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**TÍTULO COMPLETO DEL TRABAJO:** Exploring The Impact of Skype On Oral Production (Exploración del impacto de Skype en la producción oral)

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#### PALABRAS CLAVES EN ESPAÑOL E INGLÉS:

##### Español

1. Comunicación mediada por computador
2. \_Aprendizaje Cooperativo\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_Producción Oral\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_Redes Sociales\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_Skype\_\_\_\_\_


##### Inglés

- Computer-mediated communication
- \_\_\_\_\_Cooperative Learning\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_Oral Production\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_Social Networking\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_Skype\_\_\_\_\_

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**RESUMEN DEL CONTENIDO:** (Máximo 250 palabras)

Frecuentemente los profesores de inglés se encuentran con estudiantes con bajo nivel de competencia oral, pero quieren poner en práctica el idioma que están aprendiendo. La falta de oportunidades para usar el idioma dentro del aula sumado a la falta de tiempo y espacios para interactuar con otros fuera del salón de clases genera una situación aún más compleja. Este artículo contiene los resultados de un estudio de Investigación Acción el cual fue enfocado a explorar el impacto del uso de Skype como herramienta complementaria para promover la producción oral en un grupo de estudiantes en una universidad privada en Neiva, Colombia. Cuatro estudiantes de primer nivel de Inglés con un dominio básico del idioma participaron en este estudio. Constructos teóricos tales como Skype en EFL (inglés como lengua extranjera), CMC (Comunicación Mediada por Computador), redes sociales, aprendizaje cooperativo y producción oral en CMC fueron tenidos en cuenta. Las intervenciones pedagógicas consistieron en seis video conferencias de Skype entre un profesor-investigador y los cuatro participantes. Para recolectar información, se utilizaron transcripciones de las videoconferencias, notas de campo y diarios de los estudiantes. Los datos recogidos se analizaron mediante métodos cualitativos. Los resultados evidencian que Skype tiene impacto en áreas como el aprendizaje del idioma, interacción social e influencias emocionales.

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**ABSTRACT:** (Máximo 250 palabras)

English teachers frequently find students with a low level of oral proficiency but who want to put the language they are learning into practice. The lack of opportunities to use the language inside the classroom added to the lack of time and spaces to interact with others outside the classroom make the situation even more complex. This article contains the results of an Action Research study which aimed at exploring the impact of using Skype as a complementary tool to foster oral production in a group of students in a private university in Neiva, Colombia. Four students from the first level of English with a basic command of the language took part in this study. Theoretical constructs such the use of Skype in EFL, Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), social networking, cooperative learning and oral production in CMC were taken into account. The pedagogical interventions in the study consisted of six Skype video- conferences between a teacher-researcher and the four participants. To collect data, video-conference transcripts, field notes and students' journals were used. The data were analyzed using qualitative methods. Findings evidence that Skype impacts the EFL context in areas like language learning, social interaction and emotional influences.



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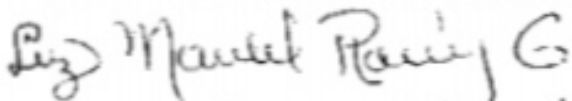
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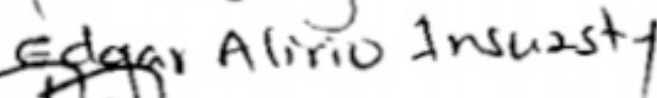
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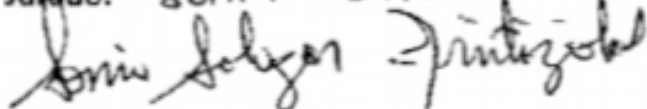
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Exploring The Impact of Skype On Oral Production

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Master thesis presented as a partial requirement to obtain the degree of Magister in English

Didactics

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Universidad Surcolombiana

Facultad de Educacion

Maestria en Didactica del Ingles

Neiva

2016



Approval Note:

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Maribel Ramirez Galindo

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Date of Approval: August 5, 2016

### **Dedication**

I dedicate my dissertation work to my beloved wife and my lovely daughter, Cindy Lorena Perdomo Chavarro and Juliana García Perdomo for their enormous emotional support and patience all along this process even in the most desperate times. I also feel highly grateful for the support from my loving parents', Alveira Trejos Franco and Ramiro García Palma who have always encouraged me to work hard to make my dreams come true. A special feeling of gratitude to my sisters, Andrea, Diana and Angela who have always given me words of encouragement throughout these years. Lastly but not less important, I thank God for all the strength, health and tenacity I have had during the last two years.

Sergio Ramiro García Trejos

I dedicate this in a very special way to my mother Maria and my sisters Lorena and Kerly. Since they have been the bridge between fiction and reality. They have been the only reason for which I smile in bitter times. They have believed in me even though. It meant to go against their thoughts and conviction, the self improvement, the unshakeable sacrifice, and the boundless kindness, have been the pillars which my three beloved have based. With the purpose of shaping the human being I am so far. The motivation of the genesis of this long process have faded and vanished, nevertheless there is nothing left to say, no more than to thank with my heart and soul.

Rolney Leonardo Díaz Pascuas

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### **Abstract**

Very often English teachers at universities have to face the reality of students with a low level of oral proficiency but who constantly struggle to put the language they are learning into practice. In many cases the lack of opportunities to use the language inside the classroom added to the lack of time and spaces to interact with others outside the school context make the situation even more complex. This article contains the results of an Action Research study which aimed at exploring the impact of using Skype as a complementary tool to foster oral production in a group of students in a private university in Neiva - Huila Colombia. Four students from the first level of English with a basic command of the language took part in this study. The problem was examined through theoretical constructs such as Skype in EFL (English as a Foreign Language), Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), social networking, cooperative learning and oral production in CMC. The pedagogical interventions in the study consisted of six Skype video- conferences between a teacher-researcher and the four participants. To collect data, video-conference transcripts, field notes and students' journals were used. The gathered data was analyzed using qualitative methods. Findings evidence that Skype has an impact in the EFL context in areas like language learning, social interaction and emotional influences. Students' progress includes fluency, vocabulary and confidence to speak. Moreover, cooperative learning emerges in small groups in which corrective feedback and negotiation of meaning play a major role. Finally, anxiety appears as a drawback in the early stages.

**key words:** CMC (Computer-Mediated Communication), cooperative learning, oral production, Skype, social networking.

### **Introduction**

A research study conducted by the British Council in 2015 suggested that in the last two decades, more and more English learners in Colombia have constantly searched for opportunities to practice and master the English language. This study found that "... the majority of Colombians lack contact with the language in their daily lives" (p. 56). The British Council study also concluded that "real English acquisition is currently limited to higher socio-economic strata, where students often have access to bilingual or private education"(p. 58). The findings in the above mentioned study resembles the current situation in a private University in Neiva where this study took place. In the students' particular context there were limited opportunities to interact in English outside the classroom. Thus, to address this problem, this research project explores the impact that Skype has on oral production. Six pedagogical interventions were designed to identify the aspects of oral production that are affected by the implementation of Skype beyond the classroom.

During the first semester of the year 2015, some students approached one of the authors of the study who was their English teacher, expressing their desire to have more opportunities to practice the language. The time for practice in the classroom was too limited and it was difficult for students to meet the teacher out of the classroom in the university. Listening to the students and taking advantage of their readiness was beneficial to plan alternatives for extra language practice. Therefore, Skype was considered to be suitable for the study because it offers an alternative way to meet people to practice English as a foreign language. So, the main goal of this research study was to identify the aspects of oral production that are affected by the implementation of Skype beyond the classroom.

In the first chapter of the present document, there is a detailed depiction of the problem that was identified in the particular context. This description is based on close observations, community visits, informal talks and likert scales that took place at the beginning of this research project and were developed in the foreign language classroom to unveil the causes of the problem. On top of this, some recent studies related to using Skype in the realm of language teaching are presented to portray how these previous works helped us to shape the initial research proposal. Also, a description of the context where this study took place is made, as well as the possible contributions the authors intend to make in the local academic and social environment.

In the second chapter, there is a compilation of theoretical constructs related to Skype, Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), social networking, cooperative learning, and oral production in CMC. In the next chapter, the nature of this study is depicted to establish the type of research and study supported by different authors. Besides, a thorough description of the population is made and the criteria to select the population from the private university are described too. A portrayal of the instruments and how they were used to collect the data is presented in the present study. In addition to this, a detailed description of the instructional design is made. In chapter four, the data analysis is presented, as well as the research categories and the findings related and supported by essential constructs in the theoretical framework. Finally, some conclusions and pedagogical implications are portrayed in the light of answering our research question and objectives in the fifth chapter.

