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REFLECTIONS ON TASK-BASED TEACHING:

ENGLISH CLASSES FOR BRAZILIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Monograph presented as a partial requirement to obtain the degree of licensed in the Letras/English Course, at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (PUCRS).

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to reflect on Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) and how it could be used in English classes for High School students at Brazilian Public Schools, in order to cope with the abilities and competences established by the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC). In the first part, there is a brief review about the teaching of English in Brazil, presenting some events that influenced in Brazilian education and English teaching. To understand the way English is approached in Brazilian education and its status as a mandatory subject in public schools, some aspects of the BNCC are discussed in this paper. Considering the difficulties in achieving student's motivation in English classes, the task-based learning is suggested as a possible strategy to engage students, helping them to understand the use of English in real-life situations, preparing them for the labor market and for any opportunity of using the additional language. To this end, this paper presents four tasks which were elaborated considering the principals of the BNCC and task-based teaching, including social and cultural aspects of the target language.

Key words: Task-based language teaching; English teaching in Brazil; High School; BNCC.

RESUMO

Este trabalho tem como objetivo refletir sobre o *Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT)* e como este poderia ser utilizado nas aulas de língua inglesa para alunos do ensino médio nas escolas públicas brasileiras, com o propósito de lidar com as habilidades e competências estabelecidas na Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC). Na primeira parte, há uma breve revisão sobre o ensino de inglês no Brasil, apresentando alguns eventos que influenciaram na educação brasileira e no ensino do inglês. Para entender a forma como o inglês é abordado na educação brasileira e seu status de língua obrigatória nas escolas públicas, alguns aspectos da BNCC são discutidos neste trabalho. Considerando as dificuldades em alcançar a motivação dos alunos nas aulas de inglês, o *task-based learning* é sugerido como uma possível estratégia para engajar os alunos, ajudando-os a entender o uso do inglês em situações da vida real, preparando-os para o mercado de trabalho e para qualquer oportunidade de usar a língua adicional. Com esse propósito, este documento apresenta quatro tarefas que foram elaboradas considerando os princípios da BNCC e o *task-based teaching*, incluindo os aspectos sociais e culturais da língua-alvo.

Palavras-chave: Task-based language teaching; Ensino de Inglês no Brasil; Ensino Médio; BNCC.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The education in Brazil has changed over the years and teachers should be prepared to adapt themselves to the new scenarios. The Brazilian teaching parameters presented in the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) emphasize that language learning may give students an opportunity to socialize and to communicate, helping them to be able to express themselves, using different language exponents to share experiences and information. Despite that, Brazilian teachers of Public Schools are still facing difficulties in attracting students' interest in foreign language classes. The aim of this study, therefore, is to reflect about the Brazilian education scenario and to suggest the task-based approach as a possible strategy to engage and motivate students in English classes, proposing tasks that encourage group work and collaboration.

This study intends to reflect on ways to develop and have a successful use of the ideas proposed in BNCC, which include the social and cultural aspects of a foreign language[1]. According to BNCC, the aim of English at school is "to enable students to cooperate and share information and knowledge through the English language, as well as to act and position themselves critically in society, on global and local context."[2] (BNCC, p. 476, translated). The study of a language, as mentioned by Chagas (1979), may be considered in its totality an "living organism", which means that language must be spoken, not only read or written. In this way, considering the approaches of teaching English as a foreign language, the task-based seems to be an effective strategy, once it comprehends not only language skills, as a part of the communicative approach, but also the sociocultural field required in English learning. The task-based approach is centered on students' necessities in order to perform tasks in another language, expressing themselves with clear goals, which brings meaning to English study.

This paper is divided into three main parts. In the first part, there is a brief review of the evolution of English teaching in Brazil, from the integration of English and other foreign languages to the Brazilian educational context until the creation of BNCC. In the second part, the concepts of task-based language teaching will be presented, including the main characteristics of this approach and the social aspects that influence the student's motivation to

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[1] In this paper, English is referred to as an additional language, as a foreign language, as a second language and as a target language. Although these expressions may have different concepts, in this paper they are used as synonyms.

[2] "Trata-se de possibilitar aos estudantes cooperar e compartilhar informações e conhecimentos por meio da língua inglesa, como também agir e posicionar-se criticamente na sociedade, em âmbito local e global". (BNCC, p. 476.).

study a foreign language. Finally, this study proposes four task-based activities that can be applied in English classes, considering task-based language teaching and the competences required in BNCC.

