Improving L2 Learning and Teaching Process through Syllabus Design

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ABSTRACT

This monograph revolves the creation of a syllabus for teaching and learning English, focused on a group of adults who belong to a validation school in Bogotá. This project aims to identify and analyze the effects and implications that a new syllabus provides to the students’ proficiency and the teaching and learning processes at the institution. This study arose from the need of a syllabus that guides teachers when carrying out each session in the institution, and that benefits current and future pupils in the development and strengthening of their skills and abilities in the L2.

This study was undertaken by pre-service teachers from Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas looking for the effects of creating and implementing the TBL syllabus (approach focused on the development of tasks) as an answer to have an accurate planning. Furthermore, these interventions showed students’ correct and ideal acquisition of the language (ability to study and learn a language) taking into account the external and internal factors such us input and interaction, and individual differences like age, sex and prior knowledge. Both were combined in order to involve real-life situations at the same time they learned how to interact by developing tasks as a relevant part of the information acquired.

Keywords: TBL, adult people, L2, Syllabus design, acquisition.
RESUMEN

Esta monografía gira entorno a la creación de una guía de estudio que permite enseñar y aprender inglés a un grupo de adultos que pertenece a un instituto de validación en Bogotá. El objetivo principal es identificar y analizar los efectos e implicaciones que un nuevo syllabus proporciona a las competencias de los estudiantes y al proceso educativo que brinda el colegio. Este estudio surge a partir de la necesidad de un programa que guíe a los docentes en el desarrollo de cada lección y beneficie de manera positiva a los estudiantes actuales al igual que a los futuros, en el desarrollo y fortalecimiento de sus competencias y habilidades en la segunda lengua.

Esta investigación fue llevada a cabo por dos profesores en formación de la Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas con el fin de examinar los efectos de la creación e implementación de un Task Based Syllabus (planteamiento enfocado en el desarrollo de tareas) teniendo un programa correcto como respuesta al requerimiento expuesto. Asimismo, estas intervenciones mostraron una correcta y completa adquisición del idioma (habilidad de estudiar y aprender un idioma) teniendo en cuenta factores externos e internos, tales como instrucción e interacción y diferencias individuales como edad, sexo y conocimiento previo. Ambos fueron combinados con el fin de involucrar situaciones de la vida real, al mismo tiempo en que aprendían a interactuar por medio del desarrollo de tasks como parte fundamental de la información adquirida.

**Palabras claves:** TBL, adultos, segunda lengua, diseño de syllabus, adquisición.
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Introduction

According to our experience as English teacher we have found syllabus as one of the key elements needed to set specific goals during a course. It is the concern between the selection and grading of content to be taught in a specific period of time and it must specify the structures, functions, notions, topics, themes, situations activities and tasks in the planning format (Nunan, Syllabus Design, 2004). Improving L2 Learning and Teaching Process Through Syllabus Design is a research project that arose from the idea of improving the learning environment in an eleventh grade EFL class in a validation institute. In order to do this, researchers’ main purpose is focused on innovating and implementing a new planning that could benefit students and the institution. Throughout this study the reader will be able to find the activities and results of how a TBL syllabus allowed students to express themselves through the development of tasks considering the importance of taking into account learners’ points of view about their reality and contexts.

In the following pages the reader will find the statement of the problem that managed the research questions, objectives and the justification of the project. The third chapter focuses on the three constructs taken to build our research as the theoretical framework: Task Based Syllabus (TBL), TBL syllabus design, and Adult Education with their definitions and stages. Later next part is displayed with the Literature Review that corresponds to the theoretical foundations and researches carried out by different investigators which ensures theoretically our intervention. Moreover, Adult Education concept is exposed as the selected population, taking into consideration it is placed in a validation institution, the laws that rule it under the power of Ministerio de Educacion Nacional as well as the learning associations that grown-ups evidence.
Fifth, sixth and seventh chapters are devoted to give information about the research and instructional design we suggest as a proposal to come up with factual answers to the research question. There is a deeply description about the participants, context, type of study, techniques, instruments and procedures used to develop this study, as well as the syllabus model we implemented and a sample of one of the lessons created for classes. Finally, there are the Data analysis and Findings, Conclusions, limitations and the suggested further research related to the implementation of a TBL syllabus in a validation institute with adult population.
1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Bearing in mind that the subjects to be taught must be defined and accurate, validation institutes have to make sure that the syllabi they present are correct according to the MEN’S aims as the Colombian educational regulator. We met some of these realities at Colegio Palermo, a validation place located in Suba at an 11th grade population we were working for, as the planning, implementation and evaluation document did not cover the topics or have a good sequence as it is stated by MEN in order to accomplish the goals of National Bilingualism Plan. Moreover, eleventh grade students should have an intermediate level B1 when they finish their schooling, according to the adopted method to measure levels of the language acquisition of the Common European Framework (CEFR) what was not being reached. This institute and its administration have obtained some certifications that indicate students will be provided with the knowledge needed to present ICFES exam (ejemplos de estandares en Colombia) as the document required advancing in the instructive process. However, the principal showed preoccupation for the results gotten in the English evaluation on the exam as the results were not the expected ones. As English teachers, we decided to examine possible reasons for the product found at the end of the test as a way of research and suggest ideas to improve this outcome. It was started by a meeting among teachers to brainstorm causes of this issue, and then there was awareness about the way topics were established in the lesson plans and the curriculum itself. It advanced to the point that the principal and the faculty considered to restructure the existing syllabi to make it more effective, interesting and accurate for students as a way to assure students will increase their knowledge.
In this respect, ordering planning, and designing of topics and contents were the key concepts to work on as the bases of a well-built syllabi that could offer students the possibility to learn a foreign language as well as the motivation through different activities related to real life that could catch students’ attention on the development of tasks at the same time they got involved in the English learning process. It became into a challenge as there was the meaning of helping students by giving them more tools, help the educational organization to increase the level they were presenting students and the objective of promoting the improvement on the National Bilingualism Plan designed by MEN.

Ministry of Education (MEN) and its National Bilingualism Plan with its Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): Vision Colombia 2019 (MEN, Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo) has set as the main goal having a country with English proficiency in foreign language. There are some important elements displayed by this plan:

- To master a foreign language represents a comparative advantage, an attribute of competence and competitiveness.
- To become this competence an ability for everyone.
- It is necessary to create strategies to develop English communicative competences.

The first stages of the Plan have been focused on formulating standards to reach English communicative competences, evaluating them with students, teachers, professionals, and graduates from language degrees, establishing formative methodology and technology programs for teaching English. To reach that goal, validation institutions had joined to accomplish this
objective by helping adult students to finish their studies as well as to have certain knowledge of English as an external language; however, they are still working on the development of internal regulations for the English programs.

Moreover, it is established (MEN. Education, 2005), that the validation practice is the process of provision of basic knowledge without taking in mind, the educational level of the learners. It generally involves taking one year, in teaching and learning the contents which are commonly presented in two academic years. Due to this issue and, (Education., 2016, pág. 25), the content which is part of each academic course must be precise and concise, in order to foster apprentices’ literacy process.

The remodeling appreciation started by taking a look carefully at the organization of the arranged syllabi. It was perceived that it held some grammar and spelling mistakes such as “Adjective and substantive” to refer to adjectives and substantives, “present tense” to refer to sentences in present simple and “defined articles and indefinites” instead of defined and indefinite articles. Furthermore, sequence is not followed by organized topics that can build up a good syllabus as there is evidenced that in the first week the teaching topic proposed is “Personal pronouns”, in the second week the area will be focused on “Opposite adjectives” which indicates that there is not a followed and firm monitoring of the studying plan. In the next week the topic is “Possessive adjectives” what gives a pace to the previous topic but in the following week the use of there is and there are changes abruptly the pace mentioned. The presentation of topics for the second unit starts by “Present simple” which should be written as “Simple present” indicating the adjective before the noun. After this period teacher will focus the subject matter on “Do and Does” what let us know the area will be repeated as it was already taught in the previous theme. Thirteen and fourteen weeks will drive “Wh questions” it gives us an understanding of the huge
emphasis this studying plan has about grammar what makes it very difficult for them as it does not innovate on the presentation and instruction of different topics.

Then, prepositions and family are planned but they still do not have a relation among them. It is noticed that the way they are presented is much emphasized on grammar, what does not let students appreciate English in a more dynamic style where they can associate subjects with their lives by personalizing to acquire the language in an easier way.

These characteristics provide us the possibility to think that this syllabus has some inconsistencies that we wanted to develop in order to deliver better classes for students and achieve some targets set previously. The institution’s teachers started to convey to some specific criteria for creating a new scheme for organizing topics and activities to increase students’ level of understanding about the foreign language. In order to do this, we started searching for the requirements a syllabus must have to be proposed as the restructuring model of the one that was already established.

On this search among a variety of authors and definitions a description that met the conditions we desired to build up was (Yalden, 2011, pág. 14) who stated that syllabus is an instrument by which the teacher can achieve a degree of fit between the needs and aims of the learner as social being and as individual, as well as the activities that will take place in the classroom. (J.A Van Ek and J.L, 1993) This affirmation is supported by expressing that it is a statement of content, which is used as the basis for planning courses through activities to select and grade content. Afterward, taking a look at this information it was decided to start elaborating a syllabus that contain the activities that will be displayed during the whole course taking into account the TBL approach as it is the vision that fits the requirement set at the beginning of the discussion. Tasks will be the outcome of the operations done in class to elicit students’ understanding of the lesson.
Encabezado: TBL SYLLABUS DESIGN

They will give a real situation to students to get to know the language at the same time they acquire it and learn cooperatively and the TBL syllabus should contain specific characteristics that will be discussed later in the literature review.

Some of the classes observed concentrated on language skills and grammar structures which did not give a time for reflection or performance of their daily lives, there could be noticed students did some activities but were not engaged on them. In order to grasp the nature of the problem at the school where we accomplish the pedagogical project, a needs analysis was conducted.

The Needs Analysis proposed tasks to discuss relationships among the family. Vocabulary was taught and grammar models were given to describe relatives, however there was not set a space during the class to allow students to talk about their own information what made the class turned into boring and not meaningful for them. Consequently, besides teachers’ points of view, and perceptions about the course plan presented, it was suggested to interview and ask students about their insights towards the program given at the beginning of each cycle to assure students’ need of changing the scope and sequence of topics. As they are the central actors in this difficulty, we as conductors of the research study, agreed on applying a questionnaire, aiming to obtain the students’ perceptions about the development of the sessions, as well as the contents which the teachers address lectures in class. Excerpt 1 involves the appropriateness of the topics in the syllabus, for the learners who take the English course.

