The Vehicle for Bringing Positive Education Into the English-As-A-Foreign-Language Classroom: Task-Based Language Teaching

Tamara Schüszler[1]

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to provide an overview of the distinctive features of interventions, tasks, and exercises. It is intended to lay theoretical ground to a forthcoming dissertation which is based on action research using positive psychology-based tasks designed or adapted for the secondary English-as-a-foreign-language classroom. Therefore, it is essential to first understand the theoretical underpinnings of task-based language teaching and define certain key concepts as well as find the features that distinguish interventions, tasks, and exercises from each other in the language learning classroom. Since literature sometimes refers to these concepts in an interchangeable manner (cf. Seligman et al., 2005; Seligman et al., 2009; Gregersen et al., 2014), an attempt will be made in this theoretical paper to compare them, and then to provide a framework for task descriptions to be used in the dissertation project which is intended to be convergent with current theory and practical enough for teachers.

Keywords: task, intervention, activity, definition, task-based language teaching

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a paradigm shift in educational thinking from traditional, black pedagogy (keeping mistakes and what needs to be corrected in the forefront), towards a positive psychology-based one in the Hungarian education system (Ladnai, 2018). This means that educators, rather than focusing on what can go wrong and what needs to be corrected, have turned to appreciating values in the learning situation and adjusting their feedback to it. In the Hungarian context, there has been an increase in the number of research investigations into reform attempts toward a more positive form of education. Fodor and her colleagues (2018) report action research carried out in a Hungarian secondary school where Italian is the most prominent second language of the students. They report data that proves students managed to get great results at the OKTV (the National Secondary School Academic Competition) owing to the fact that their teacher built her teaching strategies on positive reinforcement and the impact of enhancing positive emotions in the classroom. Also, in another analysis of action research, Fehér and Fodor (2020) focus on positive emotions in the secondary school classroom; they discuss the research done by the Magyar Templeton Program (the Hungarian Templeton Program) between 2015 and 2017 with participants aged 10–19. Their conclusion is that in order for positive psychology-based activities to work safety in the school environment is an essential element that must be fulfilled (Fehér and Fodor, 2020). In addition to these, a whole programme has also been launched targeting students under the age of 18 in schools under the name of Boldogságóra (Happy Hour). As Szarka (2020) mentions, the aim of this programme is to foster personality development and thus help students achieve happiness (cf. Ladnai, 2020).

When one attempts to gain a deeper understanding of positive psychology-based events in their classroom, first it is inevitable to choose a vehicle for bringing positive psychology into that environment. When it comes to language education in secondary schools, using tasks might seem to be an obvious choice; however, one cannot miss defining what is meant by positive psychology-based tasks as opposed to other classroom events.

[1] Department of English Language Pedagogy, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary; tamara.schuszler@gmail.com

Therefore, a distinction has to be made between *tasks* and other types of events that can take place in a school context, namely, *exercises,* and *interventions.* This is essential especially because positive psychology has already entered the classroom in the form of Positive Education (PE, cf. Bott, 2017), and it is also present in language teaching, most recently under the name of Positive Language Education (PLE, Mercer et al., 2018), but the various activities used in classrooms are not clearly categorized. Furthermore, current research referring to the practicalities of PE and PLE seems to be rather inconsistent in the terminology of the activities used for empirical enquiries. For example, Seligman and his colleagues regard their activities as *interventions* in a 2005 article (Seligman et al., 2005), whereas in another 2009 article Seligman himself uses the word *exercise* for the same type of activities (Seligman et al., 2009); in addition, Gregersen and her colleagues regard their instruments as *tasks* in an article of theirs (Gregersen et al., 2014). Despite the overlap between the activities used in the aforementioned three articles, their conceptualization is not clear; therefore, an attempt will be made in the following to find the distinctive features of *tasks, exercises,* and *interventions.* Thus, in this paper, I intend to answer the following questions:

1. What are the main differences between tasks, exercises, and interventions in the EFL classroom?
2. What do different task descriptions in selected resource books based on positive psychology contain?
3. What should a task description template contain in a dissertation project based on the enquiry into using positive psychology-based tasks in the secondary English-as-a-foreign-language classroom?

Answering these questions is indispensable because by finding out (1) what makes tasks more than exercises; (2) what makes interventions fundamentally different from tasks; (3) what a task description (TD) which is convergent with theory but also practical enough for teachers is like, one can have a clearer picture of the *responsibilities* of the language teacher in a specific project involving positive psychology-based classroom events. Also, by exploring these areas, the difference between the work of a teacher and that of a psychologist can become more apparent: role confusion on the part of the language teacher throughout the data collection phase in such a project can be avoided.