2 ENGLISH TEACHING IN BRAZIL AND THE BNCC

The process of English teaching integration to Brazilian educational curriculum started many years ago and has faced many changes until the final version of BNCC was presented as we know nowadays. The motivations for teaching foreign languages were different in each period of the Brazilian context. In the next sections, some of the main events about English teaching in Brazil will be presented together with its consequences in Brazilian education.

2.1 A brief review of English teaching in Brazil

The history of English in Brazil started with the arrival of the Royal family. Due to the opening of harbors to foreign commerce in 1808, the English language started to have an important role in communication. On June 22, 1809, the regent Prince of Portugal D. João VI signed a decree creating the subjects of English and French. In 1837, with the inauguration of the Imperial College Pedro II, English was officially integrated into the Brazilian curriculum at a regular school. (VIDOTTI; DORNELAS, 2007). After the creation of the Ministry of Education, in December of 1931, the teaching of foreign languages was based on the Direct Method (MACHADO; CAMPOS; SAUNDERS, 2007) which consists of using exclusively the target language (English, French or German) in the classroom. Even though English was recognized as a regular school subject, the low number of teachers available, at that time, to teach this subject turned the law inapplicable.

During Getúlio Vargas' government, the minister of education Gustavo Capanema created the Secondary School, divided into two cycles: The Ginásio (a four-year-course) and the Colegial (a three-year-course) (BRASIL, 1942). Latin, French, and English were considered mandatory subjects in Ginásio and Colegial while Spanish and Greek were mandatory only in Colegial. On top of that, it is important to emphasize that, for many years, foreign languages were accessible only to children from rich families. Between 1940 and 1950, with the extension of teaching to underprivileged groups, the priority was the teaching of the mother tongue. Consequently, other languages such as English stayed in the background during this period. (MENEZES, 2017).

The publication of the new Basis of National Education Law (LDB) in 1996 came along with the idea of the democratization of learning and social practices of teaching. However, even with the inclusion of a modern language in the curriculum of elementary school starting by the 5th grade, the document gave to the institutions the autonomy to decide which language would

be taught. The law affirms that "It will be mandatory, from the fifth grade onwards, to teach at least one modern foreign language, which choice will be the responsibility of the school community, within the possibilities of the institution." and "a second, optionally, within the institution's availability." (BRASIL, 1996)[3]. The position of English as an optional subject in Elementary School contributed to a sense of inferiority towards the mother tongue. Even with a global understanding of the importance of knowing English, the accessibility to this language in public schools has not been considered a priority.

Along with the elaboration of the LDB, the National Curriculum Parameters (PCNs) were discussed and proposed between the years of 1995 and 1996, having the approval of the Ministry of Education (MEC) to establish the parameters of the syllabus for cities and states in Brazilian Public Schools. The PCNs reinforced the importance of the school community's promotion of internal discussions to adapt the parameters with the educational project for each school, improving the teaching quality. In the first publication of the PCNs, there was a huge concern about the large number of students that were failing and the increase of the rates of school evasion. These, among other factors, made the Ministry of Education prioritize Elementary School, thinking about the importance of strengthening the first year's preparation.

In order to give students more opportunities to learn and to have qualified education, in 2006, the elementary school was extended to nine years, so that school entry age changed to 6. This change required the update of the educational parameters and in 2015 a group of specialists was nominated to start the elaboration of the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC). At the end of 2018, with the collaboration of educators of the whole country, the final version of the BNCC was approved and, according to the new document, English was taken as mandatory in both elementary and high school due to the fact that it is a global and intercultural language. The BNCC also highlights the use of English to build student's identity, allowing them to expand their perspectives on personal and professional life.

2.2 The National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) and High School

The most recent version of the BNCC[4] published in December 2018, is divided into three stages: Childhood Education, Elementary School and High School. Each stage is divided by knowledge areas that focus on specific abilities and competences. This new version of

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[3] Lei nº 9.394, Art. 24 § 5º

[4] Available in: http://basenacionalcomum.mec.gov.br/images/BNCC_EI_EF_110518_versaofinal_site.pdf

BNCC improved High School teaching concept, understanding the importance of this stage in learner's life. The High school section of BNCC presents competences that refer to cognitive, social and emotional practices required in daily life. The main point of the National Basis is the idea of an integral education, from elementary to the end of high school, as a way to give students the understanding of the importance of learning competences which will be necessary in real life. Students have to be able to see themselves as an important part of society, discussing about solutions for current questions, as global environmental and cultural aspects.

