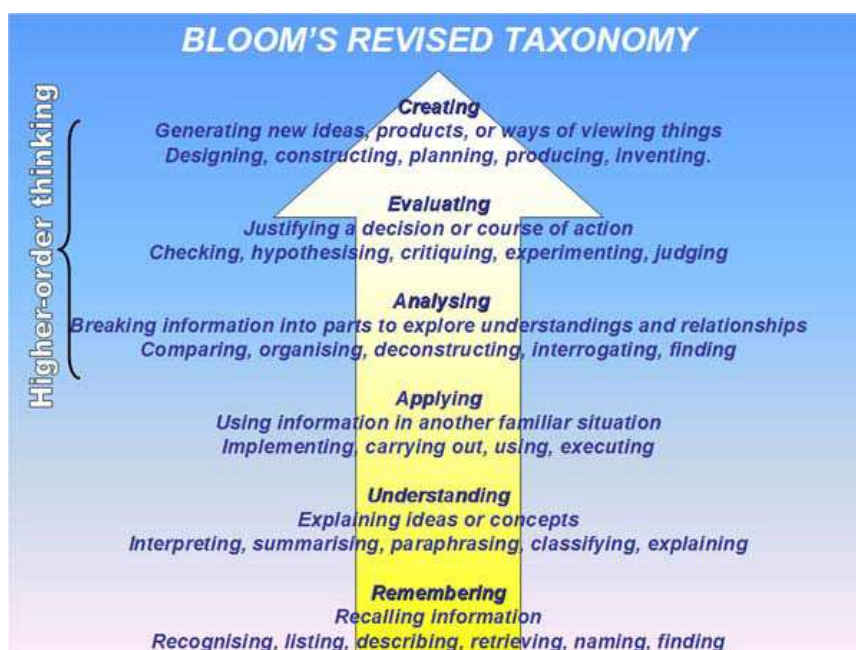
The second CLIL component we mentioned is communication. The use of the target language is essential in CLIL, since learners will need to express facts, thoughts and feelings about the subject content. Students will have opportunities to interact and use the foreign language to construct knowledge. They will have to perform a wide range of communicative functions, such as giving examples, describing processes, expressing agreement or disagreement, describing cause and effect, presenting solutions and defining concepts (Bentley, 2010, p. 16). Through this practising of the target language, learners will progress and develop their linguistic skills.

The third component of the 4Cs framework is cognition. Activities in Content and Language Integrated Learning must give opportunities for learners to develop information processing skills (thinking skills). Examples of cognitive skills promoted in CLIL contexts are (Bentley, 2010, p. 22):

- Concrete thinking skills: identify (show a relationship between things), order, define, compare and contrast, classify, predict and hypothesise (say what is possible that will happen without knowing if it is true).

- Enquiry skills: the *what, when, where, which, who* and *how many* questions.

- Creative thinking skills: produce alternative, original, new and quality ideas to solve problems. In other words, use imagination.

- Evaluation skills: use specific criteria to judge if something is good, useful, effective or not.

Also, Benjamin Bloom and a group of cognitive psychologists proposed, in 1956, a taxonomy where they classified the different thinking processes involved in the construction of knowledge. Below, we present the revised taxonomy from 2001, which is considered more useful for educators.

BLOOM'S REVISED TAXONOMY

Higher-order thinking

Creating
Generating new ideas, products, or ways of viewing things
Designing, constructing, planning, producing, inventing.

Evaluating
Justifying a decision or course of action
Checking, hypothesising, critiquing, experimenting, judging

Analysing
Breaking information into parts to explore understandings and relationships
Comparing, organising, deconstructing, interrogating, finding

Applying
Using information in another familiar situation
Implementing, carrying out, using, executing

Understanding
Explaining ideas or concepts
Interpreting, summarising, paraphrasing, classifying, explaining

Remembering
Recalling information
Recognising, listing, describing, retrieving, naming, finding

Source. Tarlinton, D. (2014)

In order to develop them, learners need challenging tasks and language-rich lessons. Also, they need time to stop, think and process new concepts and linguistic items before answering the teacher's questions (Bentley, 2010, p. 22).

The fourth and final CLIL component is culture. As Coyle says, culture is at the core of CLIL (2007:10). Nowadays, in our classrooms there are students from different countries, who bring diverse social and cultural backgrounds. In CLIL contexts, learners can explore their own culture as well as the ones of those from different regions. For example, schools can establish partnerships with schools of other countries and use the Internet to communicate with them. CLIL, and the use of the foreign language, will open the door for learners to other cultures and behaviours. In this way teachers will promote global citizenship in students. Also, through this intercultural awareness and understanding, CLIL gives the opportunity for learners to develop positive attitudes and values (Coyle et al., 2009, p. 13; Bentley, 2010, p. 7).

3.4. The role of the teacher

Loranc (2013), as well as other experts, says that "suitably trained and qualified CLIL teachers are one of the most important prerequisites of successful CLIL implementation" (p. 4). This qualification of teachers is one of the most problematic aspects of CLIL because they need to be proficient in the target language but also qualified to teach the content. But these are only the basic requirements. Apart from

a good command of the foreign language and of the subject content, CLIL teachers need to handle bilingual education methodologies. For this purpose, content teachers and language teachers need to collaborate with each other so that they can come up with rich materials, suitable activities and, in the end, appropriate methods to help learners consolidate learning.

The European Council Resolution of 1995 emphasizes the importance of ensuring proper preparation training periods for teachers, so that they improve their spoken skills, their teaching methods and refresh their knowledge about the culture of the country whose language they will teach (p. 4). One of the measures that the Council proposes to achieve this is that teachers spend study periods in the country of the target language.

This said, as we have previously mentioned, teaching language is part of CLIL. Then, it is the role of the teacher to make sure that this happens. Here we present some ideas on how to focus on language in the CLIL classroom (Bentley, 2010, p. 14, 71):

- Highlight the important vocabulary.

- Help learners notice relevant and problematic language structures and explain to them what they mean.

- Create a relaxed atmosphere so that students feel confident to use the target language.

- Correct learners' mistakes and provide constructive feedback before, during and after the tasks.

- Identify the difficulties that students have when producing the foreign language and design exercises to practise them.

- Produce comprehensible language for students to understand what they are saying.

- Allow time for learners to ask any questions about the tasks or the subject content.

- Encourage self-reflection on how well they are progressing and doing their work.