Research design and Methods

The present article is a theoretical enquiry into existing definitions of tasks and the elements of task descriptions used in task-based language teaching (TBLT). In the following sections, the existing theoretical background is examined. Then, turning to TDs, the design features of earlier TDs (to be used for this dissertation project, too) is compared, and then contrasted with what theory says about the facets of a TD. Towards the end, the design features of TDs in a forthcoming project are established, followed by a conclusion which also points to future directions. This way, this paper is meant to be lay the theoretical background of a greater study exploring students' and teachers' views on a specific set of positive psychology-based tasks in the secondary EFL classroom.

Results and discussion

Interventions, activities, tasks, exercises

Definitions of task

The definition of task is surrounded by misunderstandings (Ellis, 2009), especially because without a given context, the term *task* can have diverse meanings. In its broad sense, according to Long (2015), tasks are "real-world activities people think of when planning, conducting, or recalling their day" (p. 6.). Examining the definitions of it within language teaching, we find that a task is "a communicative event having a non-linguistic outcome" (Nunan, 2004, p. 216). However, Nunan's characterization still does not narrow down the field and help exclude certain classroom activities from the range of tasks. To address this, relying on four facets coined by Skehan (1996) may provide some guidance. According to him, a task is "an activity in which meaning is primary, there is some sort of relationship to the real world, task completion has some priority, and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome" (Skehan, 2009, p. 38). Also, according to him, the language teacher may rely exclusively on tasks in their teaching or amalgamate different approaches when designing their syllabus: Skehan called the former the strong form of TBLT, and the latter was named the weak form of it (Skehan, 2009, pp. 38–39).

There are various typologies according to which tasks can be categorized. Nunan (1989) makes a distinction between real-life tasks and pedagogic tasks, claiming that pedagogic ones are the activities used in the classroom as tools of instruction. Ellis (2017), however, focusses on what the task itself is based on in his characterization, hence drawing a contrast between input-based tasks, working with receptive skills, and output-based tasks, putting greater emphasis on productive language skills.

Regarding the criticisms that definitions of *task* have received, Widdowson's claims (Widdowson, 2003, cited in Ellis, 2009) seem to be standing out. According to him, the four criteria set by Skehan (2009) are not formulated well enough in the sense that they are rather indeterminate, making room for regarding almost any activity in the language classroom as a *task*. Ellis (2009a) agrees to this to a certain extent: he states that the fact that meaning is primary in tasks should be more precise, specifying whether the meaning which is in focus should be pragmatic or semantic; also, he concedes that the terms *goal* and *real-world relationship* used by Skehan should be specified more. However, Ellis (2009a) seems to contradict Widdowson (2003) regarding Skehan's fourth criterion. Ellis refutes Widdowson's claim that, since the performance of a task may be successful even if it does not come with any learning, it is insufficient to state that a task is evaluated based on its outcome: Ellis argues that specifying learning outcomes is out of the scope of defining the term *task* (Ellis, 2009a).

Besides this, the definition of task is also said to face challenges because of what is understood by the word itself: the plan of an activity or the performance of the activity. In his critique of the quantification of data in TBLT research, Seedhouse (2005) states that when one regards a task as a workplan, they actually mean the intended pedagogy, whereas by considering the task the process itself (task-as-process, cf. Breen, 1989), one views tasks as what actually happens in terms of pedagogy. Seedhouse (2005), using examples from conversation analysis, also illustrates how task-as-workplan and task-as-process very rarely correspond with each other.

To understand the above mentioned four criteria set by Skehan (2009) more, and for some more elaboration, one may also need to consult what Pica and her colleagues (2009) state about tasks. According to them, there is a mislabeling issue when it comes to definitions of the concept of *task* since anything that is an activity towards a goal may be regarded as a task. Their answer to this is coining the term *communication task* as opposed to other task types, hence integrating the presence of a communicative goal towards which task performance happens into their definition. Also, Pica and her colleagues (2009) claim that there are two recurrent features of tasks: goal-orientation of the activity and the active participation of interlocutors, that is, the learners performing the task (Pica et al., 2009). They also make an attempt at defining communicative tasks, claiming that the distinctive features of them as opposed to other activities have never been clear in language teaching (p. 172). They establish five different types of communicative tasks: jigsaw, information gap, problem-solving, decision-making, and opinion-exchanging, among which they found the latter the least useful. According to them, in opinion-exchange tasks there is no genuine information gap to fill and thus interlocutors are not prompted strongly enough to interact with each other. (Pica and her colleagues' evaluation is interesting in this project especially because most of the tasks being designed to be used as instruments are based on opinion exchange, making them less useful according to this characterization. This issue should be addressed and explored in the dissertation project when students are asked about the tasks they performed in post-hoc written and spoken interviews.)