The BNCC also emphasizes that students should recognize themselves and their historical context, developing abilities as responsibility, creativity, collaboration and critical analysis. These abilities will help them to access and deal with different types of digital cultures that can be faced during their learning. The High School Stage establishes that there are different kinds of youth, and it is required that the school recognize all these diversities, ensuring that student's education is aligned with their life's projects.

Concerning English as a mandatory subject in High School (BRASIL, 2017)[5], once it is a global language by its multiplicity and variety of uses, users, and functions, it may be a tool that easily enables the integration of different areas of knowledge. The BNCC (p.477) affirms that:

> English will allow students to use this language to deepen their understanding of the world in which they live, to explore new perspectives on research and information gathering, to export ideas and values, to argue, to deal with conflicts of opinion and criticism, among other actions related to their cognitive, linguistic, cultural and social development. In this way, they expand their discursive and reflective capacity in different areas.

While the BNCC for Elementary School emphasizes the importance of interculturality and the comprehension of English as a lingua franca and a notion of non-territoriality of the language, the BCNN for High school highlights the different uses of the language in multilingual and multicultural interaction and the different cultural-linguistic repertoires, including the use language on digital culture, studies and research.

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[5] Lei nº 13.415, Art. 35-A § 4º

3 TASK-BASED LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACH

The task based approach is considered a branch of the communicative language teaching (CLT), because it focuses on reaching a communicative goal. Tasks elicited language, holding a central place in SLA and also in language pedagogy. For this reason, tasks are considered a "hands on" approach, since it promotes student's learning by doing, working not only on the linguistic dimension but also on the cognitive process. The next sections will present and discuss about the Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching approach (TBLT) in English classes.

3.1 Concepts and Principals of Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching

Tasks are commonly confused with the exercise concept because both aim to achieve language learning. But, differently from exercises, tasks are primarily meaning-focused language use while exercises are form-focused language use (ELLIS, 2003). The purpose of a task is to encourage the student to construct the communication through real-world activities (pragmatic meaning).

According to Ellis (2003), there are some criteria features in order to consider an activity a task: (1) a task is "a plan for learner activity" (ELLIS, 2003, p. 9) which aim is to trigger learner's communicative behavior; (2) a task involves a primary focus on meaning, presenting some kind of intentional 'gap' that will motivate students to use language in order to fulfill it; (3) a task involves real-world processes of language use, that is, learners will be exposed to real world situations and will be required to find 'solutions' to these issues; (4) a task can involve any of the four language skills, listening, reading, speaking or writing, and it can also employ a combination of skills, listening and reading for input and speaking and writing for reporting their findings; (5) a task engages the cognitive process as students take an active part of the workplan by selecting, classifying, ordering, reasoning, and evaluating information using the target language in order to carry out the task; (6) a task is measured by a defined communicative outcome, that means, the results achieved in the task. It is important to understand that there is a difference between the outcome and the aim of a task. In a task, the focus should not be on a successful outcome but on the ways that it can promote language learning.

The methodology of a task-based lesson involves three phases: pre-task, during-task, and post-task. The pre-task and post-task stages are not mandatory, however, according to Ellis

(2003), pre-task and post-task develop a crucial role in the effectiveness of a task. In Table 1, below, each stage is presented individually.

Table 1 - A framework for designing task-based lesson

Phase	Examples of options
A Pre-Task	framing the activity, e.g. establishing the outcome of the task planning time doing a similar task
B During-Task	time pressure number of participants
C Post- Task	learner report consciousness raising repeat task

Source: Ellis (2003)

A) Pre-task

The pre-task will establish what the teacher expects from students. According to Ellis (2003, p. 244), "the purpose of the pre-task is to prepare students to perform the task in ways that will promote acquisition". The pre-task is a way to motivate students to perform the task and bring context to the class. There are four ways to do a pre-task. The first kind of pre-task aims to prepare students to perform a task similar to the main task that will be performed in the during-task phase. The second kind of pre-task provides students with a model of how the task should be performed. The teacher will require students' analysis of this model, observing the strategies used to solve communication problems. The thirty option of pre-task provides students with non-task activities, only designed to prepare them to perform the main task. These activities can be brainstorms or mind maps, focusing more on vocabulary than on grammar, working with words or definitions that will support the task. The fourth choice for pre-task is a strategic planning of the main task performance. In this kind of pre-task, students are introduced to the theme of the task and create a workplan to decide how to perform the task. They can also receive linguistic instructions from the teacher and, differently from non-task preparation, they will think about the strategies after receiving the task.