Moreover, teachers need to carefully plan the content of the subject they will teach. They need to stablish the aims of each lesson: what students will learn and will be able to do at the end of the class. Also, teachers can think of the prior knowledge that they want to activate in their learners. Another aspect to specify are the thinking and learning skills which students will develop (for example, classifying, making

hypothesis…). Moreover, teachers need to consider if they want to establish any cross-curricular links and how they will evaluate learning (Bentley 2010: 31). To assess CLIL, teachers have to focus on areas of the subject content but also on the language they have been working on during the lesson. Apart from that, they can set the criteria for evaluating communication skills, cognitive skills and attitudes (see annex).

Finally, teachers have to think which materials and resources they will employ to present the content and support the language learning. For example, they can use CDs, interactive whiteboards, data projectors, videos… Teachers can also use charts, diagrams, mind maps, tables, time-lines and Venn diagrams as visual organisers of information. These resources will help learners understand abstract content (Bentley, 2010, p. 43-46). As regards materials, teachers need to choose the ones that are appropriate for the age and learning stage of the learners. Moreover, they need to make sure that they fit the purpose of the CLIL lesson and that they are motivating.

4. A task-based CLIL lesson

In this part we are going to analyse my personal experience with a task-based CLIL lesson. We will describe the task organisation and procedures and we will also reflect on the results.

4.1. Context and rationale

I carried out the task with a group of twenty seven low level students of a charter school in Barcelona. They are in 6th grade, so they are between eleven and twelve years old. They performed the task during their regular one hour English class, which they have five times a week. Apart from these English classes, they attend a one hour conversation class once a week.

Usually, during the English lessons, the teacher presents some grammatical features and they practise them through exercises from the textbook. These activities tend to be filling in the gaps or matching exercises. Also, they can consist of ordering and completing sentences, to mention some. Therefore, the normal structure of the lesson follows the PPP (Presentation-Practise-Production) method (see 1.1). However, we have also mentioned how this paradigm presents some problems.

In front of this learning context, we wanted to implement TBL and see how learners reacted to this different language experience and if it helped them to learn more efficiently. Moreover, we thought that it would be interesting to combine TBL with another method: CLIL.

We believe that this is possible because both methodologies belong to the focus on form approach. As we mentioned in section 1.3 and throughout this project, language is learnt incidentally while performing meaning oriented activities. Then, the main focus is on communication and meaning, but attending to language whenever there is a breakdown in production or comprehension. It is because both methods are framed in the same theoretical sphere, that we believe that their combination is possible. In fact, tasks need to have a content, so that learners can focus on meaning, and this content can be provided by CLIL topics.

4.2. Description of the task

I have designed my task as a part of the subject "Coneixement del medi" in the 6th grade school curriculum. With the task, I want students to learn about the origin and foundation of Rome, and more specifically, Romulus and Remus legend (see annex).

To do so, I have come up with eight different pictures that describe the story. I put four, in random order, in a worksheet and the other four in a separate worksheet. The worksheets are presented below.
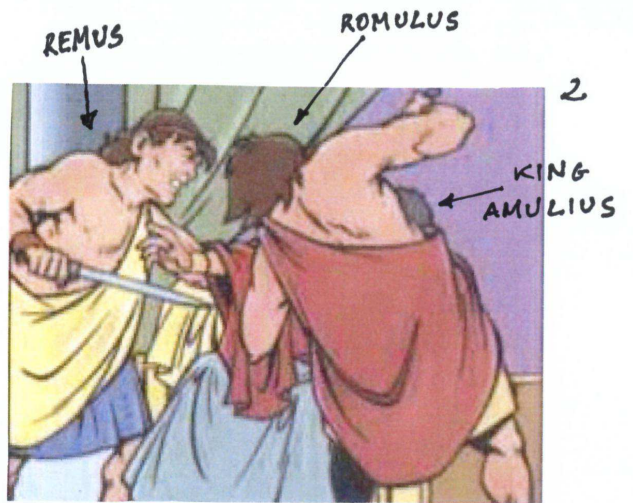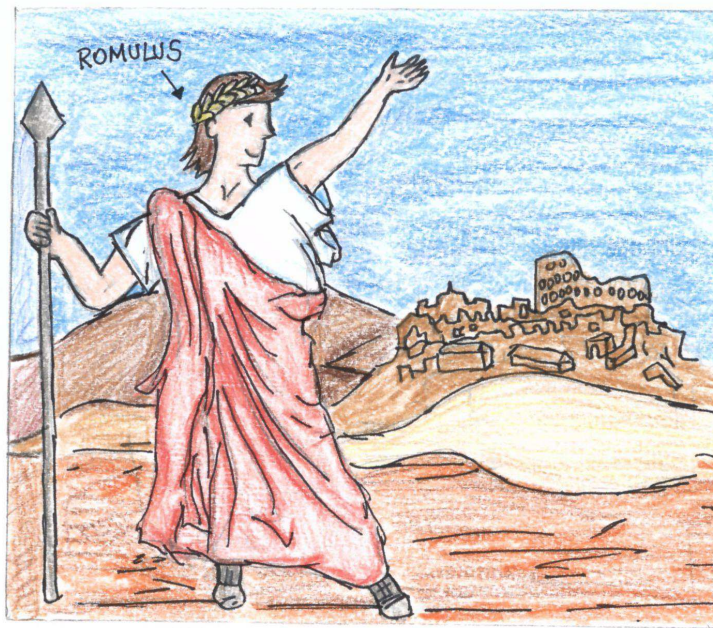
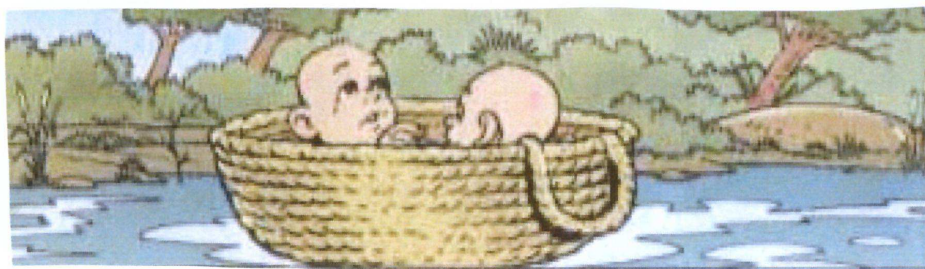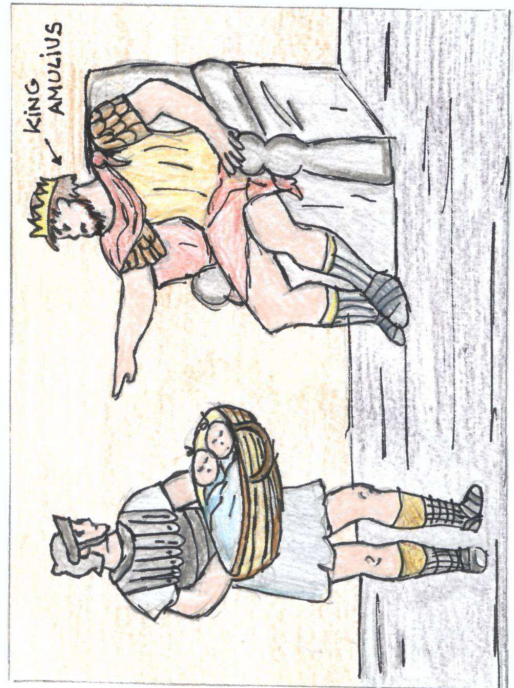It was important that the pictures captured the main scenes in the legend. In this way, students would be able to trace connections among them and discover the story behind. However, I was not able to find accurate images for all the episodes of the legend and I drew three of them (numbers 3, 6 and 7).