1. ¿Cree que las temáticas establecidas en el programa de inglés, son las apropiadas para el curso en el que estás?

   Si [X] No

¿Por qué? [Porque] ¡Las temáticas son muy básicas y se repiten!
Encabezado: TBL SYLLABUS DESIGN

Excerpt 1: Opinion about the appropriateness of the topics in the course.

2. ¿los temas de la clase se relacionan con su contexto?
   Si _____ No _____
   ¿Por qué? O sea no se habla del contexto de libros
   O nunca los hace el profesor.

Excerpt 2: Opinion about the relationship content – real context.

In this connection in excerpt 1, this student states that the topics are very basic, even, taking into account that the objective is to teach the A2 level. Additionally, this learner claims that there is a repetition of topics, an issue which could result in no progress in the learning process, in terms of reception of knowledge by the pupil. Excerpt 2 shows that the student affirms that the examples are taken from books, a material which is not connected with the real context if we bear in mind that most of the course books about English include American or British contexts. Also, he addresses the connection of the topics in the current syllabus with the real context, what means the examples are not meaningful to students as they are not linked to their daily lives.

3. ¿El programa de inglés tiene en cuenta sus necesidades de aprendizaje?
   Si _____ No _____
   ¿Por qué? Solo se practica gramática y nunca hablamos en clase.

Excerpt 3: Opinion about the relationship content – learner’s needs.

According to the excerpt number three, the student says that, in class, the learners only practice grammar and they do not put into practice activities which imply communication.
In summary, the student affirms that what he and his partners are learning is only grammar; there is no interest in applying activities which involve production, and the teachers in this institution do not go further in their teaching process, in relation to the contents established in the syllabus. It is necessary to clarify that this problem is not caused by teachers, because they have to follow educational regulations in any school, and the syllabus, which presents problems, is one of them in this institution.

Taking into consideration the institution, teachers and students’ awareness about the lack of preparation, organization and real objectives to be achieved, it is vital to provide answers to the necessity of an updating process in order to improve L2 Learning and Teaching Processes through Syllabus Design. All of this to come up with strategies and the proper reformulation of the new planning project there have arisen the following research questions.

We studied the syllabus proposed by the school for eleventh grade (which turned to be “shared” with the one established for tenth grade) according to the interview and questionnaires carried out the course has as its backbone in grammar and specific model which are no related to their interests as examples are out of their contexts. We consider this guideline is full of content but it describes some topics are repeated, do not have a sequence, and introduce topics in English and Spanish without themes or topics on it.

The abstract development stated in “Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés. Guía N. 22” by Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia (MEN, Guía No. 22 Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés), which proposes a variety of skills based on Listening, reading, writing and speaking such as:

- Identifico el tema general y los detalles relevantes en conversaciones, informaciones
radiales o exposiciones orales.

➢ Comprendo la idea general en una descripción y en una narración.
➢ Puedo extraer información general y específica de un texto corto y escrito en un lenguaje sencillo.
➢ Identifico en textos sencillos, elementos culturales como costumbres y celebraciones.

Escribo textos cortos en los que expreso contraste, adición, causa y efecto entre ideas. Establezco comparaciones entre personajes, lugares y objetos.

➢ Aplico estrategias de lectura relacionadas con el propósito de la misma.
➢ Identifico en textos sencillos, elementos culturales como costumbres y celebraciones.
➢ Identifico la acción, los personajes y el entorno en textos narrativos.
➢ Bearing in mind the classes are not focused on those skills, students are used to learn English without expression, analysis or creation as it was possible to confirm in the needs analysis. An analysis of the standards and competencies planned by the Ministry of Education (M.O.E) for seventh grade indicates that the syllabus proposed, for the school under study, falls short.
2 RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the implications of introducing a TBL syllabus in an Adult Beginner Learners class?

In correlation to this inquiry, we formulated the succeeding sub-questions?

- What characterizes English Learning through a Task Based Learning environment?

With these interrogations, this research is aimed to:

- To identify the role of a TBL syllabus in adult education.
- To explore students’ responses in a TBL environment.
- To identify students’ insights when engaged in the development of tasks.
3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are some elements that were vital to carry out this research. Tasks, Task Based Learning (TBL), TBL syllabus design, adult education and andragogy conceptions will be shown in order to give detailed information of each one as the main concepts to build up a syllabus design based on tasks for an adult group of people. All of them are linked by providing their meaning to the creation of the new planning document as an answer of the need expressed.

A task is more than a necessity when language teachers want students to use the target language. It helps students to communicate and create a language environment use. According to (Nunan, Task – Based Language Teaching, 2004), “tasks are intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect; to the way language is used in the real world”.

Task-based learning has three important stages when developing a class. The first stage is the pre-task activity; the idea of this stage is to show or define the topics the students will work with, to engage and help them recall vocabulary or ideas they will use later in the main task, in this pre-task stage the teacher needs to give complete instructions, show them the materials they will use, let them know how much time they will have to complete the task, show a model of the activity they will do and set the outcome or goal students need to reach. (Willis J., 1996) As cited in Bowen (2000), it is named the second stage of the task cycle. In this stage (task), the students in small groups must complete the activity using the model the teacher gives. The final step is the post-task stage, in this part students will report the findings to the class in a written or oral form, following three little sub-steps that are: planning, reporting and analyzing. These steps will be better described in the following paragraphs.
The Planning step is when the students prepare a short oral or written report to tell the class what happened during their task. They then practice what they are going to say in their groups. Meanwhile, the teacher is available for the students to ask for advice to clear up any language questions they may have. (Frost, 2008, p. 1)

The Reporting step allows students to report back to the class orally or read the written report. The teacher chooses the order students will present their reports and may give the students some quick feedback on the content. At this stage, the teacher may also play a recording of others doing the same task for the students to compare. (Frost, 2008, p. 2)

The analyzing step is when the teacher highlights relevant parts from the text of the recording for the students to analyze. They may ask students to notice interesting features within this text. The teacher can also highlight the language that the students used during the report phase for analysis. (Frost, 2008, p. 3)

Students can have an outcome from the task in order to measure the difficulty of the task and the way they understood the final activity developed to self-evaluate themselves. Finally, the teacher will pay attention to students’ performance when doing the task, giving feedback about their completion through different types of activities.

3.1 Task Based Learning

A task is more than a necessity when language teachers want students to use the target language. It helps students to communicate and create a language environment use. According to (Nunan, Syllabus Design , 2004 )“tasks are intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect; to the way language is used in the real world”. There is a variety of tasks with an specific purpose and ways to develop them.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Tasks</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listing</td>
<td>These activities aim to elicit students’ prior knowledge related to vocabulary they already know. This activity not only prepares the students to think proactively, it helps prioritize and organize the sequence of activities.</td>
<td>Brainstorming Brainstorming Fact-finding Games based on listing: quizzes, memory, and guessing.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordering and sorting</td>
<td>It involves vocabulary to be organized into different categories to remember them and check pronunciation while the activity is played.</td>
<td>Sequencing Ranking ordering Classifying Games finding similarities and differences Graphic organizers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparing and contrasting</td>
<td>They are set in order to make students find similarities and differences as well as being able to organize it by creating maps or graphic organizers</td>
<td>Games finding similarities and differences Graphic organizers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>Through memory games, puzzles, guessing games and some others, students will use their skills to find out an answer for each one.</td>
<td>Logic problem prediction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects and creative tasks</td>
<td>According to a theme or situation given by the teacher, students will create some handicrafts using the knowledge gotten from other activities</td>
<td>Newspapers Posters Survey fantasy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing personal experiences</td>
<td>These activities are related to report personal information about experiences students have lived.</td>
<td>Storytelling Anecdotes Reminiscences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matching</td>
<td>Being able to identify words and pictures to review or get to know vocabulary.</td>
<td>Words and phrases to pictures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. Types of Task Taxonomy in (Willis D. W., 2007)

The designing of a TBL Syllabus we considered pretty important to follow the stages presented by Nunan:

3.1.1 The first stage is the pre-task activity:
- Define the topics to students
- Recall vocabulary or ideas for the main task,
- Give complete instructions,
- Show students the materials and time
- Show a model of the activity
- Set the outcome or goal students need to reach.

3.1.2 The second stage or the task cycle.
- Get the students in small groups
- Complete the activity
- Use the model the teacher gives.

3.1.3 The final step is the post-task stage.
- Report the findings to the class in a written or oral form
- Follow three little sub-steps that are: planning, reporting and analyzing.

Planning, reporting and analyzing (Frost, 2008, p. 1, 2, 3.)

3.1.3.1 The Planning step:
- Students prepare a short oral or written report to tell the class about their task.
- They can rehearsal the report in their groups.
- The teacher is asked to clear up any language questions they may have.
3.1.3.2 The Reporting step:

- Students can report back to the class orally or read the written report.
- The teacher chooses the order students will present their reports.
- The teacher may give the students some quick feedback on the content.
- The teacher may play a recording of others doing the same task for the students to compare.

3.1.3.3 The analyzing step:

- The teacher highlights relevant parts from the text of the recording for students to analyze.
- The teacher may ask students to notice interesting features within this text.
- The teacher can also highlight the language that the students use during the report phase for analysis.
- Students can have an outcome.
- Students can self-evaluate themselves.
- The teacher will give feedback to students’ performance and the completion of the task.

3.2 TBL Syllabus Design

As it was stated before, it is considered that a task is a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language. To achieve the acquisition of the language there is a variety of activities that will be displayed through the term of one of the cycles in this eleventh grade, such as listing, ordering and sorting.
comparing and contrasting, problem-solving, projects and creative tasks, sharing personal experiences, matching. These actions will be carried out by following the pre, while and post stages that are related to showing or defining the topics, giving complete instructions and show them the materials they will use, and the last will endeavor modeling of the activity they will do and setting the outcome or goal students need to reach. In addition the planning, reporting and analyzing must be performed while developing the task.

This experience will let us wonder about the specific characteristics the creation of a TBL syllabus must contain, allowing for there’s a variety of them and it is a prerequisite to start working on the project contemplated. Nunan has a wide view about an assorting of syllabuses which are divided into two categories product oriented and process oriented syllabuses. The first one focuses on the knowledge and skills that learners should gain as a result of instruction, while the other emphasizes on the learning experiences themselves.