B) The during-task phase

This stage centers on the task itself. There are three kinds of task performance options. The first one refers to the time that a task must have, whether it can be delimited or not. In a delimited option, students will perform the task under pressure, which can be understood as a way to achieve more fluency. However, when students have their own time to perform the task, they can reformulate their utterance, improving their accuracy (ELLIS, 2003). The second task performance option concerns over providing or not the input data while students perform the task. The concern is about not providing all information and structures to students and allowing them to construct the task and promote acquisition by themselves. According to Ellis (2003), there is no problem in receiving some data, since learners are borrowing information, it means, to use data as a reference instead of reproducing it. The third task performance option is about introducing a surprise element to the task. In this kind of performance, students will receive a piece of information about the task and after some time discussing it, they will receive a new element that can change or complement the previous information. The new information can change the course or final result of the task, as well as extend the time of the task, by raising the student's interest in the topic.

During a task, there are also some process options to be considered. How the teacher and students will conduct the class, depends on theories, knowledge, and the prior experiences and beliefs from students and teachers. In task-based teaching, it is expected that learners are encouraged to use language actively, using the practice to solve social troubles. However, it is difficult to maintain a class in a task-based pedagogy model during the whole class, because it can be challenge for teachers and learners to see the language as a tool to achieve communication when they think about it as a process to teach and learn the language (ELLIS, 2003). This is one of the reasons why task-based prioritizes tasks in pairs or groups. For learners, it is easier to use interpretation instead of transmission when they feel that the teacher is not 'present' during the task, it means that they need to have enough space to practice autonomy during the task. Task-based must be a collaborative approach, where students can express themselves and contribute during the process.

C) The post-task phase

The post-task phase has three main pedagogical goals (ELLIS, 2003): to provide an opportunity to students repeat the task; to ask for a report where students can reflect about the task, describing their decisions and discoveries; and to invite students to focus on specific forms that they had more difficult while performing the task.

By repeating a task, students may improve their fluency and performance. This repetition can be executed privately or publicly. To decide the way the task will be performed, the teacher may consider the students' profile and the aims of this repetition. Performing the task in front of the class can retract students and can make them reduce their time of speaking and, consequently, the fluency acquired. On the other hand, performing to the class can encourage learners to use a more formal language and different styles of grammar resources, preparing them to make future presentations using the second language (L2).

The second option of post-task is the reflection. In this kind of post task, students are instigated to report their view of the task, the strategies used to solve it and to evaluate their performance. They can also evaluate the task itself, helping the teacher to find strategies and ideas for future tasks.

The third option of post-task is focused on form. Ellis (2003) emphasizes, however, that a task is primary a meaning focused approach and form can be assessed on the during-task stage. Even though, in some cases where specific forms are required in the task, the review of forms can be necessary. It is also highlighted that a task is not invalidated when students are required to focus on the structures that they had problems with.

By defining a task, Nunan (2004) makes a distinction between target tasks and pedagogical tasks. While target tasks refer to language in real world, pedagogical tasks occur in the classroom. In both cases, a task is mainly a communicative approach that focus on providing learning that can be used beyond the classroom. In his definition of a task, Nunan (2004, p. 04) affirms:

> A task is a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form.

In order to achieve the aims proposed in task-based learning, students must be a central part of the task. The experiential learning provides learners personal experiences acquiring knowledge actively in class rather than receiving it passively by the teacher (NUNAN, 2004). In this process, learners have the opportunity to reflect in each part of the task, promoting involvement of the group and self-growth. According to Nunan (2004), a task may follow seven main principles:

Scaffolding – It refers to the basis of a task. The teacher may provide the supporting framework that will be required in the lesson. Then, the teacher 'removes the scaffolding' in order to let students find a solution by themselves.

Task dependency – It refers to the sequence followed in a task. A main task will support learners to construct the others that will follow the pedagogical sequence.

