The effectiveness of a mixed methodology implemented in a Beginner's Spanish Course to develop the four language skills: a quasi-experimental study

KERWIN A. LIVINGSTONE

Applied Linguist/Translator/Modern Language Teacher

Angels Academy of English

4 North Road, Cascade, St, Ann's, Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago, W.I.

E-mail: profesordelenguasmodernas@yahoo.es

Tel.: 868 729 9427

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A MIXED METHODOLOGY IMPLEMENTED IN A BEGINNER'S SPANISH COURSE TO DEVELOP THE FOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

LA EFECTIVIDAD DE UNA METODOLOGÍA MIXTA IMPLEMENTADA EN UN CURSO DE ESPAÑOL PARA PRINCIPIANTES PARA DESARROLLAR LAS CUATRO HABILIDADES LINGÜÍSTICAS: UN ESTUDIO CUASI-EXPERIMENTAL

L'EFFICACITE D'UNE METHODOLOGIE MIXTE MISE EN OEUVRE DANS UN COURS D'ESPAGNOL POUR DEBUTANTS A DEVELOPPER LES QUATRE HABILITES LINGUISTIQUES: UNE ETUDE QUASI-EXPERIMENTALE

ABSTRACT: This present article seeks to provide a mixed methodological model for the development and implementation of a Teaching Module for Spanish as a Foreign Language in the face-to-face environment. The primary objective is to portray how methodological principles from different language teaching approaches (such as task based language teaching and cooperative learning) can be combined effectively in designing activities for face-to-face contexts. In this regard, empirical evidence is analysed in order to determine the effectiveness of the mixed methodology in the teaching-learning of Spanish as a Foreign Language in the said settings, in a study based on a longitudinal experimental design with pre-test and post-test, but without control group. The results show an increase in the acquisition of specific knowledge in Spanish as a Foreign Language. It is therefore proposed that mixed methodological models be integrated and implemented when designing Teaching Modules for Language Learning, since they are the most suitable for Second and Foreign Language Acquisition.

RESUMEN: El presente artículo propone proveer un modelo metodológico mixto para el desarrollo e implementación de un Módulo de Enseñanza para el español como lengua extranjera en la modalidad presencial. El objetivo principal es evidenciar cómo los principios metodológicos provenientes de algunos de los diferentes enfoques didácticos - enfoque por tareas y aprendizaje cooperativo - pueden ser aplicados de manera efectiva en el diseño de contextos presenciales. Para ello, se explora evidencia empírica acerca de la efectividad de la metodología mixta en la enseñanza-aprendizaje de español como lengua extranjera en dichos ambientes, en un estudio basado en un diseño cuasi-experimental longitudinal con pre-test y post-test, sin grupo control. Los resultados muestran un incremento en el aprendizaje de determinados conocimientos en español como LE. Se propone, entonces, que en el diseño de módulos de enseñanza para el aprendizaje de lenguas se integren e implementen modelos metodológicos mixtos por cuanto son los más propicios para el aprendizaje de LE/L2.

RÉSUMÉ: Le présent article cherche à fournir un modèle méthodologique mixte pour le développement et la mise en œuvre d'un module d'enseignement de l'espagnol comme langue étrangère dans l'environnement face à face. L'objectif principal est de présenter la façon dont les principes méthodologiques des différentes approches d'enseignement des langues (comme l'enseignement des langues par tâches et l'apprentissage coopératif) peuvent être combinés éfficacement avec le but de concevoir des activités pour des contextes face à face. À cet égard, les évidences empiriques sont analysées afin de déterminer l'efficacité de la méthodologie mixte dans l'enseignement-apprentissage de l'espagnol comme langue étrangère dans les paramètres donnés. Cette investigation est basée sur une étude longitudinale quasi-expérimentale avec pré-test et post-test, mais sans groupe de contrôle. Les résultats montrent une augmentation de l'acquisition de connaissances spécifiques en espagnol comme langue étrangère. Donc, on se propose que s'intègrent et se mettent en œuvre des modèles mixtes méthodologiques afin de concevoir des modules pédagogiques pour l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues. Sans aucun doute, ils sont les plus adaptés pour l'acquisition des deuxièmes langages et langues étrangères.

KEY WORDS: task-based approach; cooperative approach; mixed methodological model; face-to-face method; linguistic and communicative competence.

PALABRAS CLAVES: enfoque por tareas; enfoque cooperativo; modelo metodológico mixto; modalidad presencial; competencia lingüística y comunicativa.

MOTS CLÉS: approche basée sur les tâches; approche cooperative; modèle méthodologique mixte ; modalité présentielle ; compétence linguistique et communicative.

SUMMARY: 1. Introduction. 2. Outline of the problem. 3. Face to face teaching. 4. Language teaching methodology. 4.1. Task-based language teaching. 4.1.1. A framework for task-based language teaching and learning. 4.2. Cooperative language learning. 5. Longitudinal quasi-experimental study. 5.1. Hypotheses. 5.2. Objectives. 6. Methodology. 6.1. Sample. 6.2. Sample selection. 6.3. Design of the experiment. 6.4. Description of the mixed methodological model. 6.5. Manual. 6.6. Structure of the pre-test and post-test. 6.7. Time-frame for the intervention module. 6.8. Implementation of the teaching module. 7. Analysis and discussion of results. 8. Conclusion.

SUMARIO: 1. Introducción. 2. Planteamiento del problema. 3. Enseñanza Presencial. 4. Metodología de Enseñanza de Lenguas. 4.1. Enfoque por Tareas. 4.1.1. Un Marco para la enseñanza-aprendizaje de lenguas mediante tareas. 4.2. Enfoque Cooperativo. 5. Estudio cuasi-experimental longitudinal. 5.1. Hipótesis. 5.2. Objetivos. 6. Metodología. 6.1. Muestra. 6.2. Selección de la muestra. 6.3. Diseño del experimento. 6.4. Descripción del modelo metodológico mixto. 6.5. Manual. 6.6. La estructura del pre-test y post-test. 6.7. Temporalización del módulo de intervención. 6.8. Implementación del módulo de enseñanza. 7. Análisis y discusión de los resultados. 8. A Modo de Cierre y Conclusión.

SOMMAIRE: 1. Introduction. 2. Définition du problème. 3. Pédagogie face à face. 4. Méthodologie de l'enseignement des langues. 4.1. Approche basés sur les tâches. 4.1.1. Un cadre pour l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues basés sur tâches. 4.2. Approche coopérative. 5. Étude longitudinale quasi-expérimentale. 5.1. Hypothèses. 5.2. Objectifs. 6. Méthodologie. 6.1. Echantillon. 6.2. Sélection de l'echantillon. 6.3. Conception de l'Expérience. 6.4. Description du modèle méthodologique mixte. 6.5. Manuel. 6.6. Structure de la pré-test et post-test. 6.7. Calendrier du module d'intervention. 6.8. Mise en œuvre du modele d'enseignement du module. 7. Analyse et discussion des résultats. 8. Conclusion.