## **Chapter I**

### **Research Problem**

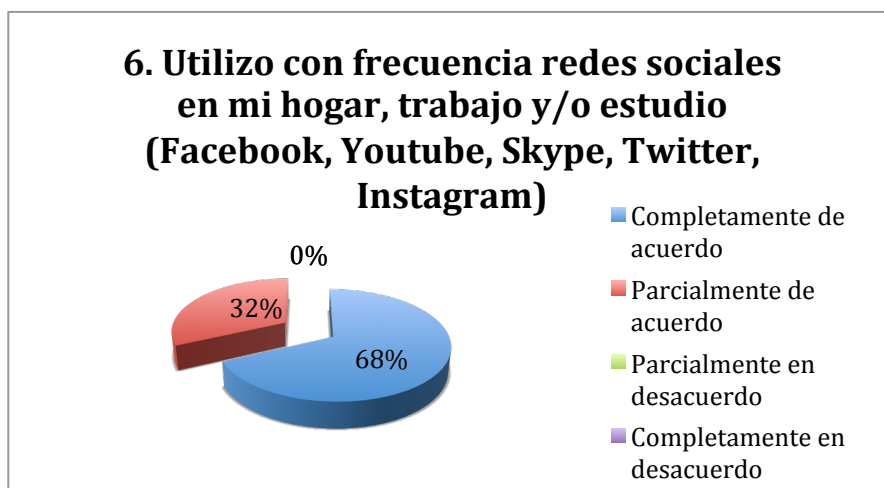
#### **Statement of the Problem**

In the first academic semester of the year 2015, at the private university where this study was conducted, a community visit, a likert scale, and informal talks were used to determine what the problem was in the particular context. By implementing these needs assessment instruments, we were able to confirm that the problem was the lack of opportunities to interact as a means to improve language abilities.

In informal talks, some students clearly stated they wanted to have extra classes out of the regular ones to practice their oral skills. It is important to bear in mind that the textbook being implemented is not mandatory for students, and hence only a few of them purchased it. However, in terms of activities to promote oral skills, this textbook provided some exercises intended to foster speaking inside the classroom. In some cases, students were required to simulate real life conversations that were suggested by the textbook. Through observations, it was seen that sometimes students did not find the tasks to be meaningful, authentic and engaging. It was also noticed that they tried to memorize the dialogues, and worked on their short-term memory. This way, students just repeated what the conversation in the textbook said and were not required to think critically about what to say. Most of these dialogues did not demand students to use their own information but literal texts from the textbook. In the same line, students expressed in brief informal talks that this sort of activities did not contribute significantly to the development of their oral production, especially taking into account the little time they have to practice the language orally inside the classroom.

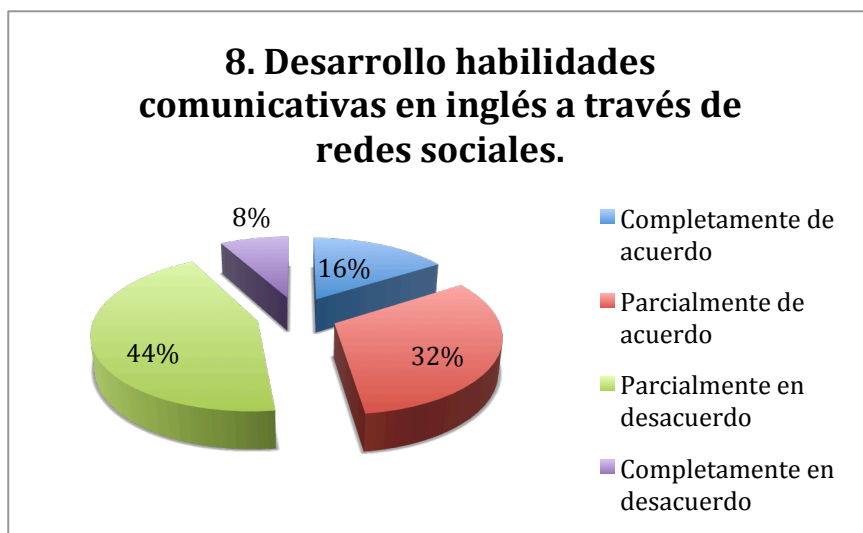
An additional factor to take into account was that students saw the classroom as the only place where they had the chance to take the risk to speak, practice what they learned and interact with others using the English language. Then, more opportunities to practice English orally out of the classroom were needed.

To explore this problem, in the diagnostic stage of this study, the researchers conducted a survey using a Likert scale to unveil the students' perceptions about alternatives to interact in the target language such as social networks. The target population for carrying out this diagnostic test was a group of 32 students in the first level of English at the private university. According to Jamieson (2008) "likert scales are commonly used to measure attitude, providing a range of responses to a given question or statement. 1 Typically, there are 5 categories of response, from (for example) 1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree" (p. 1217). One of the statements used in the survey was whether they often used social networks at home, workplace or school (Facebook, Youtube, Skype, Twitter, Instagram). The answers showed that most of the participants (68%) used social networking (see graph 1 below)



Graph 1: Pie graph to illustrate the percentage of frequency with which students use social networks.

Another statement was included in the likert scale in order to reveal whether the students used social networks (Skype conceived as a social network) to develop communicative skills in English. The result was that only 16% of the participants completely agreed with the statement about the use of social networks to practice English. This can be illustrated in the following graph:



Graph 2: Pie graph to illustrate the percentage of students who develop communicative skills through social networks.

From the previous data, it was implied that the majority of the students were familiar with social networks and used them. However, not many of the students used social networks for developing language skills.

On top of this, in an informal talk at the end of the first semester of 2015, students from the first level of English at the university were asked if they wanted to devote extra time to do additional activities out of the classroom to enhance their English skills. They replied they would be willing to take part in extra curricular activities. This was done to inquire into the perceptions about social networks. In one of the questions, they were asked if they would rather use social

networks for learning purposes and most of them agreed that they would definitely use them. Therefore, this study has its relevance due to the lack of opportunities for students to interact as a means to improve language abilities, more specifically, oral skills because it aimed at providing students with opportunities to use the language out of the classroom.

In relation to the institutional documents about English language teaching (ELT), after making a revision it was found that there was no language policy, nor a fully structured curriculum, neither a well-designed syllabus for each English level at this university. This is due to the fact that there was not any ELT department to be in charge of curricular guidelines. Then, English teachers worked autonomously, so each one made his or her own pedagogical decisions related to didactics, teaching philosophy, teaching strategies and so on. Consequently, there were teachers whose main concern was to develop students' grammar, while others were focused on reading or vocabulary.

In this vein, there was a necessity to provide students with tools to complement their language process. In a community visit, by talking to some students and taking photographic evidence, the authors found that at the university students did not have chances to practice the L2. Few students accessed websites in the computer laboratories to learn English or join language-learning networks. Most students did not install digital applications in their cellphones to practice English. In this sense, Skype appeared to be a relevant tool (taking Skype as a complementary tool) to offer opportunities to make use of the language out of the classroom.

### **Setting**

To conduct this research study, the chosen community was a local private university. This higher education institution is located in Neiva, Huila. There are two branches. The first one is in

the neighborhood Quirinal in Neiva and not far from there, the second site is in Prado Alto neighborhood in the east of the city. The population is around 5000 students in both morning and night shifts.

In relation to the target population, a group of students in the first level of English was selected in the first semester of the year 2015. They are enrolled in programs such as banking management, tourism management, and commercial administration in the morning shift. Students come from different social backgrounds. The great majority of them live in Neiva. Some others live in close towns such as Rivera, Campoalegre, Tello, Algeciras, Yaguará, Aipe, among others.

Most of the students live with their parents and have their financial support to do their studies. A few of them have a part-time job. A great number of these students are single and have no children. Few of them are parents and need to spend quality time with their children or devote extra time to other family activities.

In relation to the academic requirements for English courses in the university, students from all the programs have to take them. Students have to take four levels of English, namely, English 1, 2, 3, and 4 with 48 hours of face-to-face lessons. Each level has one (1) academic credit as stated in the students' curriculum. The only two programs with a higher number of English courses (7) is the international business program and the tourism management program with seven levels offered.

In the particular case of this study, the four participants are enrolled in the banking management and tourism Management programs. These students have 2 English lessons (1 hour forty minutes each) every week. Thus, students are exposed to the language between three and



four hours per week. In relation to the contents covered in their lessons, two years ago, a textbook called Openmind was adopted for teaching English. There are two books called Openmind 1 and Openmind 2 for the four levels of English. Each book has twelve (12) units. Six units are covered in each level.