Recycling – this concept defends that learning is a recycling process. It means that learners will not achieve everything in the first contact with a particular linguistic item. By reviewing a content more than once, learners will be able to adapt them in different contexts improving their knowledge about that content.

Active Learning – In active learning, learners receive a varied number of opportunities to use the language during the class. The explanations and inputs may not cover the most part of the class, being the teacher a facilitator to allow learners to do the work.

Integration – It must have a clear relationship between form, function (communication) and meaning (semantic) and this relation may be clear to learners.

Reproduction to Creation – Instead of receiving and reproducing models provided by the teacher, learners are motivated to use creative language, recombining elements that they already know in different structures.

Reflection – To understand the reason why they are learning brings a reflective and rational attitude to students and makes them become better learners.

There are many types of task-based activities. Nunan (2004) chose some of them to describe and illustrate.

- Information-gap activity – In this kind of task, there is a transfer of information from a person to another. Usually, the information is given partially to both and they need to exchange information in order to solve the task.

- Reasoning-gap activity – This type of task involves providing new information from the cognitive process, deduction, or analysis of patterns. To solve this gap, students should connect a piece of initial information to the one that was conveyed in the process.

- Opinion-gap activity – To formulate an opinion, students should express their beliefs, preferences and feelings using arguments and providing factual information to support their ideas about specific subjects, for example, social issues.

Tasks also can involve questions and answers, dialogues and role plays, matching activities, communication strategies, pictures and picture stories, puzzles and problems, or discussions and decisions. In a task, goals are more general than in formal performance objectives. Task goals are related to the outcomes and to the learners' behavior (NUNAN,

2004). The teacher may observe other aspects besides the language such as communicative, sociocultural, learning how-to-learn, language and cultural awareness. During the task, teachers may provide the necessary input to allow learners to create their own output. Some examples of input are articles from newspapers, magazines and journals, documentaries, short stories, poems and plays. The input can also be a little talk introduction with some minutes of conversation and scripts of group negotiations.

There are several advantages in working in groups during language instruction (ELLIS, 2003):

- The quantity and variety of learner speech can increase;
- Anxiety can be reduced;
- Motivation and enjoyment can increase;
- Increase of social integration;
- Students can learn how to work together with others;
- Learning can increase.

"Cooperative learning requires that students have time to consider how their group is functioning and find ways to work together effectively" (ELLIS, 2003, p. 271). To achieve a successful task, students need to comprehend their contribution, being committed to find the most satisfactory outcome possible for the task. Considering that each student has a different level and prior knowledge about different topics, the transfer of instruction is essential to exchange information between the pairs or groups of students. As a promoter of collaborative skills, task-based teaching stimulates collaborative skills, in ways that students can negotiate, agreeing and disagreeing, with the constant monitoring of the teacher.

The teachers' role during the task is to observe, monitor, collaborate, and intervene when necessary. Ellis (2003) also highlights the importance of teacher's talk during the task and, mainly, during the pre-task stage. An effective talk will transmit clearly the instructions of the task, preparing students to accomplish them, avoiding misunderstandings, for this reason the talk must be direct and effective. In an instructional conversation, the teacher guides students to perform functions that they are not able to perform by themselves (ELLIS, 2003), facilitating language learning with a clear thematic focus, providing opportunities to let students make comments that were not elicited by the teacher before.

3.2 The sociocultural and environmental influence in student's motivation

The study of a language is a way to acquire a tool of communication between people, receiving directly the culture from its previous period and indirectly the synthesis of human experience through the ages (CHAGAS, 1979). Understanding the acquisition of a new language as a tool of communication between people will help students to see English as an opportunity and not only as a school subject. According to Chagas (1979), modern language studies may have general and specific goals. General goals guide learners to comprehend themselves and develop a clear perception of their role in society while specific goals focus on the language itself, such as the knowledge of the foreign civilization, considering the language as a vehicle of expression and an essential element of culture. Chagas also affirms that the study of a foreign language can encourage abilities such as observation, sense of initiative, appreciation of values, along with positive and socially useful mental attitudes.