The effectiveness of a mixed methodology implemented in a Beginner's Spanish Course to develop the four language skills: a quasi-experimental study

KERWIN A. LIVINGSTONE

1. INTRODUCCIÓN

In the ambit of Language Teaching and Learning, today, one of the principal concerns of researchers, educators and teachers revolves around the teaching methodology that is being implemented, or that which should be used, to execute the work units in the classroom to teach Spanish as a Foreign Language (FL) or Second Language (SL) (Ellis, 2003; Estaire, 2004-2005; Livingstone & Ferreira 2009; Livingstone, 2008). They all agree that the methodological processes implemented should equip the students to substantially improve their linguistic and communicative competence in a determined language. In relation to this, language teachers should update and improve their teaching practises – which would influence the students' learning process in one way or another – by experimenting with new teaching methods and approaches as it relates to Spanish as a FL/SL like the Communicative Method, Task-Based Language Teaching & Learning (TBLT), Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), among others.

The interest in Task-Based Instruction and Co-operative Language Learning is due to the potential that they offer for the design and implementation of courses that respond to learners' specific communicative needs. In didactic modules, the task is seen as the vertebral and primary axis of the pedagogic "input" in teaching.

It must be signalled that the fundamental aim of these two methodological approaches is to enable the pupil to develop and to improve functional competence in a foreign language without sacrificing grammatical accuracy. They harmonize the way in which languages are taught with what Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Research has revealed about how they are learned (Lee, 2000; Sheen, 1994; Willis, 1996; Skehan, 1998). It is necessary to highlight that the said teaching methodologies constitute a movement of evolution within the Communicative Method and it would therefore not be so difficult to experiment with them by means of designing teaching modules in which the practice of the four language skills (speaking, writing, reading and listening) may be considered.

The present study deals with the effectiveness of a mixed model methodology – Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) - for the teaching and learning of Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL). The objective of this model is to improve linguistic and communicative competence of beginners' students at the University of Guyana (Guyana, South America).

The research data have been collected through a quasi-experimental longitudinal study with pre-test/post-test, but without control group. The purpose of the two tests is to collect valuable information about the skill levels of students before and after the intervention. Through this research it is expected that clear and accurate information be obtained in regard to the linguistic and communicative competence of the participants in this study, before and

after implementing a teaching module for Spanish as a FL. Similarly, we want to emphasize how effective TBLT and CLL are in the learning and acquisition of specific knowledge.

2. OUTLINE OF THE PROBLEM

As it relates to teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language (FL), it is now evident that teachers are making significant efforts to ensure that their students are linguistically and communicatively competent.

In terms of methodology, over time, different approaches have emerged to support the second and foreign language teaching (SL/FL). One of the first to be developed was the GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD. This is based on the assumption that the goal of studying a language is to learn the specific language and to be able to read its literature, or benefit from the intellectual development that results from this study.

In the traditional methodology, there have been some limitations in defining the cognitive processes involved in the development of inter-language, which include the progressive resolution of forms and functions and the restructuring of the existing SL knowledge (Ellis, 2003, Willis & Willis, 2007).

It seems clear that the traditional view that identified the teacher as an instructor of Spanish who transmitted his knowledge to the students and who took all decisions relating to the progress of the class is no longer adequate (Livingstone, 2008).

Guyana, my country of origin, presents a complex situation with respect to Foreign Language Teaching – Spanish, French, Portuguese. In secondary schools - President's College, Queen's Collage, St. Stanislaus Collage, Bishop's High School, St. Rose's High School among others - teachers of Modern Languages are trying desperately to make their students linguistically and communicatively competent. When the students graduate from High School, they, often times, do not demonstrate that they have the communicative competence necessary to express themselves when they are away from the language classroom. In fact, the truth is that their communicative competence is not being developed nor practised sufficiently.

A careful examination of the situation in Guyana, as it relates to the number of students studying a foreign language, will reveal that the number is quite small. On carrying out a survey, by means of blogs, modern language meetings, surveys, statistical analyses and teaching evaluation forms, it will be deduced that the students are bored with the way in which the language is being taught to them in the language classroom. They no longer have the desire to learn a foreign language since they do not feel motivated enough to do it.

The reason for this situation is that Modern Language Teachers in Guyana are not familiar with current methodological approaches and thus they conform themselves to teaching the language by way of the GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION METHOD, the traditional language teaching method, through which they learnt a foreign language and the only one about which they have knowledge (Livingstone, 2011).

The GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION METHOD is based on the fact that the objective of studying a language is to learn it and to be able to read its literature or benefit from the intellectual development that results from this approach. In relation to it, there must be a detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by the application of this knowledge to translate sentences and texts into the foreign language and vice versa. Reading and writing are the major focus of attention. The selection of vocabulary is based on reading texts used; in

fact, these are taught by means of bilingual lists of words, the use of the dictionary and by memorization.

The sentence is the basic unit of teaching and practising the language. A major part of the class is dedicated to translating sentences. Precision is emphasised. It is expected that students attain high standards and levels in the quality of their translations. Grammar is taught deductively, this is, by means of THE presentation and study of grammar rules which are rehearsed and practised therein after with exercises on grammar. The mother tongue of the student is the language of instruction.

Another approach that has emerged to support language teaching is the COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH. Since the genesis of this didactic method, it has been asserted that the objective of teaching-learning process of a FL is for students achieve a certain level of communicative competence in that language (Willis & Willis, 2007; Livingstone, 2009). The constant evolution of the COMMUNICATIVE METHOD led to the development of two teaching methodologies: "Task-Based Language Teaching and Learning" and "Cooperative Language Learning". In an attempt to turn the classroom into a scenario of real-life communication processes, the realisation of tasks is proposed, in a collaborative manner, as the articulating axis of the teaching-learning process.

It should be noted that there is little evidence of experimentation with Task-Based Instruction and Cooperative Language Learning in the teaching-learning Spanish as a FL/SL. It is quite evident that throughout the world these teaching methodologies are being used to teach other languages such as English and German (Livingstone, 2010a & 2011). This obviously makes it clear that many studies have not been carried out in which these methods have been incorporated in order to determine its effectiveness in teaching Spanish. It has been found that the Communicative Approach is the method that is still being widely used for teaching Spanish as a FL/SL.

Given the emergence of these new methods and approaches for teaching language in the world, and the increasing use of them, the need to evaluate these methodologies to observe its effect on learning is becoming increasingly clear. Experience has shown that what is taught in language lessons is not learned the same way nor in the same order by the students. Clearly, there are different teaching methods to learn a foreign language and consequently, teachers must find ways and means of upgrading their teaching. Besides, the necessity to evaluate the afore-mentioned methodologies, in order to observe their effect on the teaching-learning process, remains indubitable.

3. FACE TO FACE TEACHING

This style refers to two criteria: the temporal simultaneity of the processes of teaching communication and physical presence of instructors and students in the communication process. This means that in the "face to face" mode, most of the teaching-learning processes coincide in space and time. The teacher and students share the physical space where the teaching communication processes are carried out simultaneously in time.

No one doubts that FACE-TO-FACE teaching is very lively, warm, human and personal. (Bartholomé (1995:40) makes the following contribution:

"We could assume that the best possible training is undoubtedly the face-to-face training. Perhaps, because the face-to-face interaction between a trainer and trainee is considered one of the key factors in any process of formation".

FACE-TO-FACE education is accompanied by a complex context that reinforces the informal manner in the interest of the student learning activity that takes place (peers, exchanging notes and points of view, the review team, extra-educational activities, contact with the teacher; in short, interpersonal communication is the trigger for motivation). In general, it allows one to implement the interaction between all members of the learning community. Makes working in groups, increasing the motivation of the student. That is, there is a very active participation of students.