In the task, students worked in pairs. I gave to each student of the pair a different sheet of paper; so that they had completely different sets of pictures (sheet 1 and sheet 2 together compose the story). Then, Student A had to describe to Student B the pictures in his or her worksheet and, at the same time, Student B had to do the same with his or her own pictures. They had to imagine the pictures that their partner was describing to them and together reconstruct Romulus and Remus story. They will had to conjecture about what happened and which was the role of each character in the story.

It is important to clarify that the numbers that appear next to each picture do not designate the order that corresponds to the picture. They are just written to help students' interaction, so that, once they have described the images to their partner, they can refer to the pictures by saying simply their number.

At the end, during the post-task, each pair had to expose their stories about Romulus and Remus. Afterwards, I explained to them the legend as it is and we saw which one was the pair of students that had come closer to the real version.

But, is the activity that we have designed a task? We can say that it is because it fulfils the four requirements that we specified in section 2.1.

1) Primary focus on meaning: there is a primary focus on meaning because learners are mainly concerned about discovering what the story is about.

2) Gap: there is an information gap because each student has a different set of pictures that his or her partner doesn't have. Therefore, there is a need to communicate in order to know the pictures of the partner and put them in order.

3) Language as a means: language is the tool used for completing the task. Students will resort to any linguistic strategies they have in order to make themselves understood. Then, language is not the object of the task.

4) Communicative outcome: the outcome is the legend.

5) Real world language use: although the activity is not realistic but pedagogic, the language that it triggers is similar to the one we find in real world: give clear information, ask questions, make suggestions, give descriptions, sequence, predict and agree or disagree.

Once we have checked that the activity is a task, we will describe its main features following Ellis' task framework (see Figure 8).

INPUT	Pictorial
	Tight structure
CONDITIONS	Split information
	Two-way interaction
	Required interaction
	Convergent
PROCESSES	Exchange of information + explaining/reasoning
	Dialogic discourse
OUTCOME	Oral and pictorial
	Narrative and description
	Closed scope (one solution)

Moreover, the activity I have designed is a CLIL task because it integrates the teaching of content (the origins of Rome) with the teaching of English, especially by means of meaningful interaction. Also, the task presents the four major components that constitute efficient CLIL: content, communication, cognition and culture. First, it has a historical content, the legend of Romulus and Remus. Second, the use of English is essential to reconstruct the story and learn about it. Learners will need to interact with each other and perform several communicative functions (give clear information, ask questions, make suggestions, give descriptions, sequence, predict and agree or disagree) in order to complete the task. Third, our task promotes the cognitive skills mentioned in section 3.3: concrete thinking skills (e.g. order the pictures, hypothesise about the story or identify the relation between the pictures), enquiry skills, creative thinking skills (e.g. imagine the story) and evaluation skills (e.g. judge the story of the classmates and their own). Fourth and final, the culture component is present because the task promotes global citizenship and intercultural awareness: students will become familiar with an important legend of the Italian culture.

As regards the task structure, my main goal in the pre-task is to prepare students to perform the task in terms that it will promote acquisition (Ellis, 2003, p. 244). From the different pre-task possibilities that we explained in section 2.3.1, I chose to carry

out "non-task preparation activities" to reduce the cognitive and linguistic demands placed in the learners (Ellis, 2003, p. 246). After introducing and defining the topic, I wrote some words on the blackboard, related with the topic, that I believed would help them to complete the task successfully. These were vocabulary words: wolf, twins, shepherd, kill, basket and soldier. Then, after giving each student his or her worksheet, they had some time to brainstorm useful words and phrases to describe the pictures. Apart from that, they had to follow the "strategic planning" option, also posed by Ellis (2003, p. 247). I gave students time to think about strategies and forms that would help them perform the task. I guided this planning by pointing their attention to the use of past simple, which is the tense that they have been working on in their regular English lessons. As we mentioned in 2.3.1, I was not pre-teaching any language items but making them aware of the grammar they needed in order to execute the task. Moreover, I also guided them in the planning of the content of the task. I wrote on the blackboard questions as an aid to the description of the pictures:

- What do you see (persons, animals, things…)

- Where are they?

- What are they doing?

I have created a quite guided and controlled pre-task because it was the first time that learners performed this type of activity and their English level is elementary.

In relation to the post-task, I asked students to present a report on the outcome of the task to see what pair had come up with the true version of the legend. They had to say the order of the pictures that they had decided (e.g. 2,3,7,8,5,1,6,4) and explain the story. As we saw in 2.3.3, the report could be oral or written. It had to be oral so that the whole class could agree or disagree on their version and, at the end, vote which was the group that came closer to the real legend. However, since our students are English beginners, we decided to give them time to write the story so that their oral report would be organised and clear. Also, in this way, we would be reducing the pressure and nervousness that they may feel for having to speak in public. Therefore, being able to resort to the written story and read it if they needed to during their presentation, would boost their confidence and create a more relaxed atmosphere.

After the report, we focused more explicitly in language. The language practise was on forms that hopefully they would have used during their task performance. The activity that they carried out was a fill in the gaps exercise. The activity is attached below. It is a text summarising the legend of Romulus and Remus with gaps that students need to fill in using target vocabulary and forms. I chose this exercise

because they are very familiar with it and I believe it could help them internalise the language features that would have come up during the task performance. If we had had more time, I would have prepared more activities to emphasize the language focus of the task.

ROMULUS aNd ReMUS

According to the legend, Rome was founded by_____*Romulus*_____&_____*Remus*_____.

The legend says that King Amulius (order) _____*ordered*_____ the death of the (identical brothers)_____*twins*_____. They were thrown to the River Tiber. A (animal) _____*wolf*_____ (discover) _____*discovered*_____ the twins and nursed them. A (person with sheep) _____*shepherd*_____ (adopt) _____*adopted*_____ them and took care of them. One day, the shepherds of King Amulius (capture) _____*captured*_____ Remus but Romulus (rescue)_____*rescued*_____ him. Then, they (kill) _____*killed*_____ King Amulius. Later, Romulus and Remus (fight) _____*fought*_____. Romulus (kill) _____*killed*_____ Remus and he (found) _____*founded*_____ Rome in the year 753 Ac.