Language also involves verbal interaction, mediating language learning and acquisition of L2 as a result of this interaction (ELLIS, 2003). According to Ellis (2003, p. 175), social activity "allows individuals to exercise conscious control over such mental activities as attention, planning and problem-solving". Through sociocultural interaction, learners are able to improve collaboration and the independent use of structures. In the learning of a foreign language, learners tend to constrain their choices by the contents that they can find themselves in (ELLIS, 1994). During the process of teaching, teachers are mediators of knowledge. The mediated learning can occur externally (by given assistance) or internally (when learners use their own resources to achieve control of a function). Comparing verbal interaction with children acquisition of language, Ellis (2003) emphasizes that children need to receive the assistance of another person until achieve independent strategic function.

The concept of *scaffolding* mentioned before appears again when we think about the role of a teacher in the class. The teacher helps the students to perform tasks that they are not able to perform alone, simplifying the task and controlling frustrations during the problem solving. Being a partner of students, the teacher improves their confidence and motivation during the class until students feel comfortable to perform the tasks alone. Scaffolding can also arise trough interaction between learners (ELLIS, 2003), when they are supporting each other to find a solution to accomplish the task together.

There are some aspects that should be considered in second language acquisition. The age and the social class, for example, can have a great influence in L2 learning. According to Ellis (1994), some studies reveal that learners who started as children achieve better accent than

the ones who started as adolescents or adults (after 15 years). Therefore, sometimes students in high school can present some resistance to learn a new language. Speaking English in front of the class can retract students, due to the fear of exposure. Other studies indicate that there is a relation between social class and language development. Working-class children tend to have lower-levels of proficiency and more negative attitudes toward formal language learning than middle-class children. Despite that, when considering communicative language skills, the social class of learners do not seem to have any effects (ELLIS,1994).

These results indicate that the difference in levels is related to the contact that learners have with the language in other places apart from the classroom. Rod Ellis (1994) affirms that "It's important to recognize, however, that it is not socio-economics class per se that produces these effects, but rather the experiences of the world which members of the different social classes are likely to have". For this reason, it is important to bring different opportunities to use English in class, promoting a favorable environment for the ones that do not have contact with English out of the school.

4 TASK-BASED LEARNING APPLIED IN HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH CLASSES

Within the area of Languages and its technologies for High School, there are seven specific competences that must be achieved for learners. Considering task-based approach, some of the competencies and abilities required in BNCC were select to exemplify these tasks and how they could be worked in English classes for High School students. First, the specific competences of the BNCC and its abilities will be presented. Afterwards, this section will present the proposed pedagogical task-based activities related with these competencies and the steps that will be used in the elaboration of the tasks (pre-task, during task and post task phases).

4.1 Task 1

Table 2 – Competence 1

Competence 1 : The functions of different languages and practices (Artistic, Physical and Verbal) – Use of knowledge in reception and production of speeches in society and social media.
Abilities proposed in BNCC:
Comprehend and analyze the production and movement of speeches for personal and common interests.
Analyze and experience multi-semiotic productions to promote different ways of interaction and social intervention.

Adapted from: Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC), 2018.

Table 3 – Competence 4

Competence 4: Comprehend languages as a geopolitical, historical, social, variable, heterogeneous phenomenon, experiencing and recognizing them as identity, personal and common expressions, respecting their varieties without any kind of prejudice.
Abilities proposed in BNCC:

To use English as a global language, considering its multiplicity and variety of uses, users, and functions in the contemporary world.

Adapted from: Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC), 2018.

Proposed Task: The students are going to be divided into groups and each group will develop some research about one country that has English as one of the official languages and their singularities (pronunciation, how many people use the language, etc.).

Task-based Goals: Collection, analysis, and separation of information/data; cognitive process; real-world process; sociocultural aim.

Pre-task: The teacher will present the proposal to students. The idea is that each group chooses a different country.

During task activity: The students will have a delimited time in the first class to choose the country that will be presented. After the choice of the countries, the teacher will evaluate the countries and whether they have English as one of the official idioms. Then, students will collect information about the countries inside the groups. The students will present the characteristics of each country, expressing their opinion about the culture of that country and the things that they have liked most about it.

Post-task: After the presentation, the teacher will make the considerations about the presentations and correct the language structures used if necessary.

In order to elaborate the task above, the competencies 1 and 4 from BNCC were chosen. These competencies involve multicultural aspects of the language, including its varieties of use and identities. During the research, students will use abilities as active learning and cognitive skills. Being in contact with the history of the country and its culture, students should use personal and collective criteria to select and analyze data. The main idea is that students have the autonomy to do the research, feeling confident to create the presentation and its strategies.