### **Rationale**

Since the identification of the problem in the research study, there was an interest to contribute to expand the way of thinking of the English teaching staff and students about the use of Skype. It is important to widen the perspective most teachers and students have about Skype as a tool to be used only for contacting friends or relatives who are distant. Because of this belief, some teachers and students do not use this tool for academic purposes and do not know its benefits and limitations.

For the authors, with this research project it was possible to gain some research experience that is essential for professionals who pursue post-graduate studies. Furthermore, it was expected to improve educational processes in English language teaching. In regard to the relevance for the university, this research project was intended to make a positive contribution in the sense of informing other teachers from all areas and programs about the possibilities of using technological tools such as Skype. Also, it was proposed to try to improve processes that have been traditionally developed face to face. For instance, at the university, people usually attend feedback sessions, conferences, lectures and presentations in a specific place and arranged time. This way, it is expected to overcome the constraints of time to move from one place to another in arranged schedules. Finally, the authors of this study believed that it is important to share the

findings and conclusions of this study to broaden the perspective about Skype through academic events such as symposiums and conferences.

### **Research question**

The research question of this study was:

- What are the effects of using Skype on oral production out of the EFL classroom?

### **General objective**

The main objective of the present work was:

- To identify the aspects of oral production that are affected by the implementation of Skype beyond the EFL classroom.

### **Specific Objectives**

Two specific objectives were established:

- To find out the benefits and drawbacks of the implementation of Skype as a complementary learning activity to foster oral production.
- To establish the impact of the use of Skype as a means to meet the students' needs for extra language practice beyond the classroom.

## **Chapter II**

### **Theoretical Framework**

The problem identified in this study was the lack of opportunities to interact outside the classroom as a means to improve oral language abilities. The main objective of this research study was to identify the aspects of oral production that are affected by implementing pedagogical interventions using Skype. This tool was chosen because according to the literature review, some authors have portrayed evidence of its effectiveness (Romaña, 2014; Cuestas, 2013; Elia, 2006) to have extra practice of the language out of the classroom. The purpose is to expand the way teachers and students perceive Skype and its use for academic purposes.

In the present chapter, a depiction of the main constructs and theoretical foundations is made. This served as a basis to support the actions taken in this project and the methodology adopted. These foundations along with firsthand information from a likert scale and informal talks helped to unveil students' needs, perceptions and opinions about the use of social networks. Key concepts related to Skype, computer-mediated communication (CMC), social networking, cooperative learning, and oral production in CMC are taken to support this chapter.

#### **Skype**

Skype is one of the most important if not the most important VoIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol). It was first released in July 2004 allowing people all over the world to communicate free since it is a real time voice and text chat communication. This application also lets users share files and establish a videoconference with up to 9 people connected at the same time. The core of Skype is to allow people to interact with others independently of where they are.

This software has become a relevant tool for language learning and teaching users because of its low cost (or free for videoconferences) in comparison to other ways of English learning such as online courses, virtual tutors, and traveling abroad that can charge users. Also, learners can be in touch with the target language and the people they interact with could be native or non-native speakers as Skype has no restriction of any kind for users to install and use the software. “In two years, Skype has pioneered a revolution in global Internet communications by making it simple for anyone with an Internet connection to make and receive superior quality phone calls for free”. (<http://about.skype.com/2005/08>)

Generally, individuals love talking with others and listening to the voices of their friends and relatives is an element of key importance even in computer-mediated communication. Interacting with others is possible due to Skype's conference capabilities that enable up to nine people to talk to each other at the same time. Therefore, people can be connected in real-time conversations. In spite of the fact that little research has been done about the impact of Skype in an EFL environment, studies have demonstrated the efficacy of this CMC tool (Elia, 2006).

More than a decade ago, Godwin-Jones (2005) concluded “both Skype and podcasting could be considered “disruptive technologies” in that they allow for new and different ways of doing familiar tasks and offer intriguing opportunities for language professionals and learners, as they provide additional channels for oral communication” (p. 9)

Doughty & Long (2003), assert that Skype lets students interrelate, change and refine their input. As an example, Elia (2006) claims that “Many teachers around the world are actively experimenting with internet telephony in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classes as Skype can be used for communicating and sharing files and can be used as a tool to facilitate small

group class projects or small discussion forums [where] language learners can have the opportunity to speak in real-time with people from a variety of different countries” (p. 272)

In this sense, this software not only allows students to enhance skills but also it has become a relevant tool for teachers who are seeking out for effectiveness when it comes to EFL teaching. Because of this, it is important for teachers to use Skype as a means of providing students with opportunities to interact in the target language not only with native speakers but also with their classroom peers.

Apart from the studies mentioned above, Ritchie and Bhatia (2009) state that classrooms with computers that have Skype software installed and the necessary devices such as monitor, keyboard, headphones and microphone have made language learning possible from two distant place. It has also promoted language learning and e-communication in several countries in spite of the global digital boundaries at present.

Chen and Cordier (2008) back up that Skype gives one of the most popular voice- over Internet protocol facilities and with a simple processor, an Internet connection, L2 speakers and learners can interact with and make video and phone calls one another.

In regard to Skype’s relevance in education, Ryobe (2009), Skype can enhance and promote students’ English and computer knowledge while providing them the enough chances to search for other cultures, personalities, and varieties of spoken English. Additionally, Skype allows “learners to interact, modify and elaborate their input (Doughty & Long, 2003). Besides, Skype allows one-on-one calls as well as conference calls (in the latter, the person who initiates the call must stay connected for the whole session (Gough et al. 2006).

Similarly, a research conducted by Romaña (2014) evidences that Skype conference calls promote and improve adult learners speaking skills, mostly for social interaction purposes

outside the classroom setting. Furthermore, Romaña (2014) can evidence participants' acknowledgment in terms of Skype as a means of social relationship expansion not only with their classmates but also with people they knew in different contexts.

### **CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) in foreign language learning**

It is well known that language learning is a dynamic process in which human beings have been developing new ways and techniques to improve language skills. CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) is a process which people can rely on to learn an L2 not only because this practice can offer a wide variety of tools but also because people can employ it to communicate with the outside world and exchange information through computers (Chun 1994, Warschauer 1996). CMC is originally described by December (1997, para. 3) "as the process by which people create, exchange, and perceive information from telecommunication networks that facilitate encoding, transmitting, and decoding messages". Also, according to Walther (1996) CMC systems, in a wide range of forms, have become essential in the development, and conservation of personal relations. In CMC, People are able to interact with others for the first time and establish social bonds such as friendship or other relationships for a broad variety of purposes. These purposes may include emotional, educational or financial interests. As time goes by, more personal connections are established among CMC users.

At present, there is a wide range of options to promote CMC such as Skype, e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, among some others, that according to Chapelle (2003) have become supportive tools for foreign language learners since they allow people and students to interact whenever they want to. One of the tools that has gained plenty of popularity among diverse social groups is Skype. This tool has become popular because it is free of charge, easy to install

and manage and the technical requirements are not many. Also, Skype offers some attractive options such as screen mirroring, multi-user video- conference calls (up to 9 users), and multimedia sharing, among others.

According to Signorelli (2008), Skype is seen as a boosting audio- and video-conferencing tool merging aural, visual, and textual communication. Teachers may take advantage of Skype and other emerging tools that enable CMC processes to improve their teaching practices per se. In this sense, teachers can overcome the limitations of time and space at school because they can interact with their students when it is needed. Sharma & Barrett (2007) explain that CMC could be taken into two separately categories, constituting synchronous and asynchronous communication.

1. Synchronous communication is real time exchanging namely instant messaging (IM), computer conferencing, multiuser dimensions, and chat, among others

2. Asynchronous communication is communication that is performed at no real time, such as email, texting, and blogs.

In this vein, CMC offers a wide range of powerful online interaction alternatives for teachers and students. They can communicate whether synchronously or asynchronously for achieving an ample variety of purposes in communication. These purposes might involve informing, discussing, debating or any other intention interlocutors may have. In this regard, some studies have been carried out to highlight the impact in English Language Teaching.

Drawing on Warschauer's (1996) work, CMC is related to positive results and positive effect on the field of language learning and allows communication with L2 native speakers and other learners of English without limitations in terms of space and time. Moreover, Peterson (1997) claims that CMC fosters self-directed learning in a less threatening environment as

compared to L2 regular settings. Also, this author states that CMC does not discriminate students for their level of skills, background, and learning styles that can be different among learners.

Warschauer et al. (1996) state that CMC applications provide more equal participation to learners who are often discriminated against or excluded, including minorities, shy students, women in some cultures, and learners with particular learning styles. Chapelle (2003) stated that taking CMC as a means of interaction has allowed learners to look for opportunities for input that is not given in a real and regular social conversation.