4.3. Didactic unit [3]

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[3] The structure of our didactic unit is adapted from Gilabert (2014d).

THE LEGEND OF ROMULUS AND REMUS

1. Contextual information
Domain: Educational
Learners: 11- 12 year- old children (6th grade)
Educational context: Primary School
Duration: 3 sessions of 1 hour (3h)
Area: Coneixement del Medi

2. Title and general focus
"The legend of Romulus and Remus". This lesson follows both CLIL and task-based methodology. In this task students will learn about the origin and foundation of Rome. Learners will have to interact with each other in order to reconstruct the pictures that describe the story of Romulus and Remus. Student A will have a set of pictures and so will have Student B. However, these pictures will be different and they will have to describe them to each other in order to sequence them correctly. They will not be able to show the pictures to their partner.

3. DIDACTIC OBJECTIVES

Pre-Task
- to listen and process the teacher's instructions in order to complete the task.
- to understand and process the meaning of the target items (vocabulary) in a meaningful interaction with the teacher.
- to brainstorm useful words and phrases that describe the pictures.
- to pay attention to the past simple tense when planning the pictures' description.

Post- Task
-to write down their version of the legend of Romulus and Remus.
-to explain their version of the legend of Romulus and Remus in front of the class.
- to fill in the gaps with words used during the task.

Task Cycle
- to describe the pictures to his/her partner trying to use the target vocabulary.
- to make suggestions about the possible order of the images.
- to agree and disagree on the order of the pictures.
- to process for comprehension and ask for clarification.
- to hypothesise about Romulus and Remus legend.
- to put the pictures in the correct order so that they configure the story.

4. LINGUISTIC FOCUS AND CONTENT
4.1. Content: The legend of Romulus and Remus.
4.2. Language / Focus-on-Form
- Lexical items: wolf, twins, shepherd, kill, basket and soldier.

4.3. Language to be recycled from previous Tasks
- Past simple.
- *There is/are.*
- Articles: *a, an* and *the.*

5. BASIC COMPETENCES.
Learning to learn:
- use communication strategies to progress and build their language knowledge.
- notice the gaps in their production and try to overcome them.
- modify their incorrect utterances when they receive feedback.
- negotiate meaning with their partners.
Linguistic Communication:
- communicate orally and in writing their knowledge and thoughts.
- engage in meaningful interaction with their partners.
Autonomy and Personal initiative:
- become more autonomous by processing and deducing the meaning of the target items from the context.
- become more self-confident in the use of the foreign language.
- ability to cooperate and work in pairs.
Knowledge of and interaction with the physical world:
- understanding a historical legend.
- learning about a culture of a different country: Italy.
Social skills and citizenship:
- value the ideas of others.
- negotiate and converse with others.
- learn to have self-control when waiting for their partner's descriptions (instead of showing the pictures right away).

6. EVALUATION:
6.1 Form of Evaluation: The task can be evaluated by considering their ability to describe a picture successfully. The evaluation can focus both on the oral and the written output [*I was not able to evaluate the task when I put it in practise*]

6.2. Further Criteria of in-class evaluation

Pre-Task	Main Task Cycle	Post-task
- Students are capable of following the teacher's oral instructions. - Students are capable of planning the pictures' descriptions. - Students are able to process and understand the meaning of the target items.	- The students are able to describe the pictures to a partner using the right tense and vocabulary. - The students are able to order the pictures so that they reconstruct Romulus and Remus legend.	- Students use the target items in the written and oral report of their story. - Students show that they have internalized the target items by doing a fill in the gaps exercise.

7. SEQUENCE OF PROCEDURES

What I will be *doing*	What I will be *saying*	What the students will be *doing*	What the students will be *saying*
PRE-TASK **Warm-up (5 min.):** I'll be standing in front of the class and I'll introduce and define the topic. Then I'll activate their schemata by asking some questions. I'll invite everyone to participate. If they don't participate spontaneously, I'll address a few students directly. Then, I will tell them that Rome was founded in 753 A.C and that there's a legend about it. I will also ask them if they know what a legend is.	**Warm-up:** I'll tell them that we are going to learn how Rome was founded. I will be also asking questions in order to promote participation and activate ideas about the topics of 'objects in the room'. For example, "has anyone been to Rome?" or "what do you know about Italy?". I'll ask them to raise their hands if they want to answer a question.	**Warm-up:** they will be listening to my questions. Following my explanation, they will be raising their hands in order to answer them. This will unconsciously be activating their prior knowledge.	**Warm-up:** they will tell the other people of the class their experience if they have been to Rome. They'll contribute their ideas spontaneously.
Goal description (5 min.): I'll move on to the description of the task goals.	**Goal description:** I'll describe the task goals. I will make clear that they have to order the pictures to compose the story. In pairs (each member with a different set of pictures about the legend of Romulus and Remus) will have to describe the pictures to their partner so that they put them in order. They'll be encouraged to ask questions or	**Goal description:** They'll listen to my description of task goals.	**Goal description:** they may eventually request clarifications.

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Activity (10 min.): I'll hand out the task materials. I will guide the strategic planning and I will be walking around the classroom monitoring their work and ***providing feedback***.	clarify doubts. **Activity 1:** First, I will emphasize the importance of planning carefully their descriptions. Then, I will write in the blackboard the target words and we will talk about their meaning and collocation. After that, I'll help them organize the planning and the brainstorming of useful words and phrases. I will write some questions in the blackboard to guide their planning: "what do you see (persons, things, animals…)?"; "where are they?"; "what are they doing?"; "what grammar do you need to do the task?"**.** Regarding the last question, I will help them recall the use of past simple. I'll answer any questions they may have. I'll also make general comments if I notice a common problem when monitoring their work.	**Activity 1:** They will ask questions if they don't understand something. They will look at their set of pictures. They will look at the words written on the blackboard. They will brainstorm useful words and phrases for the description of their pictures. They will plan the description following the questions in the blackboard. They will be ***exposed to the target items.*** Then, their ***attention will be drawn to form while processing for meaning***. Also, they will recall the form of the past simple and its use. They will be very careful of not showing the pictures to other students.	**Activity 1:** they will be asking questions about the target language or the description of the teacher. They can also ask for clarifications any time they want during the planning time.
What I will be *doing*.	**What I will be *saying*.**	**What the students will be *doing*.**	**What the students will be *saying*.**
TASK **Task (40 min.):** Positioned in front of the class, I'll monitor their self-organization into pairs. I will make sure that the pairs do not show to each other the pictures. Then I will give instructions of what they have to do. While they work in pairs, I'll monitor their use of English. I will encourage them to not switch to the L1 when they have a communication problem. However, in the elementary stage, if this happens it is not so problematic.	**Task:** I'll give them instructions about the task. When giving the instructions, I will explicitly emphasize the importance of not showing their pictures to their partners. I'll ask them to group in pairs. Once they start working on the task, I'll answer the questions that may arise..	**Task:** each student in pairs will have to describe his/her pictures to the partner. After he/she does that, he/she will have to think about the way in which all the pictures connect with one another. Because of the task essential language, they will need to ***process the target items*** in order to give accurate descriptions. So they will ***be processing the terms for comprehension and for production***. If they try to show their pictures, they'll be reminded that they need to talk about them, not show them. .	**Task:** Student A and B will describe his/her pictures to his/her partner. They will do this by using the target vocabulary and correct language tense. In this way, they will ***necessarily need to produce the target items*** in their descriptions. When they will have to listen to the description of their partner, they will hopefully produce ***clarification requests, as well as confirmation and comprehensions checks***.