By using this model a distributed learning is created, i.e. the terms for knowledge are structured so that each linguistic skill obtains optimal development. Both productive and receptive skills (speaking and writing, reading and listening, respectively) can be improved by using a modality that can help to each of them in a more balanced way. It also promotes closer contact between teacher and students, which is vital in the process of teaching and learning languages.

4. LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODOLOGY

The birth of the COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH in the 1980's brought a shift in the conception of language and its teaching (Skehan, 1998; Lee, 2000). Before its genesis, language was conceived as a system of signs to convey ideas. Methods of teaching foreign languages (FL) such as audio oral and audio-lingual rested in the formal teaching of grammar and translation. Linguistic and language correction were essential. These had arisen as a direct result of the need to have a good command of oral and aural language. Language was conceived as a system of signs to convey ideas. The central elements of investigation were repetition exercises, drills and building habits.

Advocates of this approach saw the need to put emphasis on linguistic precision, arguing that a continuous repetition of errors would lead to the acquisition of incorrect structures and mispronunciation. The lessons were organized around a grammatical structure presented in short dialogues. Students often heard a series of recordings of conversations again and again and then tried to repeat the exact pronunciation and grammatical structures of these dialogues. These activities highlighted the use of the receptive skills (listening and reading) subordinated to the productive skills (speaking and writing).

Opponents of the AUDIO-LINGUAL METHOD argued that too much emphasis on repetition and precision in language did not help students to acquire a communicative competence in the target language. They sought new ways to present and organize language teaching and they defended the COMMUNICATIVE METHOD as the most effective strategy for teaching a foreign language.

The COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH was taking new forms while it continued reflecting on language, communicative competence, learning and language acquisition, and educational aspects that facilitated this process. Language began to be conceived primarily as a tool for communication and therefore the emphasis of teaching was directed towards developing the communicative competence of students. Its key feature is that it bases language

learning in real communicative needs that the learner will execute in that language. This new approach to FL/SL teaching and learning picked up contributions from several research fields, such as British Functional Linguistics (eg. J. Firth & M. Halliday), U.S. Sociolinguistics (eg. D. Hymes, J. Gumperz & W. Labov), and the Philosophy of Language (eg. J. Austin & J. Searle).

The COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH has an integrative character as it combines the use of language skills in terms of achieving real communication situations, and its objective is for the student to achieve communicative competence. Moreno (1997: 122) argues the following:

> "The basic goal of teaching an L2 is to develop the ability to communicate in the foreign language, not the mastery of linguistic structures. The traditional method does not put emphasis on the student's communicative output, but on developing skills such as the reading of classic works".

Regarding the above, Germany Germany & Ferreira Cabrera (1999: 1) make this assertion:

> "The teaching-learning process is justified in terms of two educational perspectives: the idealistic and pragmatic. The idealistic component of language emphasises the emotional aspects of it, while the pragmatic component emphasises the functionality of language. Moreover, considering that the student must obtain the maximum benefit of the language taught, his learning experience, moreover, should be anchored in a strong cultural base".

Over the past 100 years, the assumption that the quality of teaching a second language (SL) will improve if teachers improve their teaching has resulted in the emergence of a variety of approaches and methods and resources that can be tested, adapted or implemented depending on the contingent necessities (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Two of the new forms that emerge from the COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH are TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING and CO-OPERATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. Each one of these is discussed immediately below:

4.1. TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is based on the use of tasks as the central axis of planning and instruction in language teaching. The tasks are proposed as a useful vehicle for implementing these principles. The participation of learners in the execution of tasks provides a better context for the activation of the processes of learning, rather than focus on form activities. Breen (1987) defines task-based learning as: "any effort of learning the language that has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specific work procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who are responsible for the task."

According to Zanón (1999), it deals with organizing the teaching process in communicative activities that promote and integrate various processes related to communication. While these activities are reproduced in the classroom, students have to employ a number of useful strategies to solve specific problems (fluency, meaning, etc.). Regarding the proposed task, Ellis (2003: 276) argues that "the general purpose of the task-based methodology is to create

opportunities for language learning and for developing skills through the collaborative construction of knowledge".

According to Estaire (2004-2005: 3), it is an approach geared towards the construction of the communicative competence of students in all its dimensions. It focuses on action, developing the capacity of students to "do things" through the use of language. This approach is based on a cognitive-constructivist conception of SL/FL learning in which the student is an active player in his own learning: he finds himself in a continuous process of constructing and restructuring knowledge. It is a conception of learning in which significant learning, work focused on student learning strategies, and self-learning are particularly important. This approach is also based on a social conception of FL learning, which considers the classroom as a social context, offering a wealth of opportunities for the development of language.

4.1.1. A FRAMEWORK FOR TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

In task-based teaching, the lessons are focused on teaching units centred on a theme. This model uses tasks as the organizing unit for planning the lesson. It is precisely the task that determines the content to be worked in the unit (Estaire & Zanon, 1990). Roca, Valcárcel & Verdú (1990: 75) provide the following explanation:

> "The task involves solving a problem or filling a gap of information by activating a mental process using the foreign language and it is considered that through that mental process SL is internalised and acquired. The student concentrates on solving the task and "forgets" that he is an a SL classroom and thus he learns distractedly, unconsciously, playing, thinking and/or creating. This model enhances work in groups and pairs which is indicative of Cooperative Learning".

Ellis (2003: 238) emphasizes that Estaire & Zanón (1994) proposed a framework for planning work units or teaching units. These have two stages: The "first phase" involves a general statement and is responsible for providing what is hoped to achieve through the work unit. The general statement is accomplished in three steps in this order:

The first stage:

1. The determination of the topic or area of interest for the teaching unit.
2. Planning for the final task to be carried out at the end of the unit.
3. The specification of the objectives of the work unit.

The "second phase" consists of the details and how stipulates how the teaching unit will be carried out. There are three additional sequential steps as follows:

The second stage:

1. The specification or determination of the content (thematic and linguistic) necessary for performing the final task.

2. Planning and sequencing of the communication and language support tasks to enable students to perform the final task.
3. Planning and evaluation procedures throughout the unit.

Task-Based Instruction, in all its variants, has been and remains the guiding light of the teaching process of many educators. It has been decided that the only way to make a balance between the ideal and the real of a theoretical framework is to develop it in the classroom. In this way, teachers and educators can be guided by the techniques for developing teaching modules for their classes (Livingstone, 2010b & 2010c).

4.2. COOPERATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING

Just like TBLT, the Cooperative Approach (Cooperative Learning Language) emerges in the framework of communicative language teaching in the mid-70s (Estaire, 2004-2005). It is a teaching approach that maximizes the use of cooperative activities involving pairs and small groups of learners in the classroom.

Olsen & Kagan (1992: 8) define this approach in this way:

> "A group learning activity which is organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is responsible for their own learning, and is motivated to enhance the learning of others".

Fathman & Kessler (1993: 128) define CLL as "group work which is carefully structured to enable all students to interact, share information and can be evaluated individually for their work". Richards & Rodgers (2001) argue that the word "cooperative" in CLL emphasizes another important dimension: the development of language classes that encourage cooperation rather than competition in learning. It is an approach designed to develop critical thinking skills and communicative competence through the activities of structured social interaction.