### **Social Networking**

According to Barrow (2009), social networking is defined as a “way of communicating with others through online communities” (p. 436). In the same line, Joyce and Brown (2009) and Luo (2010) describe social networking characteristic as being public and semi-public structures. According to Luo (2010), social networking embraces a number of features such as shared users, shared connections, similar interfaces, and traverse connections with others. Social networking is cooperative and entails connection to take part in any interaction across the world (Luo, 2010).

In the same line, Skype as a CMC tool has similar characteristics to the ones presented by the former authors. Drawing on a web post by Foremski (2012, para. 2), Skype should definitely be counted as a social network because according to this author, in Skype “you can set a status 'mood' message, you can text message, use it as a group chat system, you can share files, photos, your computer screen. Plus, you can talk with people plus video calls, and set up videoconferences with several people”. Due to these features of Skype, social networking has been included in the theoretical framework of this study.

Leonard (2012) reports that applications in social networking promote postings and conversations. People that are immersed on social networking applications are contained in



virtual societies (Wandel, 2008). The great majority of the participants are composed by “younger generation” (Huang & Behara, 2007, p. 329). This “younger generation” is commonly considered to be people who were born during the personal computer and Internet age and who are in constant contact with social networking sites (Barrow & McKenzie, 2009; Wandel, 2008). Furthermore, another key concept in regards to social networking as an instructional strategy is self-efficacy. Bowers and Campbell (2008) mention that social networking is a facilitator for self-efficacy in the sense that learners have more self-sufficiency with content in a social networking environment.

A concept that is relevant to social networking is interaction. Both Joyce and Brown (2009) and Bowers-Campbell (2008) assert that interaction in a social networking environment is immediate, frequent, and social. SN in the classroom setting is inclusive whereby students are more included during activities and exclusion is minimized. Social networking tools offer students the opportunity to participate as well as give and accept invitations (Bowers-Campbell, 2008). In line with the latter authors, Joyce and Brown (2009) point out that social networking tools encourage interaction and over the duration of a class, interaction and participation increase. In addition to this, Abarca (2013) asserts that: “social networks have come to take a heavy role at home and on the daily lives of common society” [7]. Lastly, Amory (2010) claims that the instability of spontaneity in the environment is a catalyst for continuous development and change in a social networking environment.

### **Cooperative Learning**

When students establish social networks in their daily life, some of them may share similar purposes so that they work together to accomplish them. Then, cooperation among students is likely to emerge. For Johnson & Johnson (2008) cooperative learning is “the

instructional use of small groups so that students' work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (p. 5). Tran (2014) asserts that cooperative learning is organized and success-oriented for every single person that makes part of a cooperative learning group. Likewise, Koutselini (2008) defines cooperative learning as "the teaching and learning situation that ensures coherence and positive interdependence among members of small groups and results in learning for each member of the group" (p. 34). A research conducted by Nagel (2008) shows that cooperative learning is an "effective strategy that promotes a variety of positive, cognitive, affective, and social outcomes" (p. 364).

In this sense, cooperative learning is significant in the present study as more than one student takes part in the Skype sessions in order to take advantage of this strategy to have additional practice of their oral skills. By doing this, all of the four students can work together to achieve their goals in their learning process, too. Through the Skype videoconferences, all the four participants want to have extra language practice, so that the teacher researcher takes the lead to help them to achieve their goal. In the video-conference calls each person's efforts can be profitable not only for himself or herself but for the entire group as they learn together.

### **Oral Production in CMC**

Before the arrival of Skype, Payne & Whitney (2002) conducted a naturalistic experiment to examine the hypothesis that synchronous CMC could directly enrich L2 oral production by developing the same mechanisms that occur when there is spontaneous conversational speech. (p. 7). This study is framed within the Levelt's (1989) model of language production increased because of working memory concepts. This author concluded that "for students who find L2 oral production an overwhelming task and tend to tune out when the linguistic data generated in face-

to-face conversational settings becomes too great, the online synchronous interaction appears to give them a leg up on developing L2 oral proficiency” (p. 25)

Due to the fact that Skype as a Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) tool dates back to 2004, just a few research studies in the academic field have been carried out about its impact in educational settings. For this reason, more research is needed and the findings as well as conclusions should be widespread through training programs and academic events that can be the best scenario for informing teaching communities where the benefits and implications of this tool are ignored.

Undoubtedly, there are several authors who have advocated for Skype in recent years due to all the evident positive outcomes that exceed some cons portrayed by a few researchers in the form of constraints present in technological alternatives. Also, most of the theories and research studies have served as support for the use of Skype as a powerful tool to promote the oral practice of the language by learners of all ages and different backgrounds. However, despite the few findings in the last decades, particularly in Colombia and South America, there is much more that could be discovered about the potential of Skype in the realm of ELT and this could lead to an increased use of this software for academic purposes. Due to this reason, as authors of the present work, we intend that this Action Research study could inform teachers and students about the effects of Skype on oral production.

### **Related Studies**

**Skype in Language Learning.** The research studies stated below were selected and analyzed to have a well-grounded theory for this study. The contributions helped the authors

shape this research study as there was pertinence with the research question and they cover the ten-year span in which Skype has been present worldwide.

Last decade with the advent of Skype, Elia (2006) carried out a study in which she explored the impact of Skype when using ‘Mixxer’ that is website intended to connect language learners from all over the world in a way that everybody can be teacher and student. Her conclusion was that “Skype language learning through ‘Mixxer’ can be a convincing application to be widely supported, experimented, and its efficacy monitored in different language learning contexts. Skype can be a valid aid in trying to support language learners who always face problems connected to the difficulty in having contact with native speakers” (p. 275). Elia’s work differs from this research study as the participants did not interact with native speakers during the Skype sessions. However, Elia’s study was relevant because the absence of language practice was similar to the present research problem.

Some years later, Kinoshita (2008) conducted a research study about a video chat project using iChat that enables two or more learners with computers and broadband connection to ‘chat’ looking and listening to each other in real time. The objective was to offer L2 learners chances to practice their oral and listening skills with native speakers of the target language similarly to the way in real life. Some of her findings include that students showed enthusiasm and high motivation to use iChat to practice Japanese with native speakers in Japan. She concluded that iChat and Skype help language learning and let learners talk with others from distant locations for very low cost to the user (Kinoshita, 2008). This conclusion is in line with the characteristics of the context of the present work because participants can be in any place and they are able to participate in Skype sessions. They just need a computer and broadband Internet connection.

Mullen et al. (2009) conducted another study in which they made an analysis of strengths and weaknesses of Skype as a tool in Tandem language learning, which is a free site where two people can meet in person, phone or online to have language practice, to present a wide range of ways in which the exchanges can be incorporated in a more extensive Web 2.0 environment. They concluded that using Skype along with Tandem exchanges is a potential way to enable learners to take advantage of exchanges with L2 native speakers but it is not enough as it is necessary to improve the language experiences and avoid drawbacks related to sustainability and loss of motivation in students (Mullen et al., 2009).

In the same year, Wu et al (2012) conducted a research study in which a teacher from United States took part in Skype videoconferences in real time with advanced learners who teacher was a Taiwanese researcher. After each conference, a video was posted on a Facebook group by the American teacher for the students in order to discuss questions, and interact with both the American and Taiwanese teacher, as well as their peers. Then, students presented a parallel Taiwanese topic based on a critical preparation of the presentation. Survey questionnaires, critical text analysis and oral tests were used as assessment techniques. It was found that overall instructional methodology supported in social media engaged students in learning from an active attitude that promoted critical thinking and actual achievement (Wu et al, 2012). This article also matches our particular interests and helped us to shape our study because we recognize the importance of having students engaged and willing to participate in such process in order to promote the development of their oral skills.

Tsukamoto et al. (2009) carried out a study in Japan in which web conferences were implemented via Skype with a high school in the United States. After four years, the authors discovered that students were encouraged to participate more actively in the classroom so that

they began speaking more in Skype and prepared themselves better for the sessions. According to the authors, there was more real communication. A whole discussion of students' enjoyment of the web conferences was held in the study. As a conclusion, Tsukamoto et al. (2009) stated that "there are several advantages to web conference lessons for both students and teachers. Students have more chances to use English for real communication and their motivation to study becomes stronger. They speak more English even though their teachers do not force them because web conferencing is enjoyable to them" (p. 167)

In the next year, Coburn (2010) developed an Action Research study focused on teaching oral English online in an uncommon international online context full of challenges that is Iran. The objectives were to investigate to what extent topic-based conversation assignment questions fostered oral interaction and which pedagogical and technical skills the teacher, so called here "Conversation Facilitator", needed to develop to facilitate interaction and promote language learning. This study concluded that it is necessary to introduce appropriate tasks for weaker students and require them to take printed resource materials to the online conversations as well as more varied tasks and more student centered topics. Additionally, this study highlighted the importance of designing tasks carefully that suit the specific socio cultural context and technical skills required.