POST-TASK and LANGUAGE FOCUS **Report (90 min):** I'll give instructions on what they have to do next: report their version of the legend. I'll walk around in case they need _**feedback**_. I will direct the turn-taking of reports. I will set a purpose for listening to others' reports. I will not interrupt the reports and sum them up at the end.	**Report:** I will tell them that they will have to explain to the rest of the class how they think the legend goes. In order to prepare their oral presentation, they will be able to write the story. In this way, when they explain it in public, they can rely on the written exercise. Once they have done this, I will ask for volunteers to present their story. Before they start, I will encourage them to be attentive and internally compare the reports with their own. To avoid the activity to seem repetitive, after some reports I will ask if any pair has something different or special to add to the previous report. If not, I will sum up by emphasizing the use of good expressions and _**giving general feedback**_ if there is a common mistake made by more than one pair. Finally, I will explain the real version of the legend. After that, I will ask them what pair they think has come up with a closest version of the true legend.	**Report:** They will have to write their version of the legend. Again, this is _**a meaning-oriented task**_ in which they have to necessarily _**go through the understanding of the target items**_. Then, they will report their story. They will internally compare the others' version with their own. They will listen and _**process feedback.**_ They will listen to the real legend of Romulus and Remus and judge what the students' closest version is.	**Report:** They will say the order of the pictures and explain their story in front of the class. They will say what pair has explained the most truthful version.
Analysis (30 minutes): I'll draw their attention to the analysis of the task. I'll write on the blackboard a short text that summarizes the legend. The text will have some gaps. I'll walk around in case they need _**feedback**_.	**Analysis:** While they complete the activity, I'll only _**provide feedback**_ when it is requested. For the correction of the exercise, I'll ask different students to read their answers and _**draw their attention to the target items**_.	**Analysis:** They will copy the exercise from the blackboard and fill in the gaps with the target language items. They will _**focus on form.**_ They will give the answers if asked.	**Analysis:** They will ask questions if they have problems with any language form. They will say the words that go to each gap.

4.4. Reflection and evaluation

This task is an attempt to introduce students, who are only used to PPP lessons, to Task based Learning and CLIL.

It was not easy to design a task that included all the TBL and CLIL characteristics. In part, it was because I wanted to make students the centre of the lesson and have an active role in the construction of knowledge. For this purpose, I had to find a task type and a content that they could learn without too much teacher intervention. In this case, I believe I was able to do so. However, we cannot forget that many syllabus topics need the teachers' explanations. Therefore, I think that the presentation of content by the teacher, in the CLIL context, is something necessary. Then, tasks could be used as the perfect activities for students to focus on the language while they continue to internalise the new concepts.

One of the aspects that I wanted to observe with this task was if focus on form was actually present during the task performance. For this reason, I went around giving feedback and observing the students' interaction. I used an Observation Worksheet which I designed to guide my analysis (see annex). However, there were twenty seven learners and I could not stay long analysing their language production, since I wanted to monitor and advise as many pairs as I could. In spite of this, most of the times when I stopped to listen to a pairs' conversation, I was able to notice episodes where students' negotiated meaning (see 2.3). Here are some examples:

1) Clarification request (to ask for a clarification of an utterance)

   Student A: Hill? Or muriendo?
   Student B: Kill, kill. No hill.
   Student A: Ah, vale.

2) Confirmation check (to make sure they have understood it correctly)

   Student A: Vale the boys are in the river, no?
   Student B: Yes.

   Student A: babies in a basket?
   Student B: Yes.

3) Language related episodes

   Student A: how is "mamando"?
   Student B: no se [asks teacher]

   Student A: como se dice matando?
   Student B: kill

   Student A: a person… se llama… mmm
   Student B: called
   Student A: yes, called Romulus.

4) Recasts (modification of incorrect utterances but still focusing on meaning)

    Student A: and the king no quiere the babies
    Student B: don't love the babies

As we saw in section 2.3, the Interaction Hypothesis considers episodes of negotiation of meaning as an essential constituent of meaningful interaction, where students use communicative strategies to progress and build their language knowledge. Then, the fact that it appeared in our task performance is a good sign of the efficacy of the method. It means that the ingredients for language learning to take place are there.
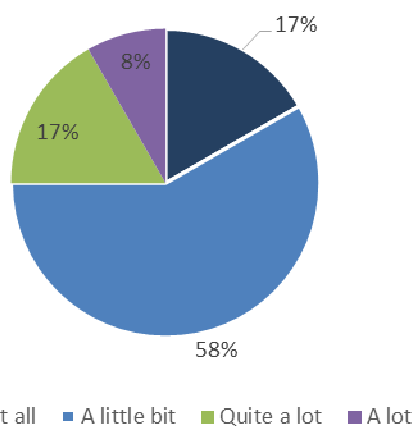
Other strategies used by students during their interaction were gestures. Moreover, I could hear one student use language creatively. She didn't know how to refer to wolf cubs and called them "mini wolfs".