Trujillo Sáez (2002: 4) states that in 2001, the California Department of Education provided the following definition of CLL:

> "Most cooperative approaches involve small, heterogeneous groups, usually 4 or 5 members working together to carry out a group task, in which each member is individually liable for part of the final result which can not be complete unless group members work together, in other words, group members are positively interdependent".

The Cooperative Method is used to develop linguistic and communicative competence, but also to improve cognitive and social skills, besides being a tool for integrating language and curriculum content, a key exercise in SL/FL context.

5. **LONGITUDINAL QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY**

In relation to the hypothesis of this research a longitudinal quasi-experimental study was carried out with pre-test/post-test, without control group, to determine empirically whether the mixed methodology, grounded in task-based teaching and cooperative learning, was effective for learning specific knowledge in Spanish as a FL. The results should reflect that the mixed methodology, using the face-to-face method, based on the task-based and cooperative approaches, is effective for increasing their learning in Spanish and thus optimize their linguistic and communicative skills.

5.1. HYPOTHESES

In this present work, the assumptions that guide this research are:

1. A mixed methodological model, supported by Task-Based Language Teaching and Co-operative Language Learning techniques, will be effective in learning and acquiring determined knowledge in Spanish as a FL/SL.
2. The students will be able to increase their knowledge in Spanish, as it relates to a specific subject matter, and therefore become linguistically and communicatively competent in that body of knowledge.

5.2. OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this research are:

1. Designing a methodological model for teaching and learning of Spanish as a FL supported by task-based and cooperative learning techniques for intermediate-level students.
2. Verify whether the work in pairs and in groups is effective in performing tasks and learning Spanish in a defined area of knowledge.

6. **METHODOLOGY**

6.1. SAMPLE

This teaching module for Spanish was aimed at students from the University of Guyana. They were from different fields of specialisation - Tourism, International relations, Education, Developmental Studies, etc. - and were at a basic level in Spanish as a Foreign Language (FL), thus it was necessary for them to develop and improve their linguistic and communicative skills.

6.2. SAMPLE SELECTION

In order to obtain empirical evidence of the learning process, and to evaluate the linguistic and communicative competence in Spanish, a sample group of 19 students from the University

of Guyana was selected. The average age of the participants in the sample ranged between 20 and 45. Of the total number of the sample, 31.6% (6) were males and 68.4% (13) of them female.

They all spoke English as their mother tongue. In fact, all the students were studying Spanish driven by two needs: they wanted to have a better degree of linguistic and communicative competence, and they had an interest in learning more about Latin American culture and custom.

6.3. DESIGN OF THE EXPERIMENT

To design the materials and procedures for the mixed methodological model that was developed for this study, a review of the theoretical affirmations of the TBLT and CLL methodology as well as the components of face-to-face teaching was conducted. The cultural context of the Hispanic world was also considered for the design of all activities that supported the practice of the four language skills to facilitate language learning. The said activities were used to activate the processes of meta-cognition, reflection, analysis and opportunities for contact with the target language, thus allowing learning to be internalised and achieved favourably.

It has been considered that the only way to make a balance between the real and the ideal of a theoretical framework is to develop it in the classroom. To this end, a teaching module for Spanish as a FL was designed and developed based on the mixed methodology already signalled. The aim then was to test the effectiveness of this mixed methodological model, which, ultimately, could help to train teachers in techniques for developing teaching modules for their classes.

6.4. DESCRIPTION OF THE MIXED METHODOLOGICAL MODEL

The module for this experimental study was designed in accordance with the guidelines established by Estaire & Zanón (1990) for Task-Based Approach as it relates to Spanish as a FL/SL. These guidelines are based on the Framework for Task-Based Language Teaching and Learning that enable the creation of teaching units in six steps and combine compatible elements from several proposals:

(1) The theme/topic of interest
(2) The final task
(3) The Objectives
(4) The linguistic and thematic contents which will be carried out throughout the teaching module.
(5) The sequencing of tasks (micro tasks) leading to the final task (macro task)
(6) The evaluation

In the context of cooperative learning, techniques were identified that served to support language teaching. For purposes of this research, the techniques that were used in particular were:

Learning Together: The main assumption is that it should include all the basic principles of cooperative learning so that, in this way, all group members achieve the goal of the proposed task.

Group Investigation: It proposes that students organize their own groups and be dedicated to studying one aspect of the proposed theme for the whole class.

Jigsaw Puzzle: Each member of the group or each group receives a different part of the information of the specific topic to be discussed. After discussing the information that each group or each group member has, with a group of "experts" on certain issues, they come together to produce a report. With students from other groups who have different pieces of information, they start to put together the project cooperatively.

6.5. MANUAL

One manual was designed: a Student Manual. This is described briefly below:

Student Manual: this consists of the six steps proposed by Estaire & Zanón (1990) and Estaire (2004-2005), which have been well planned: specification of the subject matter, final task, objectives, linguistics and thematic contents, sequencing of tasks leading to the completion of the final tasks, and the evaluative processes.

The manual is composed of a brief history of the evolution of the Spanish language, written in English, a map that shows the Spanish speaking countries of the world, some photos and basic information of eight (8) of the most important Spanish countries. Besides, there is also brief information about Spanish culture - music and dance; food; dress; religion and festive celebrations of great significance - through which the learner could come to appreciate Hispanic essence.

This "Student Manual" is divided into four (4) units or lessons. Each unit deals with a specific subject matter of the target language culture: Lesson 1 focuses on the date in Spanish and all that concerns it; Lesson 2 pays attention to the exchange of greetings with regard to getting to know someone for the first time, etc; Lesson 3 looks at telling the time in Spanish in reference to a visit to the doctor, and Lesson 4 stresses on knowing people, knowing how to describe them, the difference of use of "Saber" and "Conocer", two verbs in Spanish which mean "to know" in English.

The objective of this manual is to enable the student to develop his/her linguistic and communicative competence in relation to the specific thematic areas studied.

In each of the units or lessons, the following can be found: a dialogue in Spanish and its English version, important points coming out of the dialogue and a brief discussion of these, a Grammar summary, the tasks to be executed, a list of useful vocabulary based on the topic in question, individual and group activities, as well as some electronic links by means of which the student could deepen his understanding of the specific area being dealt with.

The purpose of giving the university students a manual was for them to have some autonomy, thus allowing them to take control of their own learning, one of the principal objectives of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Thanks to this, the teacher is now able to fulfill his/her role as a guide and facilitator to the student.

6.6. STRUCTURE OF THE PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

It is important to note that the structure of the pre-test and post-test, which integrates the receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and written) have been adapted in some ways in accordance with the general objectives of assessing general communicative competence in Spanish. "If the rates of assessment are a total of 100%, 60% is allocated to the assessment of productive skills, and 40% to receptive skills" (Germany Germany & Ferreira Cabrera, 1999: 4).

The design of these tests was realised according to the parameters and format of the Modern Languages Examinations (MLE) of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC)[1]. This evaluation scale is the same one that is being used currently in the Caribbean. Furthermore, this pattern of assessment was adopted for the pre-test and post-test applied; i.e., the scores used for the two tests were as follows: Listening Comprehension 20 points, Reading Comprehension 20 points, Oral Production 30 points and Written Production 30 points, giving a total of 100 points or 100%. The pre-test consisted of a written test to measure language proficiency and an interview to measure communicative competence in terms of objectives, content and skills related to the topic of the teaching module. The post-test consisted of a test and an interview equivalent to pre-test, with the same format, which measured the same objectives, content and skills, but with different texts to the pre-test so as not to influence the results.