In this project, Ellis's four key tenets are observed as the criteria for tasks. In the following sections, first *exercises* and then *interventions* are opposed to *tasks*; afterwards, with the help of a summary table the main differences of the three activity types are enumerated.

Task versus exercise

Traditional language learning activities are most often called *exercises* (Ellis, 2009, p. 227). Coming from the Latin word *exercere* (to practice), an exercise may be regarded as an activity the aim of which is to repeat certain actions in order to improve a certain skill or ability (cf. Glare, 1968). However, referring to terminological issues, according to Lynch and Maclean (2001), the term *exercise* is not to be confused with *exercising*, which is the repetition itself of the same classroom activity.

But what makes an exercise different from a task? Ellis (2009a) draws the difference referring back to Skehan's four key precepts of tasks (meaning is primary, there is a goal, it is outcome-evaluated, and it has a connection to realia; Skehan, 2009) He says only two of these criteria are satisfied in the case of situational grammar exercises: there is a goal and they are outcome-evaluated, while meaning is not in the forefront, nor do exercises necessarily relate to the real world (Ellis, 2009, p. 223). Lambert (2018), in a similar vein, refers to Ellis (2009a) in saying that tasks and exercises are both pedagogical tools, but doing an *exercise* appeals to explicit knowledge while performing a *task* activates implicit knowledge. Furthermore, goal orientation also

seems different in the case of these two types of classroom activities. For Ellis (2009b) exercises do not have an obvious communicative goal: he even refers to Widdowson's critique in which he says that the criteria for defining tasks are not distinctive enough (Widdowson, 1998, cited by Ellis, 2009b).

Task versus intervention

Turning to intervention, a distinction must be made between interventions in psychotherapy and classroom interventions. Both concepts derive from the original Latin meaning of the word *intervenire* "1 to arrive during the course of an activity, etc., come on the scene. b. to drop in or break in (on a person) […] 2 To take a hand, intervene (in affairs)" (Glare, 1968, p. 950). However, the difference in context leads to different interpretations of the two terms. According to the APA Dictionary of Psychology, an intervention is "generally, any action intended to interfere with and stop or modify a process, as in treatment undertaken to halt, manage, or alter the course of the pathological process of a disease or disorder […]" (VandenBos, 2015, p. 557). On the other hand, the same source defines classroom interventions as follows:

> […]any strategy implemented in a classroom setting to improve the health and well-being of students, often by reducing or preventing pathology and problem behaviors (e.g., depression, social anxiety, cigarette smoking, drug or alcohol use, bullying and aggression). Requiring interdisciplinary coordination among school psychologists, counselors, social workers, teachers, and administrative staff, programs may be targeted at subgroups of high-risk individuals or implemented across the general school population of children and adolescents. Interventions may incorporate such activities as specially designed lectures, guided online lessons, group discussions, role play, and special homework assignments to be completed with parents (VandenBos, 2015, pp. 939–940).

From these two detailed descriptions, it is apparent that for an intervention to happen, the presence of a mental health practitioner (most often a psychologist) is crucial, whereas to perform a task, students in a classroom only need the guidance of the teacher. What also comes to light examining these excerpts is the very fact that the core of an intervention is modification of behavior in the face of adversity (cf. problem behaviors listed under problems to be overcome using classroom interventions), while tasks can be used in a more general sense, in any classroom, where the extent to which a teacher may rely on tasks may not be determined by the pathologies within the group but the needs of the individuals in terms of foreign language communication.