More recently, Cuestas (2013) conducted a small-scale study in a Catalan primary school in which she implemented an interactional activity grounded on sociocultural theory using Skype as the main tool to teach. The objective of this study consisted of observations and comparisons of particular occasions in the classroom. This author presented evidence of how using a synchronous digital tool can have an effect on the interactional activity of students. The author

suggests that digital tools have the ability to create a real necessity for learners to speak L2 because these tools can bring the students into situations from the outside world.

Likely, Taillefer & Muñoz (2013) carried out a study that consisted of a Skype-mate Language Project. It was aimed at enhancing oral communication skills and cultural awareness of students learning English and Spanish as L2. This study had a qualitative and quantitative approach to analyze a series of conversations between Hong- Kong and Spanish undergraduates through Skype using Spanish and English to communicate. There was video recording of conversations for evidence. Results showed that non-verb communication was determinant to have mutual understanding when L2 level was low. Also, participants with more proficiency explained cultural matters and made comments about them. The authors established that “Within such communicative complexity, discursive and cultural issues seem crucial and should be considered in the L2 teaching curriculum (p. 260)

The most relevant study related to the present research study was conducted in Colombia by Romaña (2014). His study was focused on determining the effect of Skype conference calls as computer-mediated communication tool in promoting the speaking skill in adults out of the classroom. This research study was performed based on the characteristics of qualitative Action Research. The most important findings include the fact that Tsukamoto (p. 4). The high relevance of this study lies on two aspects. First, it is a recent study in our Colombian context where there have been a few studies. Second, it is also based on the Action Research methodology as we share with this author the concern that our students lack opportunities to practice oral skills.

### **Chapter III Methodological Design**

#### **Research Approach and Type of Study**

To conduct the present research study, Action Research (AR) was selected as the appropriate methodology because firstly, the teacher researchers were interested in planning a pedagogical intervention to improve a problematic situation that was affecting the EFL students' learning process. Secondly, the study aimed at a particular educational issue that directly affected our teaching job. Third, we were able to identify a specific problem in the context where one of us taught English as a foreign language and it could be addressed using Action Research. This type of study had not been conducted before in this private university. Some theoretical constructs will be depicted in relation to how Action Research and how it was implemented in this research study.

Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) propose that Action Research is “a form of collective reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out”(p. 6).

Drawing on Kemmis and McTaggart's ideas (1982) cited in Burns (1999), our choice of type of study is grounded on five main benefits attained through the process of Action Research. First, teachers are able to think systematically about what happens in the classroom. Hence, a problem language learning and teaching is identified. Second, teachers try to improve particular aspects of learning by applying an action plan based on the particular issue. Third, it is possible to assess the outcomes of the applied action to continue with the process for improvement purposes. Fourth, teachers are also able to check complex conditions in a critical and practical



way. Fifth, by acting and reflecting, it is intended to enrich classroom language practices through the implementation of a flexible methodology (p. 16-17)

Other authors such as Richards and Farrell (2005) claim that Action Research refers to a teacher-conducted classroom investigation that seeks to clarify and resolve practical teaching issues and problems. Thus, the nature of Action Research made a remarkable contribution in terms of both plan designing and the wide variety of data collection tools. Furthermore, as Action Research is a constant cycle: Plan, Action, observation and reflection, it allowed us to have a clear idea about further actions to take.

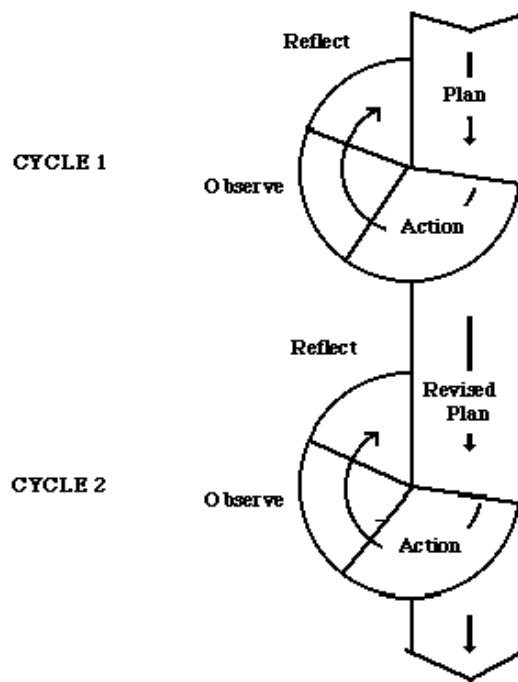
In the same line, in general terms, Frabutt et al. (2008) maintain that by doing Action Research, researchers are able to develop an inquiring systematic approach towards their own practice. Holter & Frabutt (2012) add that this approach should be oriented toward effective positive change when AR takes place or as stated by Mills (2011), applying AR could have a positive impact within a broader community.

Additionally, taken the improvement of teaching and learning in schools as a primary goal of Action Research, it has an impact in our research study since it seeks to unveil the effects of using Skype videoconferences in a particular EFL environment. Richards and Farrell (2005) also state that there are procedures that we have to follow to conduct Action Research: planning, action, observation, and reflection. That is to say, AR enabled us to enhance the practices we implemented during the whole process by employing diverse strategies and by foreseeing the actions we could apply in the future.

In McNiff and Whitehead's words (2010) "Action Research is about two things: action (what you do) and research (how you learn about and explain what you do). The action aspect of Action Research is about improving practice. The research aspect is about creating knowledge

about practice. The knowledge created is your knowledge of your practice” (P. 5). We found this principle to be very consistent as it embraces the key aspects of AR that guided us through the whole research process.

As stated before, we could rely on Action Research in the sense of the benefits that it provided to the study in terms of experience, improving teaching practices, and enhancing scholar language performance. Also, the arguments of what AR is grounded is nothing but the dynamic reflection on teachers’ practices and the educational goals by determining real context needs and situations.



Graph 3. Cyclical AR model based on Kemmis and McTaggart (1988)

Due to the nature of this study and the objectives to be achieved, Action Research provided significant means to do improvement and modifications on the way we implemented the strategies and activities that were developed in the study. In the same vein, Wajnryb (1999)

suggests that observing our own teaching is a way of discovering the classroom from a different perspective to provide focus and clarity.

To have a clear perspective about what happened in the Skype sessions, evidences were analyzed and this led us to make solid statements based on facts. In other words, the best way to explore the experience with learners is witnessing our own teaching performance from a critical standpoint. In this research study, the observations were made to analyze aspects that have helped to foresee improvements for further sessions as well as to clarify doubts about better ways to make our students use the language meaningfully.

### **Participants**

This research study took place in a private university in Neiva. The target population chosen for this research study consisted of 4 volunteers (3 female and 1 male). Their ages ranged between 18 and 21. They had a basic command of the English language. The participants were taking the first level of English at the moment of starting this study. Three of them lived in the urban area of Neiva. Only one lived in a nearby town. The selection of participants for this study is described as follows:

At the beginning of the process, the study was presented to the whole group of students (around 32). The purpose and the implications of the study were also explained to the whole class. It was clearly stated that this process was not in the curriculum of the university. Therefore, students were not forced to take part in the study but to participate voluntarily. Second, students volunteered to contribute to the Likert scale and informal talks developed inside and outside the classroom. Third, the proposed pedagogical interventions in the form of videoconferences on Skype were taken as complimentary activities for students. No financial

reward or grades were proposed to students to convince them to take part in the study. Then, we requested openly who desired to participate in the research study.

Five students were willing to contribute. However, in the first semester of 2015, two weeks after the first pedagogical intervention, one female participant deserted because she expressed that she did not have time availability to take part in the pedagogical interventions. The resulting sample was four participants. Their willingness to take part in this study consisted of devoting some of their free time to get prepared, log in and participate actively in the Skype sessions. Additionally, they also provided valuable data in the form of journal entries. As two of the participants were under 18 years old, they were asked to sign a consent letter (See appendix 2). In this consent letter, the participants were informed about the nature of the study, its objectives and the corresponding implications. In order to protect students' identities, each participant is referred with a number from one to five in the analysis of the data collected along the process.