4.2 Task 2

Table 4 – Competence 2

Competence 2: Understand the identity process, conflicts, and relation of power that bases social language practices, considering values such as cooperation, democracy, and equality considering Human Rights, fighting against prejudice.
Abilities proposed in BNCC
Analyze interests, relations of power, and world perspectives in different language practices in order to understand their meanings and ideologies.
Negotiate to promote mutual agreement considering the democracy and Human Rights values.

Adapted from: Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC), 2018.

Proposed Task: The proposal is a weekly discussion in groups about themes that are relevant and recent news.

Task-based Goals: The task will be measured by the outcome (communication); report of student's understanding; use of the target language; real-world process, defend and argue a position.

Pre-task: The students will be divided into small groups. Each group will receive some texts or pieces of news in a video about the social issues present in the countries that they have presented previously, focusing on specific people, government, culture, or regions.

During-task stage: After reading/watching about the topic, each group will give their opinion about it, defending their point of view. Students are going to be encouraged to use English during the discussions. The teacher will provide part of the vocabulary needed during the discussion, e.g.: I think, I believe, I strongly believe, I agree, I disagree, I totally agree, etc.

Post-task: The teacher will review the utterances used during the speeches and ask students to come up with the main points brought during the discussion.

Competence 2 from BNCC emphasizes the importance of the discussion and understanding about Human Rights and the process of identity related to democracy. In this activity, students are induced to use verbal interaction, defending their points of view, expressing themselves, and changing ideas with their classmates. This kind of task can be considered an opinion-gap activity because it will help students to formulate opinions towards social issues. Students will have their speech supported by the previous knowledge about the country, the vocabulary present in the pieces of news, and the structures provided previously by the teacher.

4.3 Task 3

Table 5 – Competence 7

Competence 7: To promote language practices in the digital world, considering technical, critical, creative, ethical, and aesthetical dimensions, to produce a sense of commitment in authorial and collective practices, learning how to learn in science, culture, work, information, personal and collective life fields.
Abilities proposed in BNCC
To explore digital information technologies and communication (TDIC), comprehending its principles and functions, engaging learners in an ethical, responsible and suitable way to use language practice in different contexts.
To use different languages, media, and digital tools during collective, collaborative productions and projects in the digital environment.

Adapted from: Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC), 2018.

Proposed Task: This proposal is a project where students will create digital communication media using English. The teacher is going to propose one of the following options: an informative school journal, a podcast, a blog, or a channel on YouTube. The groups will have the autonomy to work and the teacher will be only a facilitator, observing their performance. The themes brought during the discussions will be the topics of the digital media chosen by students. The idea is to keep a sequence from the previous activity.

Task-based Goals: Cognitive process; cooperative learning; student-centered; use of the target-language.

Pre-task: The teacher will ask students to talk about all the kinds of social media and means of communication that they know. After that, they need to say their names in English (they can research on the internet). Then, the teacher will ask students which ones they use more and why. The pre-task will be a strategic workplan, in which students can choose the kind of digital communication that they want to use, how they will analyze, select, and publish the content.

During-task stage: The teacher will delimit a number of three classes to the groups create the media and present it in class. The teacher will help the students to review the linguistic structures, but the strategies and platforms used will be chosen by students.

Post-task: The students will explain how they created the media, the strategies and steps of the work, and what they achieved during this experience. The digital media created by them will be available for future tasks.

This activity is a sequential communicative task, in which students will have the opportunity to express ideas in varied formats, using digital tools of communication, promoting collaboration in class through the discussion of ideas. Being one of the fundamentals from task-based, the interaction between students will help them to develop group work, mutual assistance, and connect students from different levels, helping the ones that have less knowledge in English to improve their accuracy.

4.4 Task 4

Table 6 – Competence 6

Competence 6: Appreciate aesthetically the multiple artistic and cultural productions, considering its local, regional, and global characteristics, (re)constructing authoring productions individually or collective, in a critical way, respecting the knowledge, identities, and cultural diversity.
Abilities proposed in BNCC

> Appreciate and delight aesthetically the multiple artistic and cultural expressions, resorting to different origins of knowledge (artistic, social, and political), and individual and collective experiences.

Adapted from: Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC), 2018.