Tasks, exercises, and interventions

As it can be seen in Table 1, there are several features that make tasks, exercises, and interventions similar to one another. All three have a distinct goal that the practitioner using them wants to achieve, though these goals as well as the type of practitioner trying to achieve them differs in each case. Besides that, both exercises and tasks are outcome-evaluated, while having a connection to the real world rather characterizes tasks and interventions. However, looking at distinctive features, the most prominent ones seem to be the following: (1) it is only tasks where meaning is primary; (2) the types of knowledge these activities apply to are fundamentally different (implicit in the case of tasks and also, supposedly, in the case of interventions; explicit in the case of exercises); (3) the person bringing these activities into the classroom differs: in the case of interventions, a mental health expert has to be part of the process. (Also, in *interventions*, a more interdisciplinary approach may be applied, with different agents towards the same goal, not just teachers and students, as opposed to *tasks* in the classroom, cf. VandenBos, 2015)

Table 1. The differences between task, exercise, and intervention, according to literature

key precepts / types of activities	task	exercise	intervention
Is meaning primary? (Skehan, 2009)	yes	no	no
Is there a goal? (Skehan, 2009)	yes, *successful communication*	yes, *the correct use of a linguistic feature*	yes, *a change in behaviour*
Is it outcome-evaluated? (Skehan, 2009)	yes	yes	no
Is it real world-related? (Skehan, 2009)	yes	no	(yes)
What type of knowledge does it apply to? (Lambert, 2018)	implicit	explicit	(implicit, or not relevant linguistically)
Who guides it?	teacher	teacher or psychologist	psychologist or interdisciplinary (cf. VandenBos, 2015)

Task descriptions in the forthcoming empirical research endeavor

Earlier examples

In order to have a theoretically congruent and, at the same time, teacher-friendly model for task descriptions for possible future classroom research into Positive Language Education, below, the TDs used in positive psychology-based resource books are examined. Then, keeping in the forefront what was said above about the distinctions between tasks and interventions, and also integrating what theory says about the design features of TDs in TBLT, a TD template is drawn for the upcoming dissertation project, which serves as a blueprint for all the tasks to be used with student participants and to be distributed among teacher participants.

As it can be seen in Table 2 and Appendices B through E, according to the purpose for which the resource books were intended, TDs are fundamentally different in them. In Burdick (2017), which is a mindfulness-based activity bank meant for use by clinicians and therapists, only the general focus is mentioned alongside with the description of procedures to follow and certain anticipated problems (e.g. see Appendix B). Revell and Norman's book, though, contains only the description of procedures and the aims of the specific activities can be derived from their places within the chapters of the book *In your hands: NLP in ELT* (Revell and Norman, 1997; see Appendix C). On the contrary, the continuation of this latter activity bank, *Handing over: NLP-based activities for language learning* supplements the description of procedures with the mention of a general focus, a language focus, and anticipated problems as well; what is more, even if it is not given a separate section, under *comments,* the authors suggest at what levels the specific activities should be used (Revell and Norman, 1999, cf. Appendix D). The fourth book to be used for adaptations in this project, *Energizing your classroom* (Revell, 2018) uses a different template yet includes similar elements. It comes with the mention of the general focus of each activity, the language level it is apt for, and the description of procedures. In addition, it also mentions timing and preparation work needed to carry out the activity in class (see Appendix E).

Table 2. Design features in TDs provided in the resource books used in this project.

feature of a TD / book or theorist	Burdick, 2017; Appendix B	Revell and Norman, 1997; Appendix C	Revell and Norman, 1999; Appendix D	Revell, 2018; Appendix E
general focus	present		present	present
language focus			present	
language level			present (in comments section)	present
time				present
preparation				present
description of procedures	present	present	present	present
anticipated problems	present		present	
predicted outcomes				

A possible theoretical framework for describing a task

Since the TDs in an investigation of Positive Language Education are to be distributed among teachers but still based on TBLT, they have to meet two different criteria. These TDs have to be applicable in practice as well as convergent with current theory. That is why the design features to be included are not only based on the comparisons of authentic resource books but are also checked against a framework proposed by Ellis. In his work on teachers evaluating tasks, Ellis (2018) describes the steps of involving teachers in using and assessing tasks, the first of which is to "describe the task materials and the specific implementation procedures for teaching (Elis, 2018, p. 237). He then refers back to one of his former works in which he proposed a 5-element framework for TDs (Ellis, 2003). In this framework (see in Table 3 below, demonstrated with one of the tasks I designed for a future research endeavour in *italics*), first the goal of the task is established, and then the type of input is provided. Then, the conditions of the task are elaborated on, alongside with the procedures of performing it; at the end of the TD, Ellis (2003) proposes to include two different types of outcomes as well: product outcomes and process outcomes.