### **Instruments and Data Collection Procedure**

In relation to the data collection instruments chosen to monitor and evaluate the development and application of this project, the selected sources were video- conference transcripts, researchers' field notes, and students' journals. These instruments were used in the pedagogical interventions to collect the data. In order to collect valuable information from the interventions carried out through Skype, a couple of extension software packages are necessary to record audio and video of the conference calls. This way, it is possible to transcribe what the participants say in the Skype sessions and collect the relevant information for the present study. To do so, Pamela-for-Skype TM and ScreenFlow are add-ons for Skype that are fully compatible

with it and can record one-on-one and conference audio and video calls as well as multiple users video conference calls (Gough et al. 2006).

### **Transcriptions**

The most outstanding studies about transcriptions were developed by Ochs (1979) who claimed that “transcription is a selective process reflecting theoretical goals and definitions” (p. 44). This conception is connected to the data collection procedure of this study about Skype because the authors had to select information based on the established goals. Additionally, taking into account McLellan et al.’s (2003) ideas, the use of computer software allows efficient management of data in qualitative studies but technology involves protocols that direct the systematic development of transcripts. Because of the importance of technology in managing transcriptions efficiently, transcriptions were the primary instrument to collect data from the six Skype videoconferences. All the relevant phrases, sentences and non-verbal actions made by the teacher researcher and participants were transcribed on a Word document and then analyzed in Atlas T.I. software. In this program, the authors of this study analyzed what the teacher researcher and students said. So, chunks of speech and non-verbal actions were turned into codes. To sum up, the objective of using transcripts was to create codes through Atlas Ti. in connection to identifying the aspects of oral production that are affected by the implementation of Skype beyond the classroom.

### **Field Notes**

Johnson (2012) describes field notes as “the written observations of what you see taking place in your classroom” In this particular study, it is not a traditional classroom but a virtual environment where Skype is the means to interact. The same author suggests that researchers

should stop thinking and just write what they see. Once the researcher starts recording, things that are interesting or important become salient. In this way, field notes serve to unveil details that are not noticeable otherwise. Then, patterns begin to arise from the data after many observations. Johnson also defines three types of field notes: thick descriptions during, quick notes during, and notes and reflections after (p. 3). In the present study, the chosen type was notes and reflections after because the teacher researcher wrote the field notes after each pedagogical intervention.

These field notes were based on the observations of the recordings of the videoconference sessions through Pamela and Screen Flow (specialized software packages to record Skype videoconferences). The field notes analyzed both the teacher researcher and students' particularities of their performance. Some observations were related to body language, gesture and mimics. The objective of using field notes in this study was to identify students and teachers' actions and reactions in the Skype sessions in a variety of activities. These activities included answering questions, showing agreement or disagreement towards points of view, description of pictures, expressing opinions, discussing topics portrayed on videos, among others. It is important to bear in mind that there was data that did not contribute to achieve the research objectives of this study. Then, field notes served to filter irrelevant information.

### **Journals**

Wallace (1998) stated that journals provide effective means of identifying variables that are important to individual teachers and students; they enhance awareness about the way a teacher teaches and students learn. In this study, after each session, the participants were encouraged to write a journal entry.

Students' journal entries comprised a description of activities, opinions, emotions and perceptions when performing a task from the participants' point of view. Thus, having the students' depiction of their own actions and reactions enabled the authors to have a better understanding of participants' performance in the Skype session. Then, writing a journal entry empowered the students to feel able to articulate ideas and express them freely without hiding if the experience affected them negatively or positively.

Participants wrote the journal entries by hand on a piece of paper without any particular format or sequence followed. However, the teacher researcher gave participants guiding questions such as:

- What was the session about?
- Can you describe what you did?
- What was your performance like?
- What particular moments do you want to comment on?
- What do you think about the topic and the activities?
- Did you like the session?
- Did you have any learning or technical difficulties?
- How did you feel?
- Did you find any advantages or disadvantages in terms of language learning?

Sometimes, students presented lack of ease to express their ideas because of the limitations of their writing skills even in their mother tongue. In terms of language learning, students were guided to reflect upon their development of their oral skills. Hence, the objective of using journal entries was to analyze how Skype affected the development of their oral ability out of the classroom.

### **Instructional Design**

The main concern for the authors of this study was to design a pedagogical strategy aimed at facing the problem that is the lack of opportunities for students to interact as a means to improve language abilities. Therefore, our pedagogical interventions were planned to generate a change or at least alleviate the problem. Drawing on Cuestas' ideas (2013), it can be said that both the use of the English language and Skype as a digital resource serve as a mediating tool to develop the language acquisition process to promote further interaction among the learners. (p. 52) Consequently, the focus of the pedagogical interventions was to offer students the chance to practice what they had learnt in the face-to-face lessons through Skype. The interventions were based on their particular needs, likes, taking into account their learning preferences in order to present appealing activities for students.

The actions taken in this study were grounded on the main features of Action Research, more specifically the one stated by Kemmis & MacTaggart (1982) about the fact of trying to improve certain aspects of learning by implementing strategic actions stated in an action plan that is directly related to a particular issue. The addressed problem of this research study is: What are the effects of using Skype on oral production out of the classroom? By applying the AR cycle proposed by Kemmis & MacTaggart (1982), the authors of this study intend to use Skype as a mediating tool within videoconference sessions to collect data and to be able to dig into its effects over the participants' oral skills. The two AR cycles carried out along the study are described as follows:



**First AR cycle**

**Plan.** For the planning stage, the teacher researcher chose the topics from the table of contents of the textbook Openmind 1 that had been adopted for the four levels of English (see graph 4 below). The chosen topics had already been covered prior to the Skype sessions. Before each session, participants were first informed via Whatsapp or in the face-to-face lessons about the topic to develop. By doing this, participants were able to study related vocabulary. They could also prepare ideas to express, look into relevant information about the topics or revise pertinent grammar structures. So, the participants could get ready for the Skype session.

Contents		Functions
Unit 1	<b>English around the World</b> Page 7	Using classroom language Introducing yourself Asking for and giving personal details Spelling Leaving messages Asking for help
	Reading: <b>RECOGNIZING COGNATES:</b> online survey	
	Listening: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> listening to a voicemail message	
	Speaking: <b>COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:</b> using polite language	
	Writing: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> completing an online registration	
LifeSkills: <b>INFORMATION AND RESEARCH:</b> understanding forms		
Unit 2	<b>What do You Do?</b> Page 17	Talking about jobs Talking about celebrities Talking about family members Talking about ideal careers
	Reading: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> reading a celebrity biography	
	Listening: <b>LISTENING FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION:</b> an informal conversation	
	Speaking: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> talking about family	
	Writing: <b>UNDERSTANDING THE MECHANICS:</b> capitalization and punctuation in sentences	
LifeSkills: <b>THINKING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING:</b> categorizing		
Unit 3	<b>Down Time</b> Page 27	Talking about likes and dislikes Talking about hobbies and interests Talking about your taste in movies Describing personality
	Reading: <b>RECOGNIZING COGNATES:</b> magazine article	
	Listening: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> listening to a radio show	
	Speaking: <b>COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:</b> asking for opinions	
	Writing: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> writing about yourself and your interests	
LifeSkills: <b>SELF-DIRECTION AND LEARNING:</b> understanding your learning style		
Unit 4	<b>Day In, Day Out</b> Page 37	Talking about when things happen Describing weekday and weekend routines Talking about interesting or unusual activities Talking about the order and duration of events
	Reading: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> reading a magazine article	
	Listening: <b>LISTENING FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION:</b> an interview	
	Speaking: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> talking about interesting activities	
	Writing: <b>UNDERSTANDING THE MECHANICS:</b> writing complete sentences	
LifeSkills: <b>ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING:</b> managing your time		
Unit 5	<b>Here, There, and Everywhere!</b> Page 47	Describing events and festivals Talking about places and things to do in a city Describing your neighborhood Giving advice Asking for and giving directions
	Reading: <b>READING FOR THE MAIN IDEA:</b> descriptions	
	Listening: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> listening to a news report	
	Speaking: <b>COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:</b> repeating directions to check understanding	
	Writing: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> writing an e-mail	
LifeSkills: <b>THINKING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING:</b> establishing priorities		
Unit 6	<b>Different Strokes</b> Page 57	Talking about different lifestyles Talking about your life right now and in general Describing what you do to help the environment Describing personal action plans
	Reading: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> reading personal profiles	
	Listening: <b>LISTENING FOR NUMERICAL INFORMATION:</b> online audio profiles	
	Speaking: <b>LANGUAGE USE:</b> talking to an old friend	
	Writing: <b>WRITING SIMPLE SENTENCES:</b> subject + verb + object	
LifeSkills: <b>SELF-DIRECTION AND LEARNING:</b> making personal change		

Graph 4: Table of contents from the textbook Openmind 1

The pedagogical intervention was designed based on a lesson plan previously developed by the professor and the students from the course of Issues and Trends in the Master’s in ELT at Universidad Surcolombiana in the first academic semester of the year 2015. On the first page (see graph 5 below) the lesson plan covers the following: Biodata about the two researchers who are authors of this study, place of application, date, time, objectives assessment, materials, and anticipatory setting.