6.7. TIME-FRAME FOR THE INTERVENTION MODULE

The theme of the teaching unit was "Vamos a Hablar" or "Let's Talk!" Its duration was 24 hours of lectures spread over six weeks of classes, and for two days a week, two hours each day.

This mixed methodological model comprises 16 tasks or activities: 12 of these are COMMUNICATION TASKS and the remaining 4 are FOCUS ON FORM TASKS. In other words, these were designed on the basis of clear-cut grammar and communication objectives with the purpose of helping to foster contact and allow for interaction opportunities in the target language. Table 1 shows the number of activities/tasks per lesson.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF TASKS PER LESSON

Lesson/Unit	Number of Tasks/Activities
1	3 (2 communication tasks, 1 focus on form task)
2	3 (2 communication tasks, 1 focus on form task)
3	4 (3 communication tasks, 1 focus on form task)
4	5 (4 communication tasks, 1 focus on form task)
Final Task	1 (1 communication task)
Total	16 (12 communication tasks, 4 focus on form tasks)

All these tasks were completed in a maximum period of 19 hours. The two tests - the pre-test and the post-test - which formed part of the EVALUATION, occupied the remaining 5 hours. Table 2 shows the time allotted for each task:

---

1. Caribbean entity in charge of evaluating Spanish as a Foreign Language for speakers of English and other languages as their mother tongue.

TABLE 2: TIME ALLOTTED FOR THE INTERVENTION MODULE

Unit/Lesson	Duration
1	4 ½ hours
2	4 ½ hours
3	4 ½ hours
4	4 ½ hours
Final Task	1 hour

Furthermore, it is important to establish that the focus-on-form tasks are interwoven with the communication tasks so that students can centre their attention on them at the time of completing the communication tasks. In other words, the communication tasks are accompanied by language support or focus-on-form tasks. The time scheduled for the latter includes the completion of both tasks: communication and focus-on-form.

To have a better organization of each class, a lesson plan was designed describing what would be done and how each session would be conducted, including the methodological approach and the delivery route of knowledge (in this case, face to face classes).

Following is a summary table with the specification of the number of sessions involved in this mixed methodological model:

DISTRIBUTION OF THE TEACHING MODULE

Face to face classes	19 sessions
Evaluation (pre and post-test)	5 sessions

FACE TO FACE CLASSES

Face to face contact	19 sessions
Group work	14 sessions

DISTRIBUTION OF THE LANGUAGE SKILLS IN THE MODULE

Listening Comprehension	15 sessions
Reading Comprehension	15 sessions
Written Production	15 sessions
Oral Production	15 sessions

LANGUAGE AREAS

Practice of grammatical structures	14 sessions
Vocabulary practice	14 sessions

EVALUATION (PRE-TEST & POST-TEST)

Pre-test	2 ½ sessions
Post-test	2 ½ sessions

The duration of the mixed methodological model was 19 sessions of face-to-face contact and the activities created for the said model were done during the allotted time period. The activities were divided into micro tasks, (Ellis, 2003), and these had the objective of helping and guiding the student to carry out the macro task (final task).

6.8. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TEACHING MODULE

The module was integrated into the subject plan "SPA 100/103/GSC 502" of the Department of Language & Cultural Studies of the University of Guyana. This was carried out between February and March 2009 in the Language Laboratory, located on the first floor of the School of Education & Humanities of the university. It had the capacity for the 19 subjects.

A decision was taken to give the students the material in part, instead of giving them the entire manual all at once, throughout the implementation period of the learning module. This was done in order to prevent the students from trying to complete all the tasks at home and not participating actively in their execution. Given this probability, which would undoubtedly jeopardize the effectiveness of the mixed methodology and the entire teaching module, we chose to give them the first two tasks, namely the pre-task and task 1, then task 2, etc.

Figures 1 & 2 illustrate an example of a communication task and a language support task, respectively, which were done by the students:

FIGURE 1: COMMUNICATION TASK

ACTIVIDADES DE CLASE

1. In groups of 4, test each other on the days of the week, months of the year and numbers 1-20, listening for correct pronunciation.

2. Take turns in writing down the words that your colleagues are testing you on, making corrections to incorrect spelling.

3. Take turns on telling each other your date of birth in Spanish. The teacher will guide you in this.

4. On you own, be prepared to recite the days of the week, numbers, months of the year with you Class teacher. Your Class teacher will direct you on what to do.

FIGURA 2: TAREA DE APOYO LINGÜÍSTICO (pág. 16)

Fill in the blanks determining which sentence will use SABER and which will use CONOCER, providing the correct form of the verb in each case. The first one has been completed for you.

1. Yo conozco a María Fuentes.

2. El hermano _____ español.

3. Mi tío _____ Argentina.

4. El padre de Julio _____ hablar.

5. Nosotros _____ a Señor Durante.

6. Tú _____ de la Navidad (Christmas).

7. Nosotros _____ donde está la iglesia.

This experiment considered an independent and a dependent variable. The independent variable referred to the face-to-face mode and the teaching methodology - task-based and cooperative approaches. By exposing students to this type of methodology, the development of language skills in Spanish would be greatly enhanced in contexts of face-to-face teaching. The dependent variable corresponded to the increase in learning that is observed in the results obtained by the participants, when comparing the pre-test with the post-test. The "Student t" statistical test was used to establish significant differences in the results.

The quasi-experimental longitudinal study, which was conducted to test the effectiveness of a mixed methodological model, based on task-based teaching and cooperative learning techniques, yielded very favourable results. The results of two tests (pre and post) were analyzed in terms of the mean, median, mode, variance, standard deviation, percentage of variability and correlation in order to describe the behaviour of the sample and make a comparison between them.

Regarding the hypotheses, Table 3 presents the different results observed in the pre-test of the group. These are illustrated for each subject (S) of each group, by language skill (according to the test used, CXC).

TABLE 3: RESULTS OF THE PRE-TEST (FOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS)

S	Listening Comprehension (20%)	Reading Comprehension (20%)	Oral Production (30%)	Written Production (30%)	Total (100%)
1	8.1	10.09	14	15	47.19
2	6.05	6.80	14	16.90	43.75
3	10.9	9.23	11.2	19.07	50.4
4	11	9.25	15.75	19.38	55.38
5	10.2	8.36	16	18.57	53.13
6	8.5	10	11	16.12	45.62
7	5.5	7	11.6	19.65	43.75
8	7	9	12.88	18.62	47.5
9	9.8	8.75	12	16.33	46.88
10	8	6.25	12	12.19	38.44
11	8.05	8.07	16	17.26	49.38
12	9.8	9.2	17	19.88	55.88
13	8.9	8.06	16	18.92	51.88
14	10	9.68	16.5	20.07	56.25
15	11.5	9.06	9.5	11.82	41.88
16	9.7	8.88	12	12.42	43
17	8.6	8.5	12.9	18.13	48.13
18	10.9	8.94	15.8	20.92	56.56
19	8.4	8.75	12.7	15.65	45.5
Average	8.99	8.62	13.62	17.21	48.45

To determine the median, the students were distributed according to the percentage of achievement. The calculation by the formula for linear interpolation gives a figure of 47.5. This means that 11 students (58% of the sample) had a score less than or equal to the median (41.88 – 47.5), while the remainder (42% of the sample) achieved a score greater than or equal to the median (48.13 – 56.56). In the pre-test, it can be seen that the average yield was 48.45 points out of 100. It is noted that of a total of 19 students, 11 (58% of the sample) are below the average obtained.