I was happy to see that students engaged wholeheartedly with the task and stayed active during the lesson. At the beginning, however, they had difficulties in understanding the task instructions. It was the first time that TBL methodology was presented to them and they had problems trying to understand the outcome and the purpose of the task. I finally used some Spanish to make sure that all learners had understood my instructions. In this way, I managed to motivate students and I believe they enjoyed the lesson.
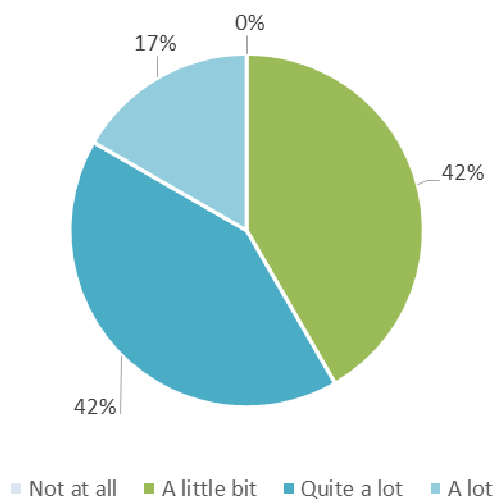
They used the expressions "In my picture…" and "I can see…" to start their descriptions. Also, the target words were used by most students. However, the use of the past simple was not very present. When I reflected about this circumstance, I concluded that it was a confirmation of the idea, which we have discussed in this project, that what we teach, when we teach it, is not always what students learn (Long and Robinson, 1998, p. 17). This statement is one of the main criticisms that linguists formulate against the focus on forms approach (see 1.1). Our students had been studying the past simple during the previous weeks and, probably, they had studied it in previous years. However, due to their own developmental patterns, they hadn't integrated the tense yet.

In an effort to evaluate the task, I conducted a survey to see how students felt about the task. I designed the questionnaire in Catalan (see annex) to make sure that they understood the question and that they could express themselves. Also, it was voluntary because the next day they had two exams. Therefore, only 12 students were able to fill out the survey. Below you can find the graphics showing the answers that they gave me.
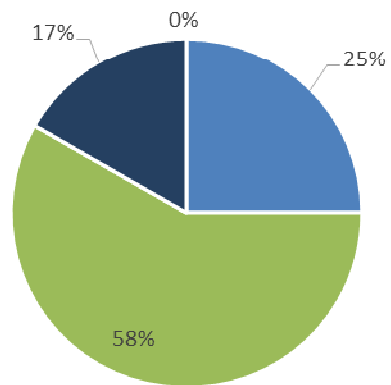
Do you find English language difficult to learn?

- 17% — Not at all
- 58% — A little bit
- 17% — Quite a lot
- 8% — A lot

Legend: ■ Not at all ■ A little bit ■ Quite a lot ■ A lot

Did the task help you?

- 0% — Not at all
- 42% — A little bit
- 42% — Quite a lot
- 17% — A lot

Legend: ■ Not at all ■ A little bit ■ Quite a lot ■ A lot

Was the task difficult?

17% 0% 25% 58%
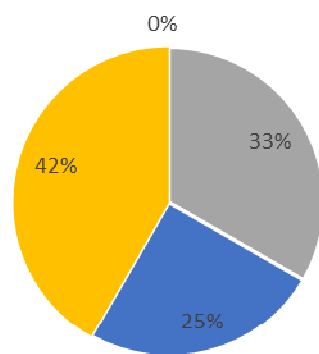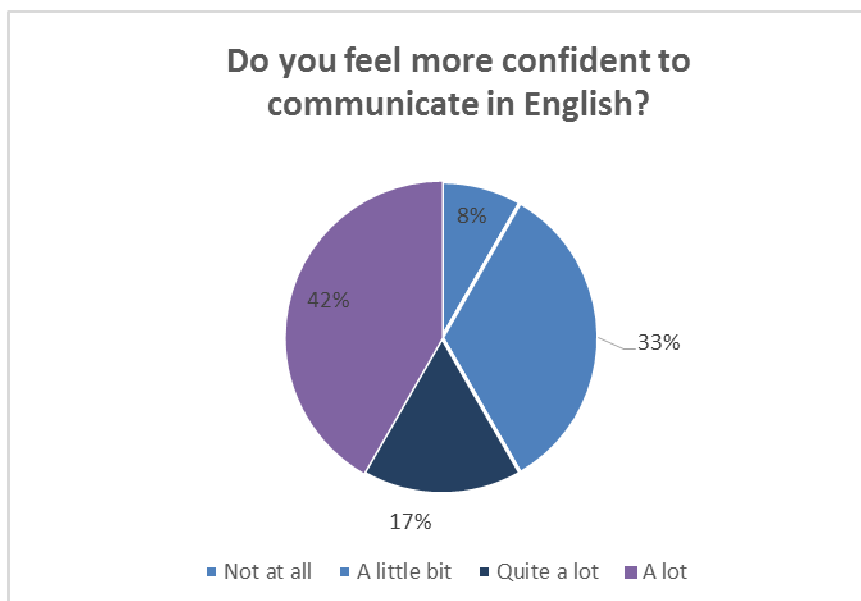
■ Not at all ■ A little bit ■ Quite a lot ■ A lot

Would it help you to learn better if regular lessons were complemented with tasks?

0% 33% 42% 25%

■ Not at all ■ A little bit ■ Quite a lot ■ A lot

Do you feel more confident to communicate in English?

- Not at all: 8%
- A little bit: 33%
- Quite a lot: 17%
- A lot: 42%

When I analysed the answers, I realised that they were very diverse and, therefore, it was difficult to reach a conclusion. I believe that, in part, this happens because I gave students four different options (not at all, a little bit, quite a lot, a lot). However, if we group the answers into "significantly" and "not significantly", understanding "not at all" and "a little bit" as "not significantly" and "quite a lot" and "a lot" as "significantly", conclusions may be clearer.

Then, we can say that, in general, students find English language difficult (75%) and 59% of students find the task considerably helpful in this respect. A narrow majority (58%) find the task significantly difficult. Most of them (67%) feel that it would be a good idea to complement regular lessons with task. They also, in general (59%) agree that the task has helped them gain confidence in their communicative English skills. Therefore, we can conclude that students' perception of the task was positive and that they were satisfied with its results.

In the questionnaire, I included some open questions to allow students to state their own views. Below I present the answers that I find more relevant to this project.

---

3. What have you learnt?
"No sabia que fos tan fàcil parlar d'història en Anglès i he sapigut [sabut] història en temps d'Anglès."
"D'Anglès moltes coses, paraules que ni sabia. Del contingut, no en tenia ni idea d'aquesta història."

---

5. Did you find the planning stage helpful?

"Sí, perquè he planificat la tasca i m'ha sortit ordenat."

"Sí, perquè sinó no ens posàvem en situació."

"Sí, perquè tinc més organització."

6. Did you like this kind of lesson?

"Ha sigut més divertit que estar assegut prenent apunts!!"

"Sí, m'ha agradat. M'ha agradat treballar amb algú, és més divertit i també ha sigut molt divertit, i escoltant les històries. Encara que, m'hagués agradat que ens deixessin una mica més de temps, i que d'alguna forma el company que un té no hagués vist les fotos que tu tens."