Proposed Task: A piece of art will be presented to the students; it can be a movie, a paint, a play, or a piece of music. After analyzing it, the students will report their impressions and try to discover to which country the arts/artists belong. Firstly, they will try to discover it by the features of the arts and their previous knowledge about the countries. Then, they will discuss inside the groups and, finally, they will research it on the internet.

Task-based Goals: Cognitive Process; use of the target language; language and cultural awareness, express feelings and emotions.

Pre-task: First, the teacher will provide some examples of museums, artists, and movies and ask students if they are able to recognize them, in order to introduce the topic.

During-task stage: The teacher will ask students to discuss their impressions and how they felt during the contact with these arts, writing down on their notebooks the much information as possible. Then, they will try to discover the country and the artists responsible for these arts.

Post-task: The teacher will ask students to share their notes and explain how they come up with the answers. Then, the teacher will ask them to verify the answers of their classmates and compare if they found the same answers.

The main idea of the activity above is to able students to have a better knowledge about art, improving their cultural repertoire bringing it to their reality. They will also be stimulated to express their feelings through contact with art, analyzing it deeply from their perspective. The structures learned in this task can also help them to express feelings and impressions in other areas of life.

5 CONCLUSION

English teaching in Brazil has been passing through a great number of changes and adaptations over the years, being adjusted according to the laws and parameters of education. These changes also derived from the position of English as a global and cultural language. Along with the changes in the Brazilian curriculum, the strategies of teaching had to be adapted according to student's necessities.

The creation of BNCC was an important landmark for education in Brazil, defining the patterns of curriculum for all the basic education from Childhood Education until the conclusion of High School, including general and specific competencies that should be acquired by students. The separation of education phases, including the High School stage and its division according to knowledge areas, also gave emphasis to English as the official foreign language inside of the area called Language and its technologies.

Even with the establishment of English as an essential and mandatory subject, the lack of usage in our daily routine turns hard for students to comprehend its necessity. For this reason, teachers find difficulties to motivate students' participation in classes, which results in a low language acquisition. Despite that, English classes that centers only on form-focused activities do not encourage communication, creativity and student's autonomy.

Being a strategy of teaching mainly focused in meaning and communication, task-based language teaching encourages students to be an active part of the class, using strategies of communication to find solutions and improve cooperation in class. According to this approach, students use cognitive abilities, being challenged all the time, having space to organize and express their ideas, having the teacher as a facilitator that will provide the base for the task, so students can accomplish it by themselves.

Some studies have demonstrated that teachers have more autonomy in the creation of their own materials and not being a passive figure under other people's syllabuses and methods (NUNAN,2004). It means that the study of task-based teaching can be the basis for teachers to create and develop their own tasks and materials. Comprehending how task-based teaching works, the teacher can adapt this approach according to the purposes of each class, focusing on specific goals that should be achieved by students. The concept of a class centered on students' production creates space for infinite possibilities of tasks that will motivate and engage students in English classes.

As mentioned by Rod Ellis (ELLIS, 2003) in his work about task-based learning, verbal interaction and learning happen when learners are able to use a new skill in the accomplishment of some goal. These activities presented in this paper aim to promote learners' acquisition of the additional language, based on the specific competencies of the BNCC. In the BNCC, there is a great concern over learners' preparation for real-life situations. Thinking about that, all the tasks have considered interactive, cognitive, and sociocultural earnings. Each step of the tasks considered a sequence of events that would be adaptable to English classes. Moreover, the task aims to encourage collaborative learning through student's interaction.

Understanding that Brazilian students did not have contact with English in their routine, the activities proposed in this paper were thought and adapted to this reality. The activities proposed has as their main purpose the elaboration of tasks that can help students to understand how they can use English as a tool of communication to express their ideas, improving the four abilities (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and other aspects of the target language such as the culture, usage and social issues.

Finally, I would like to suggest further research about the use of task-based teaching in Brazilian schools, considering other stages of education such as Childhood Education and Elementary School, considering the abilities and competencies established in the BNCC for these levels. During this research, we found some methodologies similar to task-based teaching approach principals and strategies such as the Active Methodologies and the Project Based Learning (PBL). These methodologies are also learners-centered, proposing collaborative learning and a sequence of activities. For this reason, in future researches we could reflect and discuss about the differences and similarities between these approaches and how they can contribute for learner's and teacher's development.

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