Product-oriented syllabuses display a sort of them: Analytic and synthetic syllabus, grammatical syllabuses and functional-notional syllabuses. On the other hand, process-oriented syllabuses is divided into some other categories: Procedural syllabuses, content syllabuses and mixed Syllabuses. Going more specific on our topic of research, (Nunan, Task – Based Language Teaching , 2004) defines that a task-based syllabus assumes the selection of a task as a basic building block that offers students pedagogic and psycholinguistic reasons to achieve a goal. In his book, he mentioned Candlin as a writer who promotes criteria for judging how well tasks are:

Promotion of attention to meaning, purposes, negotiation; draw objectives from the communicative needs of learners; allow different solutions depending on the skills and strategies drawn on by the learner; define a problem to be worked through by learners, centered on the
learners but guided on the teacher, and provide opportunities to talk, language practice, monitoring and feedback, co evaluation and critical awareness, among others that suggest they provide chances to work on a precise and common goal related to their daily lives at the same time language is learned.

(Long, 2015) Intends a procedure for developing a task-based syllabus:

1. Conduct a needs analysis to obtain an inventory of target tasks.
2. Classify the target tasks into tasks types. From the task types, derive pedagogical tasks.

Select and sequence the pedagogical tasks to form a TBL syllabus.

According to the information presented above, we adopt these points of view to choose the task to work with as they were shown in Table number 1. The information supports the theoretical framework intended to develop as the way of fulfilling the institution, teachers and students’ need of possessing a new planning where the whole community could be profited with. Tasks must be relevant to the real-world language needs of the student. That is, the underlying learning theory of task-based and communicative language teaching seems to suggest that activities in which language is employed to complete meaningful tasks, enhances learning.

There is a variety of syllabus design existing that allows educators to choose from as ways of looking for a precise style of teaching according to the context and population. Task syllabus design becomes the most accurate method to work with as it fits the needs and requirements the establishment wants to meet. It allows students to negotiate meaning and get the teacher as a consultant or guide when performing activities instead of getting him/her as the center of the lesson. As they perform tasks, pupils seek opportunities of using the language and encouraging themselves to carry a self-studying and evaluation process.
The previous ones were some of the items we took into account as objectives we could set up when designing a task-based syllabus as there were evidenced real goals as ways people could get by working on specific activities related to their lives (tasks). In addition, we had to include the intention we had since the beginning of the research project that has been to give a syllabus that can foster students to learn at least to communicate with some commands as well as the brief understanding of the language. The purposes or goals that we can achieve are knowledge students will get for their lives and will be a reward for the actions done.

Finally, the last but very important notion to consider in our research study is adults as the actors and population involved. The establishment provides service to people who have not finished their high school and want to complete it to get the certification in order to meet this requirement to get a job. The majority of them belong to the citizens who have already become 18 years old, what on behalf law 27 from 1977 Colombian political constitution are individuals who have plenty capacities of acting and response for their procedures.

3.3 Adults Education

The educational process is an activity that involves the human being with the world, from childhood to adulthood and those both conceptions have different considerations in the needs of learners. In that sense is necessary to understand and remark the characteristics and definition of an adult and the implications in the educational Colombian context.

It is regulated by Decreto 3011 of December 1997, and it’s defined as the set of processes and training actions organized to meet in particular, the needs and potential of people who for different circumstances did not attend levels of public educational service, during the ages accepted regularly to take them or those who wish to improve their skills, enrich their knowledge
and improve their technical and professional skills. Ministerio de Education, Decreto 3011, Art 2. Public or private institutions that offer education to adult people will display some programs which have to be completed in some terms denominated as Especial Integrated Study Cycle (EISC): 1. Literacy. 2. Basic education. 3. High education. 4. No formal education. 5. Informal education.

(MEN, Colombiaaprende.edu.co, 1997) Article 6 states that the literacy process wants adult students to develop different skills that are acquired in the three first primary grades in order to include them to exert their fundamental right to access education. Basic education will be carried out in four EISC duration, each one of them will last minimum 40 weeks, it means 800 hours per cycle depending on the institutions’ distribution. Every study cycle will have a purpose:

1. The first cycle will contain first, second and third
2. The second cycle will have fourth and fifth grades.
3. The third cycle will display sixth and seventh grades.
4. The fourth cycle will take eighth and ninth grades.

According to Art 23, High education will be offered in 2 EISC, each one of them will last merely 22 weeks. This time will be devoted to achieve some knowledge as the one evidenced on people studying at regular schools when they finish their whole bachelor. Bearing in mind, the research study will be executed with a 20 adult students group from different cities in a validation institution, the organization must count on a support of the requirements established by MEN to contribute to their educational background such as an operating license, an Educational Institution Project (PEI), and a physic and managing structure as well as the technology and equipment suitable to arrange this purpose.
In that way, it is indispensable to know some adult definitions from authors who have worked and implemented different methodologies in the process of teaching and learning with them.

Adults are people who have superior cognitive abilities that can render them a bit more successful in certain classroom endeavors. Their need for sensory input can rely a little more on using their imagination. (Brown, Teaching by Principles An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy, Third Edition, 1994). They can at least occasionally deal with language that isn't embedded in a "here and now" context but exist some variables which can help to identify these deals. Adults are more readily able to handle abstract rules and concepts but they do not have longer attention spans for material that may not be intrinsically interesting to them; Sensory input need does not have to be always as quiet as varied with adults; Adults often bring a modicum of general self-confidence in a classroom and Adults are better able to take a context-reduce segment of language and understand it. (Brown, Principles of Language Learning and Teaching, 1994).

Adults are immersed in a context where they have to face many personal, professional or family situations; therefore adults have specific characteristics that Brown describes as typical of adults.

3.3.1 Implications

Adults are immersed in a context where they have to face many personal, professional or family situations; therefore adults have specific characteristics that Brown describes as typical of adults, as an important fact there are a number of learning items that involve adults as a different population due to their status of people in charge of carrying out duties or obligations that regular students at primary or high school don’t have to fulfill. The following elements report important
material to this intervention as a mean of getting to know intensely the population we were working with.

3.3.2 **Self-direction**

Adults feel the need to take responsibility for their lives and decisions and this is why it’s important for them to have control over their learning. Therefore, self-assessment, a peer relationship with the instructor, multiple options, and initial, yet subtle support are all imperative. It means that as instructors we have to give them as many opportunities as possible to make choices (cooperative learning) about what will do in and out of the classroom. (Brown, Principles of Language Learning and Teaching, 1994).

3.3.3 **Practical and results-oriented**

Adult learners are usually practical, resent theory, need information that can be immediately applicable to their professional needs, and generally prefer practical knowledge that will improve their skills, facilitate their work and boost their confidence. This is why it’s important to create a course that will cover their individual needs and have a more utilitarian content. (Knowles, 1982)

3.3.4 **Less open-minded and more resistant to change people.**

Maturity and profound life experiences usually lead to rigidity, which is the enemy of learning. Thus, instructional designers need to provide the “why” behind the change, new concepts that can be linked to already established ones, and promote the need to explore.

Slower learning, yet more integrative knowledge

Aging does affect learning. Adults tend to learn less rapidly with age. However, the depth of learning tends to increase over time, navigating knowledge and skills to unprecedented personal levels.
3.3.5 **Use personal experience as a resource**

Adults have lived longer, seen and done more, have the tendency to link their past experiences to anything new and validate new concepts based on prior learning. This is why it’s crucial to form a class with adults that have similar life experience levels, encourage discussion and sharing, and generally create a learning community consisting of people who can profoundly interact.

3.3.6 **Motivation**

An important part of the adult learner is the motivation that they have to receive from an instructor and their life ambitions for that reason the motivation is considered as an extent to which you make choices about (a) goal to pursue and (b) the effort you will devote to that pursuit. (Brown, Principles of Language Learning and Teaching, 1994) (Knowles, 1982) it is considered that Learning in adulthood is usually voluntary. Thus, it’s a personal choice to attend school, in order to improve job skills and achieve professional growth. This motivation is the driving force behind learning and this is why it’s crucial to tap into a learner’s intrinsic impetus with the right thought-provoking material that will question conventional wisdom and stimulate his mind.

3.3.7 **Multi-level responsibilities**

Adult learners have a lot to juggle; family, friends, work, and the need for personal quality time. This is why it’s more difficult for an adult to make room for learning, while it’s absolutely crucial to prioritize. If his life is already demanding, then the learning outcome will be compromised. Taking that into consideration, an instructional designer needs to create a flexible program, accommodate busy schedules, and accept the fact that personal obligations might obstruct the learning process.
3.3.8 **High expectations**

Adult learners have high expectations. They want to be taught about things that will be useful to their work, expect to have immediate results, seek for a course that will worth their while and not be a waste of their time or money. This is why it’s important to create a course that will maximize their advantages, meet their individual needs and address all the learning challenges.

There is urgency on identification and perception of the classification of adult people as there is a diversity of responses they have towards the education field. Bearing in mind all the theoretical concepts that involved the fact of working with adult people, it is considered vital to meet students in the course in which the study will be carried out to find out what are the characteristics mentioned previously to fit their needs and arranged to activities that could be accurate and profitable for them. As it was stated before, our population presents a different background that could have advantages and disadvantages as they have some other interests when attending classes than teenagers in school but they do not have the same time availability to delve on the learning process by their own due to they have diverse concerns related to their daily lives. As the concept adult education concept is explained detailed, it is set a method or principle called **andragogy** that explores deeper the process with these students.

3.3.9 **Andragogy**

In the course of time, several educational models have had a significant evolution in their time, in order to provide a solution to the teaching and learning needs that arose as a result of political and cultural manifestations. These needs allowed us to advance in the designs of methods, techniques, strategies, methodologies, and sciences that allow a study of the conditions
of learning and teaching which are implemented in educational models. One of these sciences is Andragogy that emphasizes on the importance of applying appropriate methods of study to the adult population, understanding as it has specific characteristics, needs, limitations, advantages and interests and specific objectives that distinguish them from students who are immersed in a governmental educational system.

The scientific basis of Andrology implies an analytical review of the principles, concepts, definitions, propositions, and theories which have been formulated during the experience with adults. It explains the human being's need to learn throughout his/her life, for which he/she becomes a practical adult necessity (Reischmann, 2004). (Knowles, 1982) He was an American educator well known for the use of the term Andragogy as synonymous with the adult education. According to him, andragogy is the art and science of adult learning, suggesting 4 principles:

- Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.
- Experience (including mistakes) provides the basis for the learning activities.
- Learning subjects have immediate relevance and impact on their job or personal lives.
- It is problem-centered rather than content-oriented.