As for the average performance of the sample by language skill, the following results can be observed in Figure 3: (1) in relation to Listening Comprehension (item 1) the average gained is 8.99 points of a maximum of 20 (45% of achievement), (2) in terms of Reading Comprehension (item 2) the average achieved is 8.62 out of a total of 20 points (43% of achievement), (3) with respect to Oral Production (item 3) the average is 13.62 of a maximum of 30 points (45% of achievement) and, (4) as it relates to Written Production (item 4) the average obtained is 17.21 of a total of 30 points (57% of achievement).

FIGURE 3: AVERAGE PERFORMANCE BY LANGUAGE SKILL IN THE PRE-TEST
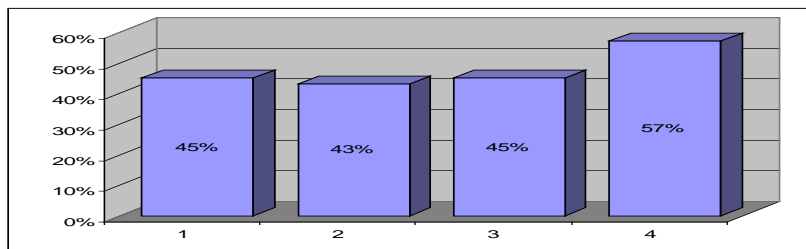
It should be noted that the distribution of pupils in percentage ranges of achievement in the pre-test sample intervals show that 41-50% and 51-60% present the highest number of students. In other words, all of the students were between these ranges: i.e. 12 students (63% of the sample) had an average of 41-50%, while 7 students (37% of the sample) had an average of 51-60%. It can therefore be summarized that 19 students (100% of the sample) were found between 41-60%.

Regarding the hypotheses, Table 4 illustrates both the scores obtained in the post-test by linguistic skill and the total score for each of the students in the sample (according to the test used, CXC).

TABLE 4: TOTAL SCORE OBTAINED IN THE POST-TEST (FOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS)

S	Listening Comprehension (20%)	Reading Comprehension (20%)	Oral Production (30%)	Written Production (30%)	Total (100%)
1	15	17	27	23.53	82.53
2	17	17.55	26	28	88.55
3	12.5	13.7	22.5	16.8	65.5
4	17	18.5	24.5	23.43	83.43
5	13.8	12.5	19	18.25	63.55
6	16.5	19	20.5	28.94	84.94
7	10	14.5	19.5	15.19	59.19
8	15.5	13	23	20.78	72.28
9	16	11.6	28.5	21.91	78.01
10	12	15	23	18.73	68.73
11	13.05	14.8	22.5	22.09	72.44
12	15.8	18.2	22	20.96	76.96
13	14	12	26	26.61	78.61
14	13.6	19.1	23	17.19	72.89
15	16	16	18	17.55	67.55
16	11.5	13.2	24	21.8	70.5
17	16.8	17	18.5	17.58	69.88
18	19	20	23.5	21.84	84.34
19	11	16.8	20	17.2	65
Average	14.53	15.76	22.68	20.97	73.94

In determining the median of the post-test, the students were distributed according to the percentage of achievement. The calculation by the formula for linear interpolation gives a figure of 72.44. This indicates that 10 students (53% of the sample) achieved a score less than or equal to the median (59.19 – 72.44), whereas the other students (47% of the sample) had a score greater than or equal to the median (72.89 – 88.55). The average yield in the post-test is 73.94 points out of 100. Furthermore, it can be observed that from the 19 students, 11 (58% of the sample) were under the average: i.e., the same number as those presented in the pre-test.

As for the average performance of the sample by language skill, the following results are observed in Figure 4: (1) in relation to Listening Comprehension (item 1) the average gained is 14.53 points of a maximum 20 (73% of achievement), (2) in terms of Reading Comprehension (item 2) an average of 15.76 is achieved out of a total of 20 points (79% of achievement), (3) with respect to Oral Production (item 3) the average is 22.68 of a maximum of 30 points (76% of achievement), and (4) in terms of Written Production (item 4) the average obtained is 20.97 out of 30 points (70% of achievement).

FIGURE 4: AVERAGE PERFORMANCE BY LANGUAGE SKILL IN THE POST-TEST
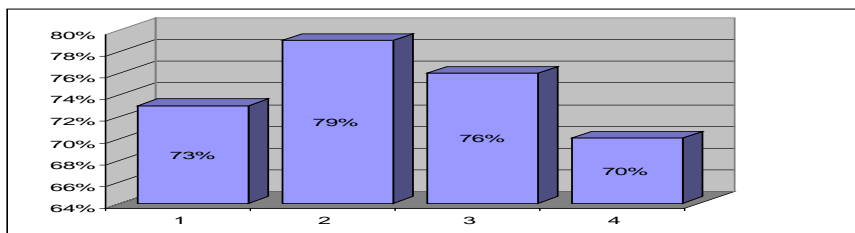
The distribution of pupils in percentage ranges of achievement in the post-test shows that the ranges of 71-80% and 81-90% present the highest number of students. In other words, most of the students were between these ranges: i.e., 6 students (32% of the sample) had an average of 71-80%, while 5 students (26% of the sample) had an average of 81-90%. It can be therefore summarized that 11 students (58% of the sample) were found between 71-90%. The remainder (42% of the sample) were below this range.

From the results in terms of the median obtained in the pre-test (47.5%) and the median reached in the post-test (72.44%), one can observe an increase in it by 24.94.

As it relates to the average, if we contrast the values between the pre-test and post-test the number of students that fall short of it is 11 (58% of the sample). 7 of these students are the same ones who are below the pre-test average.

As for the average yield achieved in the pre-test and in the post-test, Figure 5 shows that the average in the pre-test is 48.45% while the average obtained in the post-test is 73.94%. As you can see the results, the mean of the post-test (73.94%) exceeds that of the pre-test (48.45%) by 25.49%.

FIGURE 5: AVERGAES ACHIEVED IN THE PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST
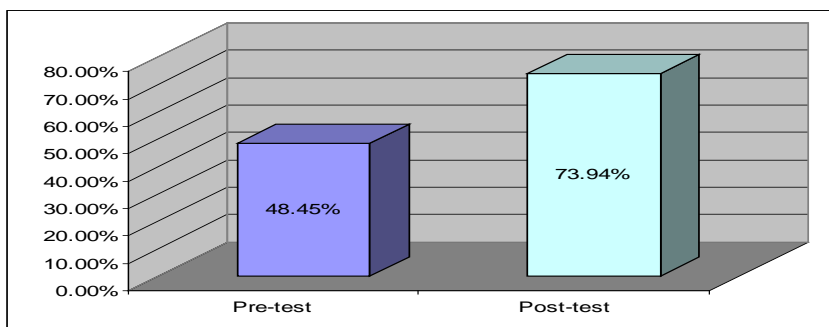
The difference established between the pre-test and post-test, according to the percentage scores also can be seen in the results obtained in each of the 4 language skills. The students performed better in the post-test than in the pre-test: (1) with respect to "Listening Comprehension", the average achieved in the post-test (14.53) is above the average obtained in the pre-test (8.99) by 5.54; (2) in regard to "Reading Comprehension", the average in the post-test (15.76) exceeds the average achieved in the pre-test (8.62) by 7.14; (3) with respect to "Oral Production", the average obtained in the post-test (22.68) exceeds the average in the pre-test (13.62) by 9.06; (4) as it relates to "Written Production", the average achieved in the post-test (20.97) is greater than the average obtained in the pre-test (17.21) by 3.76.