Finally, we can say that the lesson was warmly accepted by students. They perceived it as fun but they also realised that they were learning grammar, vocabulary, history and oral skills. They were able to focus on form while managing to convey meaning. Therefore, I believe that the task was successful in teaching content and language (CLIL) through an innovative methodology (TBL).

Conclusion

Task based Language Learning and CLIL are innovative approaches that have at their core interaction and meaningful communication. However, in contrast with other language teaching approaches, they also focus on linguistic forms and structures. This characteristic is what constitutes both TBL and CLIL as complete and effective language learning methodologies.

Moreover, they are very flexible approaches. Teachers who choose to implement TBL and CLIL have a wide range of possibilities in the design of the lesson. In order for it to be effective, teachers need to establish a tight structure where all the features of the task are carefully thought bearing in mind students' needs. Therefore, teacher training and preparation is an essential aspect of good TBL and CLIL practises.

As an answer to the hypothesis posed in the project, we can say that a CLIL lesson that follows a Task-based methodology is possible. However, after our practise, we believe that the role of tasks in a CLIL syllabus is likely to be a supportive one. Most of CLIL content requires an explanation by the teacher. Once this takes place, we think that tasks can be the perfect tool to help learners internalise the new concepts and develop their linguistic skills. In fact, we would be solving one of the main drawbacks of CLIL: the lack of language focus in its classroom implementation. We said that sometimes CLIL is confused with immersion and focus on meaning approaches. Then, if tasks are performed in CLIL lessons, language will recover its importance and we will solve the issue.

Furthermore, during the practise carried out in a school, we noticed that students engaged fully with tasks, enjoyed the challenge of performing one and perceived it as fun. Then, it could be a motivating way of learning an L2. Also, they noticed that they were learning vocabulary and content. Therefore, they were aware of learning and making progress.

Finally, TBL in CLIL sessions helps to create the right conditions for learning to take place. It allows learners to use the language they know, no matter how little it is, and progress at their own pace, using communicative strategies and engaging in meaningful interaction.

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Annex

Evaluation grid for CLIL lessons (Bentley, 2010, p. 86)

Communication skills

Name _____ Can …		Date	Date	Date
respond to questions about subject content	– open – closed			
ask questions about subject content	– closed – open			
introduce new ideas about the subject				
ask for clarification of subject content				
clarify own points				
express support for others' ideas				
build on other learners' ideas				
respond to peers by challenging ideas				
respond to peers by offering opposing ideas				
use evidence to support ideas				
identify points of similarity and difference				
report back main ideas of discussion				
personalise subject content using relevant information				
give an oral presentation				

Cognitive skills

Name _____ Can …	Date	Date	Date
match word labels to pictures/objects			
compare two objects, people, places, ideas			
compare three or more objects, people, places, ideas			
classify objects, people, places, etc.			
sequence actions chronologically			
make connections between objects, people, places, ideas			
make decisions			
give reasons			
think creatively in subject area			
make deductions			
predict conclusions			
define a problem			
evaluate work of a peer using given criteria			
evaluate own work using given criteria			

Attitudes to learning

Name _____ Can …	Not often	Sometimes	Often
concentrate			
work systematically			
ask for help when necessary			
cooperate with others			
work independently			

Legend of Romulus and Remus (adapted from: Romulus and Remus. (4 October, 2013) In *Ancient History Encyclopaedia* Retrieved from http://goo.gl/ucmHDw)

Before Romulus' and Remus' conception, Numitor's reign was usurped by Numitor's younger brother, Amulius. Amulius, wishing to avoid any conflict of power, killed Nimitor's male heirs.

So, King Amulius ordered the twins' death by means of being thrown into the Tiber River. He reasoned that if the twins were to die not by the sword but by the elements, he and his city would be saved from punishment by the gods. He ordered a servant to carry out the death sentence, but in every scenario of this myth, the servant takes pity on the twins and spares their lives. The servant, then, places the twins into a basket onto the River Tiber, and the river carries the boys to safety.

The twins were first discovered by a she-wolf or *lupa*, who suckled them and they were fed by a wood-pecker or *picus*. Eventually, they were discovered and cared for by a shepherd and his wife: Faustulus and Acca Larentia. The two boys grew up to be shepherds like their adoptive father. One day while they were herding their sheep, they were met by shepherds of King Amulius. These shepherds started a fight with Romulus and Remus in which Remus was captured and taken before King Amulius. Romulus gathered and incited a band of local shepherds to join him in rescuing his brother. King Amulius believed that Numitor's children were dead; he did not recognize Remus or Romulus. Romulus freed his brother, and in the process killed King Amulius.

After Amulius' death, the brothers rejected the citizens' offer of the crown of Alba Longa and instead reinstated Numitor as king. They left Alba Longa seeking to found their own city, and each set out to find the best locale. The brothers quarrelled over the location of the foundation of their new city. Romulus began to dig trenches and build walls around his hill: the Palatine Hill.

In response to Romulus' construction, Remus made continuous fun of the wall and his brother's city. Remus was so bold as to jump over Romulus' wall jestingly. In response to Remus' mockeries and for jumping over his wall, Romulus, angered by his brother's belittlement, killed him.

Romulus named his city Roma after himself.

FITXA D'OBSERVACIÓ

Funcions del llenguatge
- Give instructions
- Ask for information
- Agree/disagree

Què fan quan hi ha un problema de comunicació i no s'entenen.

Un alumne demana aclariments quan una cosa no s'ha entès i l'altre alumne ho torna a dir amb altres paraules (ex. "Two apples away" "two what?" "two streets away")

Un alumne diu una cosa de manera incorrecta i l'altre alumna repeteix el que ha dit de manera correcta (correcció implícita)

Correccions explícites

Autocorreccions

Comentari metalingüístic (ex. "has de fer servir passat, no present")

Preguntes sobre una norma (ex. És he was o he were?)