Also, there are 5 assumptions or characteristics applied to adult learners:

- Self-Concept: As a person matures his/her self concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directed human being.
- Adult Learner Experience: As a person matures he/she accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning.
- Readiness to Learn: As a person matures his/her readiness to learn becomes oriented
increasingly to the developmental tasks of his/her social roles.

- Orientation to Learning: As a person matures his/her time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application. As a result his/her orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem centeredness.

- Motivation to Learn: As a person matures the motivation to learn is internal.

On the other hand, (Roque, 1987, pág. 13) argued that Andragogy consists in the use of all the means and modalities of personality formation made available to all individuals without any distinction, and who only attended primary education or Secondary and high school. (Merriam, 2001) Andragogy is described as some principles of practice more than a theory as it expresses how an adult student should be. It aims to facilitate the learning processes in the adult throughout his life. This model proposes that the adult can be self-managing of his own learning process and has an encyclopedic (often memorizing) knowledge that is intended to offer at the basic levels of the educational system. It allows them as adults, to be managers of their own learning and acquire with more ease and interest the knowledge they require to meet the demands of a life every time more complex and a changing social environment. (Hoz, 1998, pág. 9). Some others consider that andragogy is a set of tools and techniques just to teach adult people. (Cooper M, 2001).

Previous information gives in detailed characteristics of Andragogy as the way of understanding adult people relevance to the idea of studying at their age as it contains a higher and complicated degree of concentration and awareness. They own several concerns related to their families, jobs, money, homes, and professional development among others. However, meeting these characteristics will give us certain knowledge of possible activities we can adopt
when developing tasks and building up a specific program that permits them to understand and acquire the English language encountering the implications it would have as they have distinctive characteristics and ways of learning.

4 LITERATURE REVIEW

At this point, it is presented the theoretical background of the topic of this research project. The literature review contains two sections. The first is devoted to a discussion of the previous studies regarding syllabus design and task-based method; and the second section involves the theory that frames our project to create a new guideline focused on TBL approach for an adult population.

4.1 Task-Based Learning

The importance of Task-Based Syllabus as an approach to learning and teaching through a task set has been investigated in the last 10 years, showing that, there are many cases and fields where it has succeeded. This investigation includes several studies that contribute to this research: (Khaghani, 2009, págs. 23-41), (Badruddin, 201) (Kasap, 2005) (Buitrago, 2016, págs. 95-110), (Sijia Guo, 2016, pág. 1.13) (Aboagye, 1997), (Ismaili, 2013, págs. 291-299), (Kim McDonough, 2007, págs. 107-132) (Zuñiga, 2016, págs. 13-27) have made strong contributions to this research. In their work, they talk about the use of task-based language teaching methods,
and the design of syllabus in different contexts and places. Those investigations were conducted in different places. Most of the researchers used schools, but others used universities as the places to investigate.

Taking into account institution’s thought about changing the traditional transcription from Spanish to English and the grammar focus that had been implemented since the foundation of the organization, teachers and directives conveyed that working with a Task-Based oriented classes could catch more effectively students’ attention as it draws very real situations that can be associated to students’ lives as well as the experiences they live. The discussion started by coming up with some approaches suggested by different instructors that work at some other places. There were two options to vote for in order to choose the most accurate for our population. PPP (Presentation, practice, and production) method was one of them, where students get information from teacher’s explanation, they follow some patterns to practice the grammar taught and finally, production is developed by creating students’ own examples which give a glance of what people in charge wanted to provide pupils with. On the other hand, TBL tactic promote the same steps adding a plus that is working bearing in mind a specific objective set since the beginning of the lesson. Also, it was believed that the fact of getting a task to accomplish as an aim, could make students feel as a part of a group where their participation and performance is crucial to obtain a goal as the same time they get to know the grammar by using it.

Subsequently, people involved expressed their concern about working with the TBL approach what led us to start searching on how to establish a connection between the theory and the application and implementation of it. As we were much attached to this situation due to we were head teachers of the English area, it was begun to look for documentation, researchers, and
authors who could provide deeper information to support our new direction on the syllabus designing. In order to do this, the following concepts are defined below to explain the steps the tools and steps followed.

A task is more than a necessity when language teachers want students to use the target language. It helps students to communicate and create a language environment use. According to (Nunan, Task – Based Language Teaching , 2004), “tasks are intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect; to the way language is used in the real world”. (Zuñiga, 2016) in his project called Implementing task-based language teaching to integrate language skills in an EFL program at a Colombian university argues that during the implementations of tasks with students of the first semester in a public university in Colombia helps them to improve their English learning process. Students communicate clearly and explore different topics in the class, showing their creativity and their ability to solve problems. The learners were the center of the language process; tasks help students have real-life activities and use English to improve all their skills in the classes.

Kasap aimed his project in enhancing students’ speaking skills through the application of TBL, defining it as “an approach in which communicative and meaningful tasks play the central role in language learning and in which the process of using language in communication carries more importance than a mere production of correcting language forms” (Kasap, 2005, pág. 15) In his experimental research, Kasap used a pre-test, while-test, and post-test to his learners, in order to identify their perceptions about TBL, finding a positive reaction by his pupils and the teachers, in addition to an improvement in the learners’ oral skills. Through the analysis of this research, we could notice there are advantages on the implementation of this approach as the main goal of the proposal is to provide students a new course planning to get an improvement on
their performance. Moreover, (Khaghani, 2009) inquired about the effectiveness of TBL and gender, in the development of speaking performance of their students. They defined this method as “having learners perform tasks which help them to develop knowledge and skill in the second language in accordance with the way their own language learning mechanisms work” (Pg. 27). In their experimental research, Khomeinaji and Khagani worked with 162 students, divided into an experimental group and a control group, and including the development of convergent, divergent and jigsaw tasks, aiming to practice and improve speaking. The findings of this study revealed that the experimental group presented a better improvement of its speaking performance, and additionally, the members of this group acquired skills related to the negotiation of meaning and detection of sounds. Supporting the willingness to establish TBL as the instrument to create the new syllabus for the institution, Khomeinaji and Khagani showed that working with a task can encourage students to produce language as all of them are part of a project that would be explained by them. The results gained at the end of this research are some examples of what teachers can inspire or foster students to do when having a goal.

Ismaili’s research study (Ismaili, 2013) aimed to identify the effectiveness of TBL in the development of learners’ speaking skills, starting from the issue that beginner students presented difficulties when speaking fluently and accurately. In her article, Ismaili stated that TBL is founded on solving problems connected with the real world, in which meaning is first and there is a presence of evaluation. She worked with 60 beginner students, developing questionnaires and interviews, in relation to data collection; and experimental lessons, in the representation of the teachers’ intervention. This study found that the learners improved their communicative competence because they could realize that the activities proposed in the intervention had a meaning and a communicative goal. As it has been stated before by some researchers, TBL has
been an assistant in the teaching process where teachers find the theory suitable to get students interested and involved in learning the language by working in class, for a specific purpose (task). Along the development of the class they are given some rules, structures, and vocabulary to reach a conversation made by themselves in which they can produce what they have learned. This is an important aspect allow for at the time of designing the syllabus as the main target we have as teachers are to make students recognize the language. We are conscious of the risk of implementing these works for students due to their backgrounds, interests and mother tongue as it cannot be as effective as we expect. However, the contribution of these researchers is significant because TBL implementation could increase student’s skills development.

To finish, Guo and Möllering (2016) decided to the inquiry about the effects of implementing Task-Based Learning in the improvement of communicative competencies in web conferences – Based classrooms. In relation to this method, they agreed that TBL contributes to the stimulation and possibility of learners to interact with each other, resulting in an easier L2 learning process. Guo and Möllering aimed their study on detecting the effectiveness of TBL in the development of communicative competences in eight beginner students, with the particular issue that they studied through web conferences. With the application of recordings of the online sessions and the development of activities, following the three stages, that will be explained elaborately in the following topic (Pre, While, and Post task), the researchers found that the students presented an improvement of their oral performance, as well as their interaction process, by the use of elements of online language such as emoticons.

Previous information gives a wide understanding of the task concept as well as the items and stages included to develop a class based on this approach. Moreover, well-known authors show findings and results after carrying out different investigations on the education field with the
purpose of informing educational community about implications, advantages, and disadvantages of using tasks in classrooms. The variety of task types and the activities displayed by them are a huge help of material to get ideas from, as it narrows the way of elaborating the concept while it is being used as a mean to foster students’ interest, acceptance, and appreciation on the English language.

Taking into consideration the description of the view, the effects it has on a classroom development, the order of steps that must be followed, and the background presented to build up a studying plan, afterward, it is included and related its characteristics to the institution and student’s needs. The following is exhibited information about TBL Syllabus Design, to comprehend extensively the connection between task and its role in a syllabus, as well as the way it is organized and the features it must contain to allow the execution of objectives.

4.2 TBL Syllabus Design

The first researcher who inquired about designing a syllabus based on activities was (Aboagye, 1997), who carried out a research study, in order to solve the problem of the syllabus in an institution, which was devoted to structure and functions. In his thesis, he affirmed that “the task-based syllabus sees the learner as someone who knows how to be accurate, appropriate and sound meaningful through the new language and also be able to interpret, express and negotiate meanings in speech and/or writing” (Pg. 21). To get a deeper knowledge about the implementation of TBL in the classroom it is important to know the phases it has.

According to Allen Fuente especificada no válida. a curriculum is a very general concept which involves the philosophical, social and administrative factors contributing to the planning. One of its subparts is the syllabus that is concerned with the topics to be taught. Following the
same line of research, Leo Van Lier defined syllabus by means of metaphor that it is a collection of maps with information and options tracing the route a member has requested for a specific trip. It gives teachers the opportunity to organize and displayed a set of activities during a specific period of time. Lier stated it, as a really important fact educators must create since the beginning of a course as it will provide more success to the lessons developed.

In his book, Leo carried out a study in a school where he found that designing a syllabus shows a number of positive consequences as the followings:

- The teacher is able to lead the students in a certain planned direction, measuring step, following a logical progression.
- Students are willing to know what they learn.
- Teacher controls and conducts an orderly lesson.
- Prediction of possible material that could enrich the lessons according to population.