In Figure 6, there is an increase in the average percentage obtained in each of the four skills: Reading Comprehension (2) that is by 36% (43% to 79%), followed by Oral Production (3) by 31% (from 45% to 76%); Listening Comprehension (1) by 28% (from 45% to 73%), Written Production (4) by 13% (from 57% to 70%).

FIGURE 6: DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERFORMANCE BY LANGUAGE SKILL IN PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST
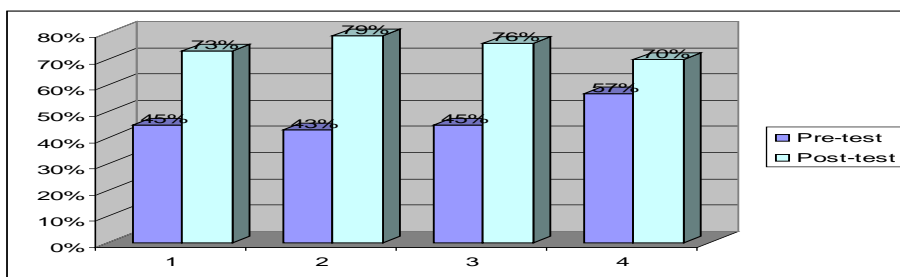
Regarding the distribution of students according to the percentage of achievement, it is noted that the tendency in the pre-test to concentrate the students in the range of 41-60% changes, placing the post-test range above it (71-90%). As a result, students achieved a better performance in the post-test than in the pre-test.

To calculate the average percentage improvement in relation to the knowledge acquired by the 18 students, the difference in final percentage scores was divided (ΣD) by the number of students leaving a result of 25.49%. Ten students (53% of the sample) are above this average. 4

students (21% of the sample) are between 21-24%, and 5 students (26% of the sample) fall below these averages.

In summary, in accordance with the results from pre-test and post-test, the following can be highlighted:

> - In terms of "Listening Comprehension", it was noted that all of the 19 students had an increase in their knowledge. This means that there was a 100% improvement in this language skill.
> - Relating to "Reading Comprehension", it was observed that all of the 19 students improved their performance. This means that there was a 100% improvement in this language skill.
> - With respect to "Oral Production", there was an increase in the knowledge of all of the 19 students. This shows that there was a 100% improvement in this language skill.
> - In regard to "Written Production", 14 out of 19 students performed better. This shows that there was a 74% improvement in this language skill.
> - With regard to the final percentage scores achieved in the two tests, it was shown that 16 of the 18 students had an increase in their performance. This indicates that there was a 100% improvement at the end of the teaching module for Spanish as a FL/SL.

To determine whether the improvement in the learning and acquisition of a specific body of knowledge by the students was statistically significant, the difference between the average results of the pre-test and post-test was calculated using the paired "Student t" test. The purpose of this was to quantify the difference between the average of the two tests, to verify if it was significantly different and to objectively establish the correlation between the variables. In order to establish the critical value, an error margin of 1% N-1 degrees of freedom (18) was considered, which is equal to 2.567. Any value above it would allow us to decide on the effectiveness of the mixed methodology used.

With respect to the statistical analysis, it was observed that the critical obtained have surpassed that of 2.567. The critical values obtained for each language skill is presented below:

- Listening Comprehension: 9.709 $p > 0.01$
- Reading Comprehension: 12.402 $p > 0.01$
- Oral Production: 10.639 $p > 0.01$
- Written Production: 3.364 $p > 0.01$

A notable increase in each of the language skills must be appreciated. In accordance with what has been previously said, the hypothesis outlined in this research can be validated, therefore indicating the success of the treatment given that the values obtained are considered to be statistically significant. These, in no way, cannot be attributed to randomisation, to chance or to external stimuli. They are due to the intervention process that was carried out.

It should be stressed that when adding the averages of each of the 4 language skills, to get the total percentage score for the initial test and final test, it became clear that the value of *t* was exceeded the critical value of 2.567 (12.959 *p> 0.01*). Here, a noticeable increase must be valued in the analysis of the said tests. According to the above, the research hypothesis can be

verified, revealing that this value is considered statistically significant. There is no doubt about the effectiveness of the mixed methodological model based on the results obtained.

These results are very important because they indicate that when teaching in the context of a mixed methodological model based on the Task-Based Language Learning and Cooperative Learning techniques, it is possible to reach a balance both in practice and in improving the various skills necessary for learning & acquisition of knowledge within the target language for students at a basic level.

The face-to-face sessions enabled and optimized even more the teaching-learning of Spanish without neglecting the elements of grammar that were considered. Also, feedback was given with the objective that the student be aware of his mistakes and internalize, in a more solid way, the knowledge learned.

Another element that was considered essential so that the results of this research could show favourable effects is the fact that in its design the face-to-face teaching space was structured quite clearly for the practice of the different language skills. Of a total of 19 sessions, 100% of these were done via face-to-face contact in order for students to practice the different language skills using specific contexts. In addition, students had a comprehensible and a much richer input (Krashen, 1987) unlike what is generally done in traditional teaching styles.

Considering these figures, it can be said that the learning gained by students in the experimental group was due to the design, and the way in which the materials and means of delivering them were presented (through face to face classes, using various resources of this kind) encouraged students to practice skills in an integrated and compact way, involving them in a profound way, in accordance with the objectives of the mixed methodological model.

8. CONCLUSION

This research has focused its attention on answering the question with regard to improving the linguistic and communicative competence through practicing the 4 language skills in Spanish as a Foreign Language in the context of a mixed methodological model, TBLT and CLL.

But as the treatment period was relatively brief (19 sessions) and also the small numbers of subjects (19), there will have to be further studies to confirm the trends that have been observed in this work.

Throughout the intervention module, the performance and response of students in relation to this new teaching methodology was evidenced. In general, the results of the experiment highlighted that performance in the language skills in Spanish for students at an intermediate level was highly improved when applying a combined learning model. This suggests that the students were supported in their learning, in an effective way, by the use of the face-to-face mode, thus confirming the hypotheses.

The design of the mixed methodological model based on tasks and cooperative learning techniques promoted opportunities for interaction in the target language, thus achieving higher learning. The Task-Based Approach provided the essential theoretical bases for the execution of the activities with the face-to-face modality. Specific tasks were created with defined objectives and the students were placed in the context in which they had to work, in order to carrying out each task in a positive way. The idea of introducing real communication situations

enabled them to reflect and focus more on the target language thus choosing the appropriate structures to produce texts.

Task-Based Curricula have been promoted by Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers as well as educators (Ellis, 2003, Willis & Willis, 2007; Livingstone, 2010b & 2010c) as an alternative to the linguistic curriculum, based on the following principles: (1) linguistic curricula are not effective in promoting acquisition, and (2) Task-Based Curricula are constructed around the acquisition processes.

The language teacher should use these criteria with the aim of designing courses, curricula and teaching units through tasks. In addition, he must analyze the results and adjust his practice to add, edit or delete any item so that the students' learning process can be successful and productive. Tasks, for many years now, have been part of the conventional repertoire of teaching techniques for language teachers in the past decades, and what matters today is the specific manner in which a task is conceptualized. It is recommended for language teachers, in their quest to improve the quality of their teaching, to integrate into their curricula, this learning model to improve their teaching practices.