Universidad Surcolombiana  
 MA in English Language Teaching  
 Lesson Plan- Research Study

Teacher-Researchers: Sergio Ramiro García Trejos- Rolney Leonardo Diaz Pascuas Date: October 26<sup>th</sup> 2015- 10:00- 10:40  
 School: CORPORACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA DEL HUILA CORHUILA Grade: Second semester students  
 Lesson Subject: English  
 Teaching Time: 30 mins.

*Lesson Concept: What are you wearing?*

<i>Objective</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
1. Students will talk about clothing according to different situations, weather conditions and places.	1. Students will be able to choose suitable clothes according to the appropriate context.
2. Students will express their opinions and preferences about clothing other people wear.	2. Students will be able to express opinions about clothes worn by others.

**Materials:**

Laptop or desktop computer, full-headset/earphones and built-in microphone, pencil and paper, slides on PPT show, Skype™ software (previously installed), broadband connection (over 512mb)

**Anticipatory Setting**

1. First, students will place themselves in a comfortable and quiet place away from noise or other interruptions to log in Skype. Then, students will make some testing on their computers to make sure video and audio are clear prior to the beginning of the video-conference.

Graph 5: First page of a lesson plan implemented in the first AR cycle

The anticipatory setting was intended to enable students to get acquainted with the content information that the teacher researcher asked in the session and they could prepare the ideas through web quests to be more familiar with the topic. The second page (see graph 6 below) of the lesson plan includes: activating prior knowledge activity, procedure by steps, closure activity, and additional concept related activity in which they were required to reflect on the session and write the journal entry.

Universidad Surcolombiana  
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Lesson Plan- Research Study

**1. Activating Prior Knowledge:**

1. Students will be greeted by the teacher-researcher. The topic of the session is stated clearly to gather background knowledge. Then, the teacher-researcher will make examples about the clothes he is wearing to model the activity.

**Procedure:**

1. First, students will be asked questions about the clothes they are wearing, e.g.: Sebastian, What are you wearing today? Then, one by one will describe what they are wearing using the structure, e.g.: I am wearing a t-shirt.
2. Students will have to talk about the clothes they wear in different weather conditions. For example, what clothes do you wear when it's really hot? or what clothes do you wear in cold city like Bogotá?
3. Students will be presented a set of encouraging, eye-catching pictures of people in several scenarios and they have to describe what they are wearing and explain if it is formal or informal and in what situation they would wear these clothes. Then, students will describe the clothes they wear depending on the situation, such as an informal or formal party, a funeral, on the beach or just at home.
5. Students will watch a video (fashion-police) to express ideas about foreign people clothing. Also, they have to say if they would buy and wear the clothes they have just seen and why.

**Closure:**

5. The teacher-researcher will ask students to express their opinions about how important clothes are in their daily life. Students will be engaged to express their ideas following examples posed by the teacher for example: I think clothing is important because it can tell you about people's personality and because we have to choose clothes according to the situation and the context.

**Additional Concept Related Activity:**

Students will be assigned to write a journal about the experience they had in the Skype session|

Rolney Leonardo Diaz Pascuas  
Sergio Ramiro García Trejos

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Graph 6: Second page of a lesson plan implemented in the first AR cycle.

**Action.** In the action stage of the first AR cycle, three (3) Skype videoconferences were implemented as follows:

The teacher researcher logged in Skype 10 or 15 minutes prior to the sessions. With the assistance of the second teacher researcher, some technical tests were made to ensure that audio and video were available. Both of them verified that the software package Pamela or ScreenFlow was working properly by starting a trial videoconference call. This was done to ensure that the Skype sessions were correctly recorded for further analysis. The four participants usually arrived at different times. One female participant was always on time and complained about the others' unpunctuality. Sometimes, the participants experienced problems with the password to log in or the installation of the software. Once, one of the participants had to log in from a very remote rural area, which generated aural interference or problem with the webcam in the videoconference call.

When the four participants were ready to begin, the teacher researcher started by greeting them enthusiastically to make them feel at ease. The topic of the session was reminded to participants. Then, the teacher researcher made questions to activate background knowledge. Questions related to the participants' daily life were also made. This was done so that they found it meaningful to talk about themselves and exchange ideas with the others. In order to give each participant the opportunity to talk and enough time to express ideas, the teacher researcher assigned them turns to answer the questions. During the participation of each student, the other three (3) were expected to listen and wait for their turn to talk. Students were allowed to ask the

teacher any question they had. Their inquiries included corroborating that they had understood the question, asking for clarification, or inquiries about grammar and vocabulary, among others.

To keep participants' attention, appealing pictures and videos were used to persuade participants to take action in the session. Also, provoking questions were made to keep participants focused on the activities. Sometimes, when there was no clarity about words or expressions or participants did not know the vocabulary, the teacher researcher used mimics or gestures to help participants to get the meaning more easily. Otherwise, the words and expressions were written in texting area of the Skype window so that students could read the words and understand the meaning with examples. When participants kept silent, they were encouraged to talk or to ask anything related to the topic. Occasionally, the teacher researcher tried to elicit opinions from the participants. Some of them were eager to talk, while others preferred to keep silent and listen. During most of the session, the participants were on task. Finally, some conclusions were made between the teacher researcher and participants. The students were asked to write a journal about each Skype session. These Skype sessions lasted between 30 and 40 minutes.

**Observation & Reflection.** For observation purposes, three main actions were taken. First, one of the teacher researchers closely observed the whole recording of each session to write the transcriptions that were relevant for the objectives of this study. Second, the other teacher researcher who was leading the Skype session wrote field notes about what happened during the session. And third, reading the journal entries that were written by the four participants. In regard to reflection, the authors of this study were able to unveil the following aspects to be kept in mind for the next cycle:

Despite participants showed interest in taking part of the session, sometimes they felt that the topics were not very attractive to them because the teacher researcher chose them. Besides, the pictures and videos played a significant role to keep participants focused on the sessions. Some technical difficulties were present because the teacher researchers do not foresee problems related to the computer literacy of students and limitations of Internet connection from remote places. Moreover, it was frustrating for students who arrived on time to see that the others were not punctual and their time was wasted. Also, they enjoyed when the teacher researcher used mimics to make himself clear. Regarding participants' engagement, it was noticed that if they did not have prior knowledge about the topics, they avoided participating. Lastly, some external interruptions (e.g. noise, people interrupting participants) in the places from where they logged in affected the development of the sessions.

### **Second Cycle**

**Plan.** In the second cycle, improvement of some pedagogical actions was achieved. In the planning stage, taking into account that the topics played a key role to keep participants engaged in the sessions, the authors decided to listen to participants' voices. The students were empowered to decide what the topics for the next three sessions were. For instance, the chosen topics were travel options and ambitions, festivities and customs around the world and food from abroad. In relation to aural and visual aids such as pictures and videos, it was pertinent to inform the participants the URL (internet addresses) where they could find these aids to have the opportunity to see them in advance. Thus, participants felt more prepared to talk about the topics. In regard to technical problems, it was crucial to ask participants to check if the Skype software was working correctly with granted access as well as the necessity to have a good internet connection without any problem to log in. The pedagogical sessions were not held during the

weekends because one of the participants was in a rural area at this time with limited connectivity. The teacher researcher also insisted on the importance of being on time for the sessions to show respect for others' time availability and be able to start on time. Finally, it was relevant to ask the participants to access Skype from a place where there was not too much noise or family members interrupting the flow of the sessions. This ended up in a well-revised lesson plan as can be seen below:

Universidad Surcolombiana  
MA in English Language Teaching  
Lesson Plan- Research Thesis

**Activating Prior Knowledge:**

Students will be greeted by the teacher-researcher. The topic of the session is re-stated clearly through questions to gather background knowledge. Are you hungry? What is your favorite food? What food do you usually eat at the university? And then, what strange food have you tried in Colombia?

**Procedure:**

1. First, students will be shown some pictures about exotic foods around the world. They will be engaged to try to describe how these dishes are prepared and for what occasions they are eaten. Also, the teacher researcher will ask them to discuss whether they will try them or not.