These assumptions are supported by Kathleen Graves as she considers a course design as the main element to take into account when teaching. There is a variety of researches that were undertaken in order to check results after working with an organization of content and time before going to the teaching exercise.

One of them was tackled by teacher Iris Broudy in Taiwan what come to a halt that setting up principles, themes and materials enable her to choose and integrate functions, grammar and vocabulary related to each theme. As the outcome, Broudy assumes that the topics must be clear that one may decide what to include and the components. Task based courses have to emphasized on how students develop tasks together, they expand competences through action.
and interaction involving negotiation between students and teacher where most of the activities can be for work purposes by performing functions, practicing skills and discussing skills.

Furthermore, Van Ek contended some necessary components as necessary for a syllabus:

- The situation in which the foreign language will be used, including topics.
- The language activities in which the learner will engage
- The language functions to fulfill
- What learners will be able to do regarding each topic.
- General notions learner will be able to handle.
- Specific notions learners will be able to handle.
- The language forms that learners will be able to use.
- The degree of skill learners will be able to perform.

However, some studies made with teachers in primary showed that they were not developing very well the designing, implementing, and evaluating stages expected for curricula as they consider themselves as not expertise or adequately trained to undertake tasks.

Finally, Nunan (Nunan, Syllabus Design, 2004) set some tasks for teachers in order to get to know deeply to understand the characteristics and effectiveness of a syllabus design.

- Task 1: The objective is to criticize the curriculum model operating with a view to what extent some elements were considered or should be modified such as: needs analysis, goals and objectives, content specification, learning tasks and activities, resources and materials, curriculum implementation, curriculum management, learner assessment, programme evaluation, teacher development.
• Task 2: The aim is to identify the scope of the syllabus currently used through statements and outlines from the ones displayed by Brumfit (1984) by getting similarities and differences to design a better proposal.

• Task 3: The goal is comparing the own proposal to the one considered accurate for the institution to work with in terms of analyzing and comparing documents.

Task syllabus design becomes the most accurate method to work with as it fits the needs and requirements the establishment wants to meet. It allows students to negotiate meaning and get the teacher as a consultant or guide when performing activities instead of getting him/her as the center of the lesson. As they perform tasks, pupils seek opportunities of using the language and encouraging themselves to carry a self-studying and evaluation process.

The previous ones were some of the items we took into account as objectives we could set up when designing a task-based syllabus as there were evidenced real goals as ways people could get by working on specific activities related to their lives (tasks). In addition, we had to include the intention we had since the beginning of the research project that has been to give a syllabus that can foster students to learn at least to communicate with some commands as well as the brief understanding of the language. The purposes or goals that we can achieve are knowledge students will get for their lives and will be a reward for the actions done.

4.1 Adult education

Language acquisition in context is different in children and adult people. Given the fact that grownups can learn a foreign language after cognitive development is complete, they need to use the most of their resources, in order to compensate the internal and external limitations that have
been imposed. Talking about foreign language learning for adults, there are some factors that are vital to mention as they play a role that can affect or help the English learning process such as the age, sex, working memory and prior language experience.

(DeKeyser, 2005) conducted a research with people from China and Korea arriving to the United States with a varying age, the other one was an adult group from Hungary. Data analysis revealed that there was a significant performance by puberty (first group) unlike Hungarians who did not show an improvement at the same speed but just some students who were more successful than others. These results are supported by Bialystok and Hakuta and (Hakuta, 2005) as they reported deterioration of lifespan of cognitive capacities such as the ability to perform tasks under time pressure, risk taking, establishing long-term memories and recall of details.

The second element is sex which has been an issue with a little investigation. (Ellis, 2003), (Kiss, 2005), (Powell, 2005), (Ehrman, 2005), conducted researches with different sexes which have revealed a general trend toward higher achievement for females on most tests. Some studies showed women are less anxious than men, some others stated that females employ more use of a private than males, and others expressed a better positive attitude towards the learning process.

In addition, working memory approaches the task of language learning in terms of differences in strategies and aptitude (Vallar, 2005) conducted a series of experiments with a group of Japanese learners, to investigate the pairs of known words and novel pseudo words. Results suggested that the capacity to temporarily store and rehearse verbal material is different in young and old learners, as adults expressed a lower competence to acquire real vocabulary in terms of time. However, there are some researches stated that there could be some variations according to the population and context.
The fourth concept to make allowances on adults’ learning process is the prior experience by way of previous knowledge as well as understanding of educational events. Klein (1995) investigated the effects of prior linguistic experience on the acquisition of the preposition-stranding parameter by a group of 17 adult immigrants and 15 teenager immigrants learning a foreign language. Her results showed that both groups of learners produced the same type of errors which Klein interpreted as evidence a leading acquisition to the concepts. Nonetheless, the rates at which the groups acquire the parameter were significantly different from old and young learners.

Bearing in mind most of researches demonstrate mature learners as less successful according to the foreign language education, the notions conveyed that the age, sex, working memory and prior language experience. They were key theories to base our research on, as it gave us more knowledge regarding teaching conceptions to work with adults in a validation institute’s community where different contexts were presented.

5 RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first discusses the research paradigm and type of study, the second one, presents brief information about the participants, and the third section displays the data collection instruments and procedures used in this study.

5.1 Research Paradigm

This is a qualitative research that inquires on designing a TBL syllabus. It was conducted in a natural setting where the participants come from different places as well as backgrounds that have not given them the opportunity to finish their studies. The aims of conducting our research
The previous characteristics describe part of our research process, initially because this study was carried out in a natural setting, in this case the English class at school; therefore there was a rapport and an interaction with the students as participants of the study.

The data collected were focused as (Creswell, Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods, 2003) stated on a collection of documents and observations that allowed us to get specific details; we did to collect evidence from multiple factors in order to state a problem.
5.2 Type of Study

This investigation will follow the Action Research Method. (Merriam, 2001) stated, “Action research has as its goal to address a specific problem within a specific setting, such as a classroom, a workplace, a program or organization.” This kind of research often involves the participants in the research process, data is collected from students and the researcher can observe and analyze what is happening in the learning process. This investigation was a classroom action research where the teacher is the one who is in charge of trying to improve his/her practices.

This study is particularistic; this means that the action research focuses its attention in a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon and the case itself reveals important information about the phenomenon to intervene and try to change the reality. As Hendricks (2006), mentions, the main purpose of “Action research is to investigate and improve the researcher practices, teachers engaged in the action research may study ways to increase student learning in his or her class, focusing on intentions, methods, and desires outcomes as part of the investigation” (p.3).

“Sampling is also the most popular method for choosing a sample among population for a wide range of purposes. In simple random sampling each member of population is equally likely to be chosen as part of the sample” (Dudovskiy, 2011). This investigation followed the action research steps, which are described below as a stage, its description and the intention of researchers.

1. Stage: Observation

Description
The observation process was a reality since the researcher was the English teacher during the year. In that job the teacher had the opportunity to observe and plan the classes having in mind the necessities of the students. From this group there were 20 students who were helpful as they were the sample to be investigated.

**Intention**

According to the action research methodology, the step of observing the setting is important to find out what the problem is.

The action research points out that as the participant observation takes place for an extended period, the researcher can develop more intimate and informal relationships with the population in a more natural environment than those in which experiments and surveys are conducted. (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011, p. 298)

**2. Stage: Selection of the group**

**Description**

The group selected for this investigation was randomly chosen. This class had certain characteristics like: different styles of learning and interest and commitment when working in the tasks.

An interview with the teachers and a focus group with the students were necessary to analyze the different points of view about the learning of writing skill.

**Intention**

For the selection of the group, it was necessary to have a sample of the population so the researcher used the simple random sampling as a way to choose the group to work with. “In simple random sampling, each member of the population is equally likely to be chosen as part of the different points of view about the learning of writing skill.

*Description*

The information gathered from these instruments helped this investigation to be concrete.

Interviews to the teachers were necessary to determine the problem. A focus group with the students was another instrument the researcher adopted for this investigation to analyze the perceptions of the students when talking about writing skills.

Daily observations to analyze the problem and progress of the students when achieving the tasks were necessary. Pictures and videos of task development were part of this research.

*Intention*

In action research the data and the instruments to work are important. Participation observations are often pre- eminent on it but there are not the only sources of data. There are six more sources of evidence like: Documents, Archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts. (Yin, 2011). The information obtained was studied using three of the classes to establish the intention, objective and analysis of the task proposed.

### 5.3 Participants

The population of this project was composed by a group of 20 students from an institution in Bogotá. This institution bases its procedures on validation process, which means getting knowledge faster than the recommended in schools, focused on people who could not complete their high – school studies in the appropriated time. As we had already established it, they are adult learners, due to this; there is a brief description of them in order to protect their identities and information. This population covers an ages range between 22 and 56 years old.
Students’ names are not mentioned, however it is important to the state, there are 13 women and 7 men. All of them are people who want to finish their high school and get a degree to get job and education opportunities. They have had some difficulties to finish their studies due to different reasons such as violence, economic difficulties, children and family problems that have caused some interruptions in this process. Furthermore, these students have come from several countries, and the only requirement they had to achieve, with a view to complete their studies, is acquiring the A1 level, according to the CEFR.

5.3.1 Role of the teacher

Our role in the classroom was as teachers-researchers, this role includes teachers as observers and listeners who get details in the classroom through students´ interactions, teachers as examiners and explorers identifying aspects in order to answer the research questions, teachers-negotiators between the interest of the school and our own research purpose, and teachers-innovators generating new activities and knowledge for students through the implementation of a new syllabus based on the TBL approach.

5.3.2 Role of the Students

According to (Rodgers Jack and Richards T., 2001) the students need to be participatory in the activities that the teacher presents, and additionally, they have to be very creative and put to practice their critical thinking skills, aiming to understand how language works since the very beginning. In addition to this, (Knowles, 1982) defined that adult learners (the population of this study) need to acquire three characteristics: Firstly, they have to be independent; secondly, the pupils have to be treasures of knowledge, by the reception and understanding of knowledge; and thirdly, the apprentices need to be able to use any knowledge they receive in their daily lives.
5.4 Data Collection Techniques

The data collection instruments and the intervention designed and applied are based on three data collection techniques: Observations, document collection, and questionnaires. (Freeman, 1998) frames that the observation technique involves having close watching and identification of the events that happen in the context. This watching and documentation of situations can be developed, taking into account the researcher as a participant observer (who interferes in the context) or its opposite, a non-participant observer (who only pays attention to what happens in the classroom). In this project, the observation technique was represented by the pedagogical intervention, in which we introduced the new syllabus and observed the particular events that happened around it and the learning and teaching process. In agreement to this author, the recognition and careful detection of students and their weaknesses was the first aim intended facilitating real and clear information to the research project to start building the problem and its possible solution.