Table 3. Framework by Ellis (2018, p. 238), with an example from this project (in italics)

design feature according to Ellis 2018	description according to Ellis 2018, p. 238 (with *example* from this project)
1 Goal	the general purpose of the task (e.g. to practice the ability to describe objects concisely, to provide an opportunity for the use of relative clauses) *e.g. to practice modals for speculation*
2 Input	the verbal or non-verbal information supplied by the task (e.g. pictures, a map, written text) *e.g. a recording (Bardini.mp3, 60 seconds)*
3 Conditions	the way in which the information is presented (e.g. split versus shared information) or the way in which it is to be used (e.g. converging vs diverging) *e.g. shared information (Sts listen to the same recording)* *to be used in a diverging way (Sts need to make their own assumptions)*
4 Procedures	the methodological procedures to be followed by performing the task (e.g. group versus pair work , planning time versus no planning time) *e.g. T plays a recording* *Sts listen to the recording individually* *no planning time for Sts* *Sts write down their speculations about the noises they could hear* *Sts share their speculations with each other in pairs*
5 Predicted outcomes: product outcomes	the product that results from completing the task (e.g. a completed the table, a route drown in on a map, a list of differences between two pictures). The predicted product can be open (i.e. allow for several possibilities) or closed (i.e. allow for only one correct solution). *e.g. a list of assumptions*
5 Predicted outcomes: process outcomes	the discoursal, linguistic, and cognitive processes the task is predicted to generate. focusing attention *e.g. modal verbs for speculation (in the present or in the past)*

If we check this framework against the elements that can be found in the resource books described above, it is apparent that many of the details overlap (see Table 4 below).

Table 4. Design features in TDs provided in the resource books used in this project checked against the framework by Ellis (2003).

feature of a TD / book or theorist	Burdick, 2017; Appendix A	Revell and Norman, 1997; Appendix B	Revell and Norman, 1999; Appendix C	Revell, 2018; Appendix D	Ellis, 2003
general focus	present		present	present	(goal)
language focus			present		(input)
language level			(in comments section)	present	
time				present	
preparation				present	
description of procedures	present	present	present	present	present (conditions, procedures)
anticipated problems	present		present		
predicted outcomes					present (predicted outcomes: product and process outcomes)

Even if certain parts are labelled differently, it is easy to find that *goal* in Ellis's terms the equivalent of the *general focus* in the resource books, as well as to see that conditions and procedures are included both in the guidebooks and theory. What Ellis's framework supplements the previous list of possible elements is the expected outcomes, though. That is why the TD template I am proposing here is a compound of the above. In it, the following eight features are included:

1. General focus: the pedagogical goal to reach by doing the task.
2. Language focus: the linguistic goal to reach by doing the task.
3. Language level: the level the learners should be at in order to be able to perform the task (according to the *Common European Framework of Reference* levels, 2001).
4. Time: the amount of minutes that should be allocated to doing the task with students.
5. Preparation: the type of activity that the teacher needs before starting the task.
6. Description of procedures: a detailed plan of how to conduct the activity, step by step.
7. Anticipated problems: a note on where the task can go sideways and what may be done about it on the part of the teacher.
8. Predicted outcomes: any kind of product the learners are expected to produce upon performing the task.

Conclusions

As it can be seen from the above, besides their common core, namely, the fact that all three types of activities are done in a classroom context, *tasks, exercises,* and *classroom interventions* are fundamentally different. What *tasks* and *exercises* have in common is that they are to fill a gap in knowledge, though *exercises* serve a clear-cut, more limited purpose (practicing *only* a certain structure or subskill) than *tasks*. Also, a *task* can be similar to an *intervention* because of its goal-orientation; besides, the tasks in a specific project focusing on Positive Language Education share another thing with a group of interventions: their content. As these tasks designed are based on positive psychology and hence serve as the vehicles for bringing positive psychology into the language classroom, it is inevitable for them to grow out of the experiences and empirical studies of positive psychologists. However, the responsibilities of the teacher researcher are limited by the fact that the primary aim of the tasks is language development and change in general behavior is not sought when performing these tasks.

Regarding future directions in research, the author of this paper intends to carry out a greater dissertation project using a specific set of 10 positive psychology-based tasks designed or adapted from resource books (Revell & Norman, 1997; Revell & Norman, 1999; Burdick, 2014; Revell, 2018) as instruments. The TDs will be corresponding with the blueprint drawn in this article. First, the tasks will be piloted by the researcher in her own groups in a secondary school based in Budapest, and then given to EFL teachers to try in their own classrooms. In the pilot of this strand of the research, secondary EFL teachers will be involved from the school where the teacher researcher works, and then, in the main study phase, EFL mentor teachers will be asked to try the tasks in their own schools in their own EFL classrooms. The positive psychology content mentioned will be scrutinized in the sections to be followed in the dissertation by defining what positive psychology, positive education, and positive language education are. Also, attention will be devoted to earlier empirical research into positive language education, and an area of positive psychology (namely, mindfulness in positive psychology practice) where the content of the tasks in the project should come from will be defined, described, and its adaptation will be justified. Then, the TDs will be finalized and used for data collection in the empirical research phase of the study. The aim with this forthcoming dissertation study is to fill in a further niche mentioned in the introduction of the article; namely, to gain a deeper understanding of the use of positive psychology-based tasks in the secondary EFL classroom in the Hungarian context, examining the students', the teachers, and the teacher researcher's points of view.