The cultural elements of the learning module focused on Hispanic food, dress, dance, celebrations and music. They provided a very positive added value to the execution of the tasks and activities that students had to perform throughout the experiment. The notion to set the exercises within that context further enhanced the field of linguistic and world knowledge of each student. Learning the socio-cultural codes is displayed as an aid for students to able to understand and manage the language every time they are caught in a communicative situation in which they have to practice or use the new language.

Presently in Guyana, the teaching methodology that is still being used to teach Spanish and other foreign languages is the traditional methodology known as the Grammar-Translation Method for which this study is an important contribution towards the teaching of these languages. In fact, this research is the FIRST of its kind in this country since, to date, there is no documented evidence of the experimentation with mixed methodologies ever being done in Guyana to teach foreign languages.

This research approach will enrich the area of language teaching and learning with respect to the language specified. There is no doubt that this study has a lot of importance and scope for researchers, educators and language teachers. Moreover, this mixed methodology could be successful the classrooms of secondary and tertiary institutions in those countries not yet using these new teaching methods for Spanish as a FL/SL.

Through this study it was possible to shed light on the use of mixed methods in language teaching and learning and, more specifically, in teaching Spanish as a foreign or second language. The effectiveness of a mixed methodological model for teaching Spanish as a FL/SL for the purpose of improving the linguistic and communicative competence of a specific body of knowledge was proven.

There is documented empirical evidence that demonstrates that TBLT and CLL are focused on meaning and are effective for the development and improvement of linguistic and communicative competence (Lightbown, 1992, Ellis 2003, Willis & Willis, 2007).

This research may form part of that existing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of these methodological approaches emphasising the fact that the TBLT and CLL are concentrated on meaning and the development of the student's instrumental and formal knowledge.

REFERENCIAS

AUSTIN, J. (1964): *Sense and Sensibilia.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

BARTHOLOMÉ, A. (1995): "Algunos modelos de enseñanza para los nuevos canales", Cabero, J. y Martínez, F. (coords.): *Nuevos canales de comunicación en la enseñanza*, Madrid: Centro de Estudios Ramón Areces, pp. 119-141.

BREEN, M. (1987): "Learner Contributions to Task Design", Candlin, C. y Murphy, D. (eds.): *Language Learning Tasks*, Eaglewood Cliffs N. J.: Prentice Hall International, pp. 23-46.

ELLIS, R. (2003): *Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

ESTAIRE, S. (2004-2005): *La enseñanza de lenguas mediante tareas: principios y planificación de unidades didácticas*, Madrid: Universidad Antonio de Nebrija.

ESTAIRE, S. y ZANÓN, J. (1990): "El diseño de unidades didácticas para la enseñanza de una segunda lengua", *Comunicación, lenguaje y educación,* 7-8, pp. 55-90.

ESTAIRE, S. y ZANÓN, J. (1994): *Planning Classwork: A Task-Based Approach*, Oxford: Heinemann.

FATHMAN, A. K. y KESSLER, C. (1993): "Cooperative Language Learning in School Contexts", *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 13, pp. 127-140.

FIRTH, J. (1957): *Papers in Linguistics 1934-1951,* London: Oxford University Press.

GERMANY GERMANY, P. y FERREIRA CABRERA, A. (1999). *Evaluación de Competencia Comunicativa en Español como Lengua Extranjera*, Concepción: Universidad de Concepción.

GUMPERZ, L. (1979): "The Communicative Competence of Bilinguals", *Language in Society*, 1-1, pp. 143-154.

HALLIDAY, M.A.K. (1985): *Spoken and written language*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

HYMES, D. (1964): *Language in Culture and Society*, New York: Harper and Row.

KRASHEN, S. D. (1987): *Principles and practice in second language acquisition,* London: Prentice-Hall.

LABOV, W. (1980): *Locating Language in Time and Space*, New York: Academic Press.

LEE, J. (2000): *Tasks and Communicative Language Classrooms*, Boston: McGraw-Hill.

LIGHTBOWN, P. (1992). "Can they do it themselves? A comprehension-based ESL course for young children", Courchene, R., John, J. ST., Thierren, C. y Glidden, J. (eds.): *Comprehension-based Language Teaching: Current Trends*, Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.

LIVINGSTONE, K. A. (2008): *La Efectividad de un Modelo Metodológico Mixto para la Enseñanza-Aprendizaje de Español como Lengua Extranjera*, Chile: Universidad de Concepción.

LIVINGSTONE, K. A. (2009): *Implementación de un modelo metodológico mixto para la enseñanza-aprendizaje de español como LE*, München: LINCOM GmbH.

LIVINGSTONE, K. A. y FERREIRA, A. (2009): "La efectividad de un modelo metodológico mixto para la enseñanza-aprendizaje de español como LE", *Boletín de Filología*, 44-2, pp. 89-118.

LIVINGSTONE, K. A. (2010a): "Empirical study: a mixed methodology to improve linguistic and

communicative competence in Spanish as a FL/SL", *Entrehojas - Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, 1(1), pp. 1-38.

LIVINGSTONE, K. A. (2010b): *Los procesos metodológicos de la enseñanza-aprendizaje de lenguas mediante tareas,* München: LINCOM GmbH.

LIVINGSTONE, K. A. (2010c): *El diseño de cursos de lenguas basados en tareas.* München: LINCOM GmbH.

LIVINGSTONE, K. A. (2011): "The evaluation of a mixed methodological model to improve the productive and receptive skills in Spanish as a FL/SL: an experimental study", *Baraton Interdisciplinary Research Journal*, 1-1, pp. 38-49.

MORENO, B. (coord.) (1997): *Experto en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera: Historia de la Metodología de Lenguas Extranjeras, con referencia al español*, Madrid: Fundación Antonio de Nebrija.

OLSEN, R. y KAGAN, S. (1992): "About Cooperative Learning", Kessler, C. (ed.): *Cooperative Language Learning: A Teacher's Response Book*, New York: Prentice Hall, pp. 1-30.

RICHARDS, J.C. y RODGERS, T. S. (2001): *Approaches and Methods In Language Teaching*, London: Cambridge Language teaching Library.

ROCA, J., VALCÁRCEL, M. y VERDÚ, M. (1990): "Hacia un nuevo paradigma en la enseñanza de idiomas modernos: el Enfoque por Tareas", *Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación de Profesorado*, 8, pp. 25-46.

SEARLE, J. (1985): *The Philosophy of Language*, New York: Oxford University Press.

SHEEN, R. (1994): "A critical analysis of the advocacy of the task-based syllabus", *TESOL Quarterly*, 28, pp. 127-57.

SKEHAN, P. (1998): *A cognitive approach to language learning*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

TRUJILLO SÁEZ, F. (2002): "Aprendizaje Cooperativo para la enseñanza de la lengua", *Publicaciones de la Facultad de Educación y Humanidades* 32, pp. 147-162.

WILLIS, J. (1996): *A framework for task-based learning*, Harlow: Longman.

WILLIS, D. y WILLIS, J. (2007): *Doing task-based teaching*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

ZANÓN, J. (coord.) (1999): *La Enseñanza del Español mediante Tareas*, Madrid: Edinumen.