Secondly, document collection technique is also defined by (Freeman, 1998) as the process of compiling sets of documents such as texts, lesson plans, exams and others. In this study, the only evidence of document collection was the design of sixteen lesson plans which were part of the new English language syllabus.

Finally, (Hopkins, 2016, págs. 102-128) states that, through surveys, the researcher can obtain wide information about a specific topic, from the participants, including opinions, perspectives, suggestions, demands, and other information. In this project, we represented the surveys technique in the development of the questionnaires for students in order to get their perceptions about the current syllabus of the institution. In order to render information of the
results obtained after the implementation of a new syllabus, we established some instruments that helped us to organize and linked insights and awareness to ones set at the beginning of the study.

5.5 Data Collection Instruments

As teacher-researchers, we need to gather data, aiming to identify problems and formulate solutions to those in a research project. In this study, we took into consideration three data collection instruments: **Questionnaires, Interviews, and Artifacts**.

Questionnaires are defined by Johnson and Turner (Charles Teddlie and Abbas Tashakkori, 2006) as a self-report with questions or statements which the participants need to fill out. Additionally, Johnson and Turner classify questionnaires in three types. The qualitative questionnaire, composed of open-ended questions, and aimed to collect participants’ opinions or perceptions towards an item; Quantitative questionnaire, composed by closed questions in which the participants only choose one option, and intended to count frequencies; and the mixed questionnaire, which combines both types of questions mentioned previously. In this study, it was determined to use qualitative questionnaires because it was vital to identify what the learners felt and thought about the implementation of a new syllabus, regarding the English language-learning process. This questionnaire consisted of questions about their impressions and assessment of the new syllabus and the ways the apprentices acquired knowledge.

In addition to this data collection instrument, (Charles Teddlie and Abbas Tashakkori, 2006) explain that interviews are the second most important data collection instrument, especially, in mixed and qualitative research. Interviews consist of a process in which “the interviewer establishes rapport and asks the interviewee a series of questions” (Pg. 305). When applying this instrument, the interviewer needs to acquire two roles. On the first hand, he/she has to be no-judgmental and neutral with the interviewee’s answers. And, on the other hand, he/she
needs to ask for clarity in the answers, in order to make the analysis of data easier. In this study, we decided to develop and apply a focused interview, defined by (Hudelson, 1994) as the interview in which the interview establishes a framework, including topics that will guide the interview. Furthermore, the interviewee is able to talk freely and give their perspectives on the questions. Moreover, Bell asserts that this type of interviews makes data analysis simpler. This instrument was applied focusing interviews on teachers’ perceptions, looking for their perspectives about the structure of the syllabus that the institution follows and how it should be changed, in order to enhance the learning and teaching processes with the pupils.

The last instrument is artifact collection which is associated to the products created by students. It has its emphasis on “collecting pertinent ‘traces’, ‘props’ or ‘products’ used by research participants, or that are relevant to the problem area being studied” (Colin Lankshear and Michele Knobel, 2004) The kind of data collected helps build contextualizing data for the study.

In summary, interviews and questionnaires were chosen. On one hand, the questionnaires will be applied to the learners, along with the intervention. On the other hand, interviews were carried out with the English teachers from the institution. Along the research study, there were seven interviews requested to teachers to know perceptions gotten as the syllabus was implemented. Also, seven artifacts or tasks from students were analyzed to understand the improvement and reception they were getting from the new syllabus. At the end of the study, there were two questionnaires carried out to students, one at the beginning of the process and the other one at the end of it, with the intention of getting information about the solution of the problem.
6  INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

( Jack C. Richards, Theodore S. Rodger, 2014) Defines TBI as a method in which tasks are considered as the most important element in instruction. Additionally, other key elements of this method are the inclusion of real communication in the classroom, an integration of language and tasks, and an importance of language meaning; characteristics which frame an effective learning process in the apprentice. (Nunan, Syllabus Design, 2004) Establishes five characteristics about TBI in learning and teaching:

1. Involvement of interaction and communication of language learning.
2. The inclusion of authentic materials in the classroom.
3. Importance of considering not only language but the learning process itself.
4. Construction of learner’s language experiences to enhance classroom learning.
5. The connection of learning process, in and out of the classroom.

Furthermore, (Brown, Principles of Language Learning and Teaching, 1994) states that when applying TBI in the classroom, pupils are able to address two types of tasks: pedagogical tasks, which can be developed inside the classroom, implying an interaction student-teacher and student-student, and the implementation of teaching techniques, in order to reach pedagogical objectives. On the other hand, Brown defines target tasks as the activities which students perform beyond the classroom, involving a close relationship with classroom instructions.
6.1 Theory of learning

(Rodgers Jack and Richards T., 2001) Establish that tasks involve a process of input, intake, and output by the learner. Input is the knowledge the pupils receive; intake is the knowledge that s/he processes and discards; and output is the knowledge the apprentice produces, as an understanding of what s/he received (Krashen, 1982) Additionally, Richards and Rodgers affirm that, when implementing tasks, there is a need for negotiation between the learners and the teacher, in order to assign and develop activities which lead to an increase of motivation by the apprentices and, to avoid frustration and abandonment of the learning process.

In the same line of argument, (Brown, Teaching by Principles An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy, Third Edition, 1994) explains that the fact of learning through tasks is focused on communication, but the activities are of a linguistic type. However, “they are not linguistic in the traditional sense of just focusing on grammar and phonology, but by maintaining the centrality of functions… the course goals center on learners’ pragmatic language competence” (p. 230).

The designing of a TBL Syllabus we considered pretty important to follow the stages presented by Nunan:

6.1.1 The first stage is the pre-task activity:

- Define the topics to students
- Recall vocabulary or ideas for the main task,
- Give complete instructions,
- Show students the materials and time
- Show a model of the activity
- Set the outcome or goal students need to reach.
6.1.2 The second stage or the task cycle.

- Get the students in small groups
- Complete the activity
- Use the model the teacher gives.

6.1.3 The final step is the post-task stage.

- Report the findings to the class in a written or oral form
- Follow three little sub-steps that are: planning, reporting and analyzing.

Planning, reporting and analyzing (Frost, 2008, p. 1, 2, 3.)

6.1.3.1 The Planning step:

- Students prepare a short oral or written report to tell the class about their task.
- They can rehearsal the report in their groups.
- The teacher is asked to clear up any language questions they may have.

6.1.3.2 The Reporting step:

- Students can report back to the class orally or read the written report.
- The teacher chooses the order students will present their reports
- The teacher may give the students some quick feedback on the content.
- The teacher may play a recording of others doing the same task for the students to compare.

6.1.3.3 The analyzing step:

- The teacher highlights relevant parts from the text of the recording for students to analyze.
- The teacher may ask students to notice interesting features within this text.
- The teacher can also highlight the language that the students use during the report.
phase for analysis.

- Students can have an outcome
- Students can self-evaluate themselves.
- The teacher will give feedback to students’ performance and the completion of the task.

6.2 Theory of language

Regarding language, (Rodgers Jack and Richards T., 2001) state that elements of language such as vocabulary and grammar are important in TBI, but they are considered as bits which need to be connected, aiming to get the meaning, which is the most important aspect of this method. Brown (1994) complements explaining that “the priority is not the bits and pieces of language but rather the functional purposes for which language must be used” (p. 229).

6.3 Teacher’s Role

Several researchers have stated opinions about the role that the teacher needs to play when developing a lesson, by the use of TBI. Firstly, (Swan, 2005, págs. 376 - 401) explained that the teacher is a facilitator of communication instead of being a source of language. It means the teacher needs to help the learners with how to communicate in the L2, rather than providing him/her with vocabulary or translations. Secondly, (Prabhu, 1987) said that in TBL, the teacher is not only a facilitator of communication; s/he needs to be a skillful communicator, with the ability to manage his/her language, in order to make it easier or more difficult to understand. Finally, (Rodgers Jack and Richards T., 2001) assumed that the teacher has to be a careful designer of tasks, considering the need of creating activities which get the pupils ready for the lesson, aiming to satisfy the apprentices’ needs and expectations.
In this study, we played the role of designers of activities. We developed a syllabus, and that syllabus was composed of activities, goals, materials, and resources, taking into consideration the level of proficiency of the apprentices.

6.4 Student’s role

According to (Rodgers Jack and Richards T., 2001) the students need to be participatory in the activities that the teacher presents, and additionally, they have to be very creative and put to practice their critical thinking skills, aiming to understand how language works since the very beginning. In addition to this, (Knowles, 1982) defined that adult learners (the population of this study) need to acquire three characteristics: Firstly, they have to be independent; secondly, the pupils have to be treasures of knowledge, by the reception and understanding of knowledge; and thirdly, the apprentices need to be able to use any knowledge they receive in their daily lives.

In this research project, the students participated in each activity from each session. Additionally, they contributed to their own knowledge by practicing the exercises proposed in the new syllabus, and moreover, it was expected that the pupils use the knowledge acquired in their routines.
7 PEDAGOGICAL INTERVENTION

For the pedagogical intervention or innovation it was created a Syllabus proposal Instructional to implement TBL approach, previously described while enhancing learners’ proficiency on their Second Language. Next there is part of the lessons created for three classes, in which the reader is able to see how TBL was progressively implemented within different frameworks of learning (topics). Besides the tasks performed in the classroom there were homework assigned and an assessment part which are not displayed on the table.