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Appendices

Appendix A – a task description from Burdick, 2017 (p. 102).

Basic Relaxation Breathing

A breathing exercise that is very helpful in deactivating the stress response, and can really help kids and teens calm down anger and anxiety, consists of breathing air through the nose to the count of four and breathing out through the mouth to the count of eight. Thus, we activate the parasympathetic nervous system twice as long as the sympathetic nervous system with a net result of calming our physiology and stress responses.

Teach them this simple technique and encourage them to use it during their day as often as they think of it, particularly if they are angry, stressed out, worried, or upset. It is an excellent way to increase their ability to self-regulate.

"Breathe in through your nose to the count of four and out through your mouth to the count of eight. When you breathe out, purse your lips and blow gently like you are blowing a bubble. This will help you slow down the exhale. Don't worry if your nose is stuffy, just breathe in and out through your mouth instead. Inhale through your nose: 1-2-3-4.

Exhale through your mouth with lips pursed, blowing gently, like blowing a bubble: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8."

Repeat 3-4 times.

Be sure to observe them when they are learning this to make sure they are breathing in slowly and then breathing out twice as slowly. Often, kids will inhale very rapidly to get a big breath. This is counterproductive and may activate the stress response instead of deactivating it.

Appendix B – a task description from Revell and Norman, 1997 (p. 55).

Positive-negative transfer

Put 50 toothpicks into your left-hand pocket. Every time you have a negative thought, transfer one to your right-hand pocket. The average person transfers all 50 toothpicks within 15 minutes!

Now try transferring the toothpicks back to your left pocket every time you have a positive thought. How quickly can you transfer them this time?

Appendix C – a task description from Revell and Norman, 1999 (p. 12).

Achievable goals

Purpose
To help students clarify an objective and therefore make it more achievable

Language focus
Want, will

Procedure
- Ask students individually to write down a goal.
- They share their ideas with a partner.
- Explain to students the way we express a goal to ourselves – that the way we put it in words and think about it – makes it more or less achievable. The clearer and the more thought-out the goal, the better. They work with a partner through the worksheet checklist of questions on the next page.
- Students write the final version of their goal on a sheet of paper, put their name on it and hand it in to you. You could then:
  - look at what they have written, keep a record and hand them back – giving individual advice on improvements and follow-up where necessary.
  - put the papers up on the noticeboard or wall (with agreement) so everyone can read each other's and offer support and advice.
  - read them out anonymously, pausing to allow people to offer support and advice.
  - suggest they pin up their goal somewhere prominent where they will see it every day.
  - do a combination of the above.

Comment

This activity can be done in English with an advanced or intermediate group. Lower level monolingual classes can initially write their goals in their mother tongue. Then they ask each other and the teacher to help them express what they want to say in English.

Appendix D – a task description from Revell, 2018 (p. 29).

Three speak as one

Focus	To promote careful listening and quick thinking.
Level	Intermediate to advanced
Time	5 minutes per round
Preparation	None

In class

1 Invite three students to come and sit at the front of the class, facing the others. They are, collectively, the expert in something, and it is for the class to decide what they are expert in. (Elicit ideas for the rest of the class to choose from – it might be English, geography , baking, paddle boarding, DIY, salsa… anything.)

2 Give the class a moment to think of and write down possible questions on the chosen subject.

3 Ask someone to put the first of the three questions to the expert.

4 Explain that to answer the question, the three students must take it in turns to add just one word. The combined words must make sense and work grammatically, and they must keep going until they arrive at a possible end of the sentence. So with three students, A, B, and C, you might get something like:

A	To
B	answer
C	your
A	question
B	I
C	think
A	that
B	the
C	most
A	important
B	thing
C	thing
A	is
B	um…confidence!

5 Ask the class if they're happy with the answer. If not, ask the expert to elaborate.

6 Move on to get answers to the second and third questions (started by B and C respectively.)