Consells sobre llengua entre ells (ex. "recorda que has d'utilitzar el passat)

Tots els alumnes involucrats?
Interès/motivació?
Segueixen bé les indicacions de la pretask?
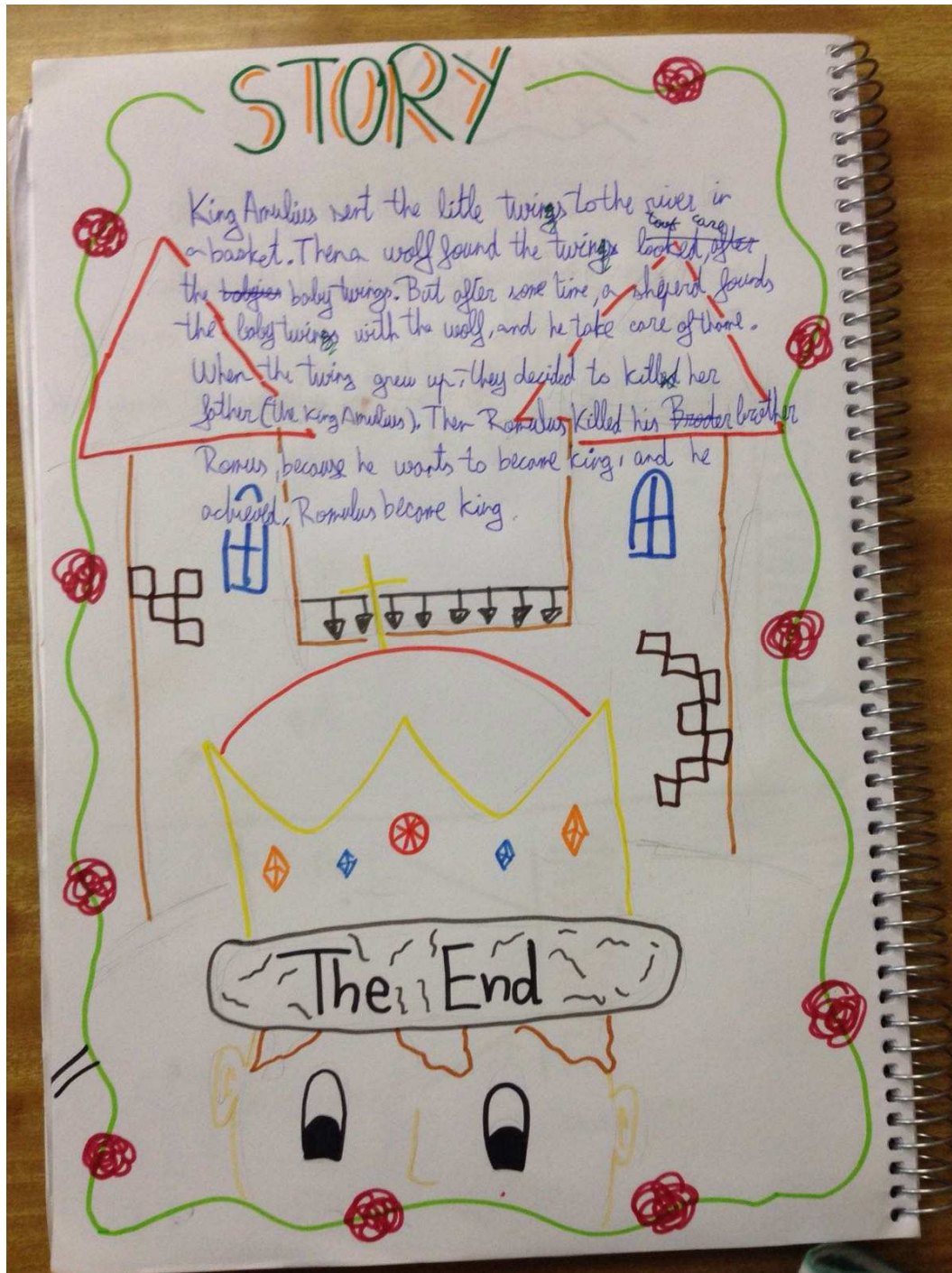**Quin tipus d'interacció i llenguatge genera la task?**
Fluidesa?

Students' questionnaire about the task

QÜESTIONARI

	GENS	UNA MICA	BASTANT	MOLT
És difícil per a tu l'anglès?				
Aquesta lliçó t'ha ajudat?				
T'ha semblat difícil?				
Complementar altres lliçons amb aquest tipus d'activitats, t'ajudaria a aprendre millor?				
Has guanyat confiança a l'hora de comunicar-te en anglès?				

1. Com creus que t'ha sortit la task? Abans de fer-la, pensaves que podries fer-te entendre?
2. Què podries millorar?
3. Quins coneixements nous has après (tant d'anglès com de contingut)?
4. Marca allò que creus que has treballat amb aquesta tasca.
   Història   Expressió oral
   Gramàtica   Vocabulari
5. Creus que la fase de PLANIFICACIÓ t'ha ajudat a fer millor la tasca? Per què?
6. En general, t'ha agradat aquest tipus de lliçó? T'agradaria que alguna cosa hagués estat diferent?

Photos of students' written report

STORY

King Amulius sent the litle twings to the river in a basket. Then a wolf found the twings took care of the baby twings. But after some time, a sheperd founds the baby twings with the wolf, and he take care of them. When the twings grew up, they decided to killed her father (the King Amulius). Then Romulus killed his brother Remus, because he wants to became king, and he achieved. Romulus became king.

The End

THE ♥STORY OF TWINS

A long time a ago there where the powerfull King Amulius. The King Amulius had twins but they threw the sons in the river and a wolf find the twins and they resque there. After sheperd will find the sons and will feed. When they older they take revenge and Kill there father. After they to fight to Kings And Romulus winns the fight.

♥ The Story of Twens ♥

A long time ago there where the powerfull King Amulius the King Amulius had twins but they threw the sons in the river and a wolf fin the twins and they resque there. After sheperd will find the sons and Kill there after. After they to fight to kings. And Romulus winns the fight.

S.T.O.R.Y

The King Amulius tell a ~~soldier~~ soldier let twings in the river.

The ~~tr~~ twings navegate in the river when wolf mather and ~~babies~~ ~~toodies~~ wolfs find the twings lookafter. One day shepherd find ~~todays~~ the wolf lookafter the twins and shepherd lookafter the twins at the old. When the twins are old ~~his~~ neames is Remus and Romuls kill his father King Amulius. And Remus and Romuls fight between Theys. ~~to~~ bat be King. Romuls kill Remus and pass the King.

I invited a my friend. I invited a my friend

ROME

The King Amulius have two twins and he doesn't like the twins, and he indicate to trow one the river, the wolf mom see take twins and he nursed the twins. When the twins are nursed one sheperd kill the wolf an continue nursed. The twins are old her going to Kill Remus and he proclamed King of Rome.

I was drinking a glass of water.

ROMA (in English = Rome)

The king don't love this babyes and order to a soldier
to throw the babyes to the river. The babyes was in
a basket. The wolf look two babyes in the grass.
A person find two babyes under the wolf. The person
take the babyes ...
After more time, Romulus and Remus kill the king
beacause they where abandon. After Romulus kill Remus
beacause only one king sit in the trone.
And Romulus win the battle and was the king of Rome.

Photos of students performing the task