7.1 Syllabus proposal

The syllabus presented in this research project contains a description of activities, objectives, methodology, justification, procedures, assessment and materials. Table 3 illustrates a list of main activities which are part of the syllabus (See complete syllabus in Annex 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First week</td>
<td>Presentation, Syllabus and Diagnostic test.</td>
<td>Discussion about topics that will be addressed during the term. Diagnostic tests about possible students’ understandings and knowledge of the English language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowing myself and my partners.</td>
<td>Development of communicative activities, in which students will use vocabulary and images in order to recognize subjects in class. Game and Worksheet # 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third week</td>
<td>Preparing my journal</td>
<td>Development of communicative tasks, in which students will use some routines with the vocabulary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Fourth week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expressing what I like and dislike</td>
<td>Students will work on a task listening to people talking about their likes and dislikes to show by following the model to express their own information. Listening #1. A game, and worksheet #2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fifth week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing our interests</td>
<td>Students will write about their partners’ information to state, deny and ask questions to reassure this data. Game and writing activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sixth week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describing my appearance and my partners’ similarities and differences</td>
<td>Acquiring vocabulary related to appearance combined to identification of people, routines, likes and dislikes. Resuming knowledge gotten from previous classes. Worksheets #3 and 4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Seventh week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telling what I do</td>
<td>Students will get to know professions by using different words, matching famous people to their professions. They also listen to some people talking about activities they do. Listening #2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Eighth week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing our personalities</td>
<td>By this time, students will work on a task to get to know characteristics to describe people. As they already know their classmates they will state, deny and ask questions about information. Worksheet #5, poster creation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Ninth week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing time with my partners I</td>
<td>Students will compare their lives to their classmates’ to get similarities and differences by asking questions to get additional information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tenth week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing time with my partners II</td>
<td>Students will compare their lives to their classmates’ to get similarities and differences by asking questions to get additional information and report it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4: Sample of the syllabus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievements:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To identify relevant characteristics to describe appearance and personality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To internalize vocabulary to express routines and activities related to professions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To analyze and develop real-life settings to state, deny and ask questions to get information or ask for clarification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time 1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reportin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Sample of the lesson plan

8 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

According to (Freeman, 1998) “Data analysis involves taking the data apart to see what is there and then putting them together to see how they responded to the question or puzzle under investigation” (P. 36) Based on this, the data analysis is a procedure carried out in order to obtain answers for our research questions, which included data analysis during data collection and it required to maintain an interaction with participants and at the same time to analyze key aspects that emerged along the study (Gay, Mills, and Airasian. 2009).

Taking into account students’ perception and problems acquiring the language, teachers’ awareness and points of view related to the English syllabus proposed by the validation institution focused on grammar and had some grammar and content mistakes. According to the principal’s testimony, TBL was the approach she wanted to work with as it had been the one presented in the previous syllabus planning attempt, followed by the staff’s support after a discussion among some other approaches. In addition, the direct observation of the problem plus the implementation of tasks were the key elements to designing a new element for the organization, teachers, and students to get their main English achievement that was to get the A1 level. The analysis of the information allowed giving new meaning to the incidence of the learning process that was carried out through the systematization of the testimonies, an indispensable process for the re-organization of the experiences in the classroom, since through it, it is possible to reflect on the teaching work and the elaborations constructed with the students.
Systematization gave this study a more judicious way to check the processes of acquisition of vocabulary, concepts and getting to know the language working in real-life situations projected to answer the research questions set. Endeavoring efforts to know the effect the elaboration of a TBL syllabus could have on adult learners as it has been a different population compared to the ones faced during the studying and teaching process at the university. To elicit information regarding the implementation of this new plan we focused on the outcomes created by students after the development of a task as at the end of each one, they expressed their concepts and learning in terms of their significance; These views were linked to the analysis of variables described in the theoretical framework section, as key elements of understanding of the dynamics in the classroom with a holistic and reflective view of the teacher's work.

In the following information are described some of the tasks proposed for them to achieve during the school semester. They were designed by having a goal or objective to reach, the way they were carried out and the analysis done to them, however they were adapted according to the results of their analysis to aid in improving their knowledge and skills.

The three main categories were divided in this way: Intentions, Register, and Analysis. In the intention, the idea was to show what the researcher believed to find during the intervention. The register is the description of the intervention with its evidences; and in the last part, there is an Analysis of the intervention during the development of the task.

### 8.1.1 Analysis and interpretation of tasks proposed # 1

**Intention or objective:** For this task, the main objective was to identify the use of the verb to be, the structure in affirmative, negative and questions by having the goal of introducing
themselves and their classmates. For this first intervention, it was important to identify the variables of the investigation: how adult students plan, report and analyze the tasks they develop.

**Register:** For the first task, students needed to create a poster with their partners’ information following some grammatical structures and the meeting people topic to talk about. This task took one class to be presented. Students had to organize the topics they already saw in the previous classes (personal information, the use of subjects, verb to be and the verb like). The TBL process of this task was made by playing a game with a ball where teacher will show how to introduce him/herself, in order to students introduce themselves, using worksheets to complete information having a model to follow, and finally creating a poster to give their information and a classmate’s data (See Appendix 1)

**Analysis during the development of the task:** At the beginning of the task, students were ashamed of playing as they had to participate because they did not know how to do it, however, teacher encouraged students by giving a short model to work with, and as everybody was making mistakes they laughed at themselves and were getting along with the activity. They started asking for new words to give more information. It was awesome as they were challenging themselves. For this task, students took just one session of the week to develop it. Some students did a very good job while others had trouble with skills like understanding the concepts, pronunciation, and organization of structure or sentences. Time was enough; however the teacher had to help some students individually for them to be able to present their posters. In general terms, all the class fulfilled the activity with very good results. At the time of presenting the final product and the teacher gave them feedback some of them were really surprised with the excellent results so it helped to make them realize they were able to speak and give personal
information in English. In this task the planning, reporting and analyzing of the task were very important to evidence students’ process when reaching the goal.

**8.1.2 Analysis and interpretation of tasks proposed # 2**

**Intention or objective:** For this task, the objective was to show students some images of activities people usually do. The teacher will play a matching game in for students to acquire. Students try to write all the words as they already know they will need them for the final task.

**Register:** this intervention was intended to continue working on the use of personal information to describe routines by studying famous characters and their possible daily activities. Some students wrote separated words which did not make sense. However, some of them were creating right examples. The teacher had to help some people to complete in the right way their information. The teacher showed them some images and they had to identify the subject and activity. (See appendix 2).

**Analysis during the development of the task:** During this task (one session) students were very motivated to write about their favorite characters (singers, actors, actress, soccer players, among others). The majority of the group created excellent examples rendering they did understand the topic and are able to give more information about different people. The planning, reporting and analyzing of this task were relevant to know the conceptions students had about different people and how to transmit knowledge to others. At the end of this task teacher could be demanding as students gave more information from the one asked when the criteria were set.
8.1.3 Analysis and interpretation of tasks proposed # 3

**Intention or objective:** The goal of the third intervention aimed to be the big closure of the semester and the end of the TBL process to check progress when working on tasks and acquiring vocabulary.

**Register:** For this session, students had to research about a famous person they admire as he/she had done something important for humanity. They were very interested as they had to perform their characters. At the beginning, they had to guess who the character was by asking questions to their partners. When the characters were guessed by someone in the group, students had to introduce him/herself as the famous person giving adjectives and personal information. This process was not difficult as they were very committed to learn and produce language. They worked on the report they wanted to be helped by the teacher following the structure taught and the vocabulary learned. The process took 2 sessions and in the process of having a good product where students had to look at a model and complete a guide with their creations. (See appendix 3).

**Analysis during the development of the task:** After some videos and readings about some examples of proactive and famous people. They started to write using worksheets as models to structure introduction of the knowledge they got from different people. Unfortunately, 7 students did not complete the task as they argued they were busy to find data about a person besides their understanding of topics was not good enough. It was most complicated for them to acquire vocabulary and structure of the sentences to achieve the task. For the analysis, the teacher noticed that the students who finished the task on time could do so because they were very interested in learning and asked for classmates or teachers’ help when they had doubts what
allow them to increase their knowledge. Presentations were incredible and they were very excited to realize how much they had improved.

Getting a wide view of the outcomes gotten there is seen that the 35% of the population could not reach the purposes established from the beginning of the creation of the new studying plan. On the other hand the other 65% saw an improvement in their processes at the same time they recognized tasks as a supportive and inspiring way to learn the English language. It is evidence in the following graphic organizer.

A TBL syllabus in the classes became a way to show students activities where they could use the target language and reach a goal (introduce themselves and some other people, giving personal information including professions characteristics and daily activities) using grammatical structures and vocabulary learned during a term. In those main tasks, students were able to identify some grammatical structures they could use them when developing their assignments. Students realized the vocabulary they learned could be used in their activities, allowing students to create a word bank in the classroom to look for the words they probably forgot and use them in their projects.

Information above gave us enough tools to answer the research questions stated from the beginning of the investigation. At the end of the data analysis we report some assumptions to come up with the result obtained after the implementation of a TBL syllabus.

**What are the implications of introducing a TBL syllabus in an Adult Beginner Learners class?**

Each task shows that when students have to face real situations and speaking about others, they were able to use the some chunks they already worked within the classes, and the
vocabulary they knew, allowing them not to use online translators or the dictionary. The production of the second task was more difficult for them since they had to look for vocabulary to express what they wanted to say, and a self-work process was required. The understanding of new vocabulary allows students to use words from the word bank to create their own description and give extra information about other people, being able to create affirmative, negative and questions using the verb to be and simple present tenses.

When the students had to express and give information in the tasks, in the beginning, they were reluctant of speaking as they were afraid of making mistakes or have problems pronouncing. Through the development of the tasks, they were able to show understanding of the goal to reach and show an effort to present the final product. For some students, it required time and extra explanation of the task, but at the end, they were capable of presenting their final papers, following the criteria the researcher used to evaluate. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight some students were not dedicated to accomplishing tasks as external factors played a major role in their learning process.

**What characterizes English Learning through a Task Based Learning environment?**

The use of TBL to implement a new syllabus to improve their acquisition of the language as adult people as well as getting a new planning for next groups of students and English teachers to work with was positive because, according to their oral reports, students felt motivated and wanted to look for more information. The implementation of this approach was pretty accurate as one of principal, teachers and students’ aim was to change the syllabus existing using the TBL method that had been established in the previous curriculum. It needed materials, preparation and time; however it did show a progress and advance on the students’ English level.
9 CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Designing a TBL syllabus allowed students and teachers to work on the development of different activities to accomplish a goal related to personal information and real-life situations. Operating in organized steps such as pre, while, and post cycles permitting students to get trained on a specific process to learn English. Also, the possibility of planning, reporting and analyzing gave teachers and students the opportunity to assess looking for improving answers every time they wanted to express themselves.

The action research allowed us as teachers to get a great understanding of how the implementation of this new syllabus, encourage them to speak and create examples drawing from the ones given by the teacher. To go deeper into students’ lives, experiences and interests made easier the creation of each lesson was an advantage of this type of study, as it favored their perspectives about the language and strengthen the activities set for them as a different population. The design of the tasks developed throughout each of the moments of the classroom proposal favors not only the construction of the group knowledge in relation to the problem of understanding and lack of coherence on the themes. It also favors the way the instrumental interaction between students and teachers develops the construction of new meanings of the process, taking the activities as a whole, it was possible to correlate different perspectives
without looking at the main problem of this study, thereby bringing students closer to taking the vocabulary resource and appropriating it as a communication resource.

In addition, our professional fields were fed as we got expertise on the adult education area and their characteristics as teaching a foreign language implies researching on the population in order to success and introduce ourselves as a guide that can help them to acquire knowledge taking into account their age and interests what let us have a better understanding on their behavior and the way they learn. Adult people could be underestimated as the age they are could not be appropriate for studying, even more, a foreign language. Getting to know them and understanding that the way they learn is completely different to people at schools, give us advantages at the time of creating interests and activities for them as it has happened in our performances in our jobs as their background and experiences could provide us a lot of ideas of possible interests when developing tasks due to if they are motivated completion and acquisition of tasks and language will be profitable.

As a plus of the results of the intervention presented made on this group, it is vital to express, it encouraged us to keep researching on designing as there could appear different wonders that could let us contribute to further researches. Moreover, it strengthens our knowledge as professionals of the art of teaching a foreign language and gave us many tools about possible and diverse settings we can apply these strategies in. Finally, a recommendation or piece of advice we could suggest future researchers is focusing on the extension of activities and time as the term devoted to the implementation was short to achieve more comprehension of the foreign language, as well as operating in some weaknesses of the way lessons were given and directed and the lack of expertise on managing adult students. and there were some activities we can also
Encabezado: TBL SYLLABUS DESIGN

use to study by our own to acquire better awareness of the language through having effective results in international tests to reach and keep increasing in our professional development.

For the further research items we consider the following as the appropriate ones to keep on the research of TBL syllabus design for adult learners:

* Explore on how to modify curricula to implement TBL approach, not only in English classes but in other school subjects.

* Training teachers to teach through tasks in order to get students involved by their own information.

Results, findings and analysis showed that it is necessary to go deeply into the research about how to modify curricula to implement TBL for adult learners aiming to get students interested on English by having chances to create outcomes by using their own information. It means people who are able to analyze their context and to judge it, giving reasons based on what they already learned.

The curricula have to be complemented with a precise training of teachers to raise these abilities in students: teachers that implement activities in which students are forced to solve tasks in a proper way going beyond the content.
Appendix 1: Lesson plan Task # 1

LESSON PLAN
INTRODUCING AND DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

LESSON PLAN NO. 1

SCHOOL: COLEGIO SUPERIOR DE PALERMO  
PRE-SERVICE TEACHER: Ingrid Roa and Daniel Peña

INTRODUCTION
During language acquisition,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC: Knowing myself</th>
<th>GOAL: To create a significant interaction and English communication among students using images of some relevant movies that they may recognize, focusing in their likes and dislikes to interpret how these movies mean relevant ideas or values for them.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GRAMMAR FOCUS: Verb To be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OBJECTIVES:
- To identify the right time grammatical sentence.
- To internalize the use of the different structures.
- To analyze the context which students can use verb to be to introduce themselves.

TIME: 1 hour.

CLASS DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WARM-UP</td>
<td>20 min.</td>
<td>Students and teacher will make a circle and each one will say his/her name and do a sign (example: Ingrid and she touches her head). The next person will perform the previous sign and will do hi/her own sign.</td>
<td>Students will get to know classmates by mention their names and making a sig with their bodies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Activity No 1 | 20 min. | Teacher will show students a paper where they have to put the following information.  
In the middle of it they will write the name of the person they love the most. In one corner, one place they want to visit. In the other corner, an object they love and on the last one a value that represent themselves. | Board.  
Papers. | Teacher will express some answers to the words they have to write in order to model examples for students. They will have to write some examples. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Activity No 2 | 30 min. | Teacher will give an example to students about how to do the activity by doing his/her own.  
Teacher will make students organize in groups of four. Each one of them will have a paper where they will have to write 5 words.  
In the middle of it they will write the name of the person they love the most. In one corner, one place they want to visit. In the other corner, an object they love, on the other one something they want to reach by this year and on the last one a value that represent themselves. | Board.  
Notebook | Students will model and express some information about them to interact with classmates. They will use verb to be and listen to some others’ examples. |
| Activity No 3 | 25 min. | Teacher will give students two diagnostic tests for them to answer. One of them will be developed in order to know deeply what is the level or knowledge of the English language the other one will be to know the perceptions and opinion they have to this process. | Diagnostics Tests | |
| EXTENSION | 10 min. | After all the activities, teachers will ask the students for the work done in class, solving questions about vocabulary and extra information of the activities. | Board  
Notebook | |
LESSON PLAN

INTRODUCING AND
DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

LESSON PLAN NO. 3

SCHOOL: COLEGIO SUPERIOR DE PALERMO
PRE-SERVICE TEACHER: Ingrid Roa and Daniel Peña

CYCLE: V, VI

INTRODUCTION
During language acquisition,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC: What I do everyday</th>
<th>GRAMMAR FOCUS: SIMPLE PRESENT AFFIRMATIVE SENTENCES VERBS IN INFINITIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL: To make students be able to interact by expressing their routines and activities they do during the day. They will acquire the simple present tense by personalizing it when giving examples about what they do every day as well as listening to their parents to get to know their opinions and how to use the third person pronoun. Students will be able to recognize different verbs and their conjugation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OBJECTIVES:
- To identify the right time grammatical sentence.
- To internalize the use of the different structures.
- To analyze the context which students can use verbs to recognize their routines.

TIME: 1 hour.

CLASS DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WARM-UP</td>
<td>10 min.</td>
<td>Students will review some vocabulary related to verbs. Teacher will divide the class in four groups, teacher will show some</td>
<td>Board F 1 a</td>
<td>Students will use verbs and images to recognize some of them and review some others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Activity Nº1 | Explanation | 10 min. | Teacher will use some couples students found to give examples using students’ names. Example: I study, Carolina studies, they study, you study, Daniel studies.
Teacher will give a brief explanation of the reasons why we have the letter s at the end of some verbs.
Teacher will ask students to give more examples according to the explanation he/she gave. | Board. Flashcards |
| Activity Nº2 | Practice and production | 20 min. | Teacher will show some images about routines people do every day. Students will have to circle the ones they do. Students will have to write the name of the action. Teacher will ask for some examples such as I work, I study, I eat.
Students will discuss their routines in couples. | Board. Notebook Worksheet with images |
| Activity Nº3 | 10 min. | In the task students will have to make a circle where they will have to mention some activities they do during the day as well as some of their partners’ activities.
Example: I wake up, I go to my job, I have lunch, I play with my kids, I listen to music I sleep in my bed. My partner: she/he wakes up, she/he goes to work, she /he goes to the supermarket, etc. | Cardboard Paints Brushes Markers |
| EXTENSION | 10 min. | After all the activities, teachers will ask the students for the work done in class, solving questions about vocabulary and extra information of the activities. | Board notebook |
LESSON PLAN NO. 7

SCHOOL: COLEGIO SUPERIOR DE PALERMO
PRE-SERVICE TEACHER: Ingrid Roa and Daniel Peña

INTRODUCTION
During language acquisition,

**TOPIC:** Professions
**GRAMMAR FOCUS:** VERB TO BE IN AFFIRMATIVE, NEGATIVE, AND INTERROGATIVE FORMS.

**GOAL:** To foster communication production in students to express information about their personal lives. Students will be able to understand similar situations in classmates’ lives. Students will give examples about different professions; they will deny the ones they do not do. Also, they will recognize the way of asking and answering questions in order to know what the character hidden is.

**OBJECTIVES:**
- To identify the right time grammatical sentence.
- To internalize the use of the different structures.
- To analyze the context which students can use verb to be to recognize partners.

**TIME:** 1 hour.

CLASS DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WAR</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Teacher will ask for students show a video to students about professions. Students will have to write as many jobs as they can from the ones showed in the video. At the end teacher will review verb to be to express his/her occupation and get...</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=</a></td>
<td>Students will...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-UP</td>
<td>min.</td>
<td>and students will discuss about the ones they have. Example: I am teacher</td>
<td>jHF5W8FyiXs</td>
<td>to know classmates’ jobs. Teacher will check the structure in use.</td>
</tr>
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<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activit y N°1</td>
<td>15 min.</td>
<td>Teacher will divide the class in four groups each member of the group will give a number to his/herself. Teacher will call the number 2 from each group. The representatives from each group will have to perform an occupation teacher will give them. Example: She is a nurse. Students will have to perform the whole sentence by acting and expressing the number of words of the sentence.</td>
<td>Board. Notebook s</td>
<td>Teacher will evaluate the use of verb joined to the professions seen previously.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activit y N° 2</td>
<td>10 min.</td>
<td>Teacher will give each student a card with the picture of a famous character. Students will have to invent the name, nationality, age, and profession. Students will create 5 questions to ask their partners about themselves. Example: Are you from Colombia? Are you a singer? Are you a doctor? Are you fifty years old? Teacher will emphasize on the answers yes, I am. No, I am not. Yes, you/we/they are. No, you/we/they are not. Yes, he/she/it is. No, he/she/it is not.</td>
<td>Board. Notebook s</td>
<td>Students will express information about their partners using verb to be and making conjugations with third person. Teacher will evaluate the way students ask and answer questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activit y N°3</td>
<td>20 min.</td>
<td>in the task students will interview their partners by asking the questions the created in order to guess the character he/she has. students will write on the notebooks about the information collected and the characters gotten. teacher will choose 3 students to talk about the characters he/she guessed and their information.</td>
<td>Board Notebook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTE NSION</td>
<td>10 min.</td>
<td>After all the activities, teachers will ask the students for the work done in class, solving questions about vocabulary and extra information of the activities.</td>
<td>Board notebook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11 SAMPLE OF TASKS

Sample 1: Evidence of the class June 25th, 2017

Presenting the task for the lesson

Students preparing the task

Sample 2: Evidence of the class September 9th, 2017

Material for the task

Students developing the task

Sample 3: Evidence of the class September 23rd, 2017
Encabezado: TBL SYLLABUS DESIGN

Students developing tasks

Students developing a worksheet
12 REFERENCES


CHAIKITMONGKOL, K. M. (n.d.).