Additionally, the teacher researcher will show participant a Power-point presentation with foods from different parts of the world and they will try to guess where they are from and if they will try them or not.

(<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ceL5DP0DwDa3QtIqMACAcuM0gmkTM2Dr9wr2x6ynZIc/edit#slide=id.i0>)

2. Second, students will watch a video (previously watched) about weird foods around the world. In this video, they can observe some weird, disgusting foods around the world. They will state if they would try them or not, and explain why. Also they will be asked if they have ever persuaded a person from a foreign country to try our traditional food.

3. Third, they will present a dish they found interesting to try and they will persuade their partners to try them no matter if they look delicious or disgusting. Then, they will see a video about Thanksgiving day in USA and the Dog festival in China (not previously seen and without subtitles) and the teacher-researcher will ask them how much they knew about these two celebrations and make comparisons between them and they should express which one they would like to try and why.

**Closure:**

1. The teacher-researcher will ask the following question? Do you think it is important to preserve the customs about traditional foods? If so, explain why?

**Additional Concept Related Activity:** Students are required to write a journal about the experience they had in the Skype session in which they report what they learnt through this activity, the outcomes, perceptions, opinions, etc.

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Graph 7: Page one of a revised plan of the second cycle of AR

Universidad Surcolombiana  
 MA in English Language Teaching  
 Lesson Plan- Research Thesis

Teacher-Researchers: Sergio Ramiro García Trejos-Rolney Leonardo Díaz Pascuas

Date: May 21<sup>st</sup> 2016

School: CORPORACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA DEL HUILA CORHUILA

Grade: Third semester students

Lesson Subject: English

Teaching Time: 35-45 minutes

Lesson Concept: *Would you try that plate?*

**Objectives**

1. Students will be able to exchange ideas about carnivals and festivities around the world.
2. Students will be able to compare their own culture with others' from foreign countries.

**Materials:**

Laptop or desktop computer, full-headset/earphones and built-in microphone, pencil and paper, slides on PPT show, Skype™ software (previously installed), broadband connection (over 512mb)

**Anticipatory setting:**

1. At least 3 days before developing this lesson plan, students will be told that the topics for this coming session is about food and traditional plates in Colombia and around the world. Besides, students will be told to prepare a short presentation about a strange traditional dish from anywhere in the world they find interesting to try.
2. First, students will find a quiet place away from noise or other interruptions to log in Skype. Then, students will make some testing on their computers to make sure video and audio are clear prior to the beginning of the video-conference.
3. Students will be sent a link of a YouTube video around weird food to be matter of discussion during the Skype session. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3AxDtpdCCc>

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Graph 8: Page two of a revised plan of the second cycle of AR.



**Action.** In the action phase, it was relevant to implement the revised plan bearing in mind the most outstanding actions for improvement. Among these actions, the teacher researcher gave them the chance to take the initiative to talk without assigning turns. More corrective feedback was given to the participants. The use of attractive pictures and interesting videos was more prevalent. Provoking questions that led to discussion were common in the three sessions. Also, mimics and gestures were more frequent in order to avoid the use of the mother tongue. Students were engaged to learn by making positive appraisals of their performance. It is relevant to pinpoint that the dates and times of these interventions had to be rearranged more than once due to students' available time, holidays stated by the university, students' external duties, students' new jobs, and place of residence. All the actions mentioned above were taken following the theoretical foundations of Action Research.

**Observation & Reflection.** It was interesting to see how some actions taken for improvement actually worked while others did not. Regarding the topics for the sessions, participants showed interest to participate actively and in some cases, they lacked previous knowledge to express a wider variety of ideas. Moreover, one of the participants did not arrive on time for the Skype sessions despite the recommendations made by the teacher researcher. Technical difficulties were also present in the second cycle because one of the students accessed Skype from a cellphone and could not see the video through the screen mirroring option activated by the teacher researcher. Corrective feedback, mimics and gestures also played a major role to facilitate students' improvement of grammar and vocabulary.

The following table shows the topics, dates of development, and main objectives addressed in the six pedagogical interventions of the two AR cycles.

Session # /Cycle	Date (dd/mm/yy)	Topic Of the session	Main Objectives of the sessions
#1 First Cycle	24/08/15	What should we do to help?	<p>1. In this lesson, students will be able to use should and should not effectively to give suggestions and recommendations about an environmental problem and a political problem through a Skype videoconference.</p> <p>2. In this lesson, students will elicit their opinions and points of view about the present situation in the Colombian border and the refugees escaping from war in Syria.</p>
#2 First Cycle.	05/10/15	What are you like?	<p>1. Students will use adjectives correctly to describe their personality and they will compare themselves with close relatives or friends.</p> <p>2. Students will use comparative adjectives applying the correct grammatical rules through a Skype videoconference.</p>
#3 First Cycle	09/10/15	What are you wearing?	<p>1. Students will be able to choose suitable clothes according to the appropriate context.</p> <p>2. Students will be able to communicate their critical perspective about clothing worn by others supporting their ideas.</p>

#4 First Cycle	13/05/16	Where would you like to travel?	<p>1. Students will be able to discuss their travel ambitions and ask their partners about theirs.</p> <p>2. Students will be able to express their habits and opinions about travelling.</p>
# 5 Second Cycle	18/05/16	Do you know festivities and customs around the world?	<p>1. Students will be able to express their opinions about food and traditional plates around the world.</p> <p>2. Students will be able to share their ideas and discuss others' about strange food from their own country or a foreign one.</p>
#6 First Cycle	23/05/16	Would you try that plate?	<p>1. Students will be able to exchange ideas about carnivals and festivities around the world.</p> <p>2. Students will be able to compare their own culture with foreign cultures.</p>

Table 1: Table Dates, topics and objectives of pedagogical interventions

Note: The dates stated in this table show an evident gap between the first and the second cycle. This is due to the following reasons:

a. 2 Holiday spans arranged by the university that affected the program for implementing the pedagogical interventions. The first holiday started on the second week of November 2015

until the second week of February 2016 (three months approx.). The second holiday span took place at the end of March 2016 and lasted one week.

b. Difference availability times among students. The four students have different schedules at the university and other external duties, which resulted in difficulties to arrange meeting times.

## Chapter IV

### Data analysis and findings

This chapter presents the data analysis and findings of this study and starts by drawing on the steps and the stages implemented. Then, a description of the process of data reduction, which helps to get the categories and subcategories, is made. Next, the portrayal of patterns or commonalities that appeared in the data collected during the intervention phase are shown. Afterwards, a depiction of the categories and subcategories arisen from the data collected with the purpose of answering the research question is made.

This research study is grounded on the principles of Action Research. Richards and Farrell (2005) claimed that there are certain procedures to conduct action research: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Taking into account the observation stage that allowed us to analyze the procedure to further actions, namely, the choice of suitable topics to be developed in the Skype sessions, the total number of pedagogical interventions, among others. All this was with the purpose of portraying experience as a means of interpreting data. As this study aimed at the improvement of educational matters, the principles of qualitative research are relevant in order to get significant data to such purpose. Drawing on the previous idea, Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) stated that qualitative research embraces analyzing and interpreting texts and interviews to discover meaningful patterns of a specific phenomenon. In the same way, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) define qualitative research as “a set of complex interpretative practices, which embraces tensions and contradictions, including disputes over its methods and the forms its findings and interpretations take” (p. 6).

Taking as a reference the concepts about qualitative research specified above, the data analysis implemented in this study was a qualitative one. According to Dey (1993), a qualitative data analysis requires tearing apart data into bits, and then mixing them together. That is to say, qualitative data analysis allows us to break up the data into fragments in order to observe the details of the information gathered. Similarly, Corbin and Strauss (2008) described qualitative data analysis as “a process of examining and interpreting data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge” (p. 1). In regards to action research, Burns (1999), asserts that data analysis in action research that takes as a starting point the “action” or components of the cycle, where the priority lies on planning and acting. Then, getting to the “research” features, where the significance switches to more systematic observation and reflection. That is to say, that the research part implies to structure a stage in which the researchers have to reflect upon the observations made in a pedagogical intervention to make further actions in order to improve the subsequent cycle.

### **Process of data analysis**

In order to fully develop the process of data analysis, it is significant to acknowledge the concepts of the different variations of code, which is one of the major components in the analysis of the information collected. Hence, the concepts of open coding, axial coding and selective coding are prompted as follows. First of all, Corbin and Strauss (2008) refer to open coding to the procedure of breaking up the information gathered describing concepts to stand for chunks of raw data. At this first step, the researcher starts by breaking data down into portions that are easier to handle, reflecting upon those chunks of data and making concepts of what the researcher considers the information lead to (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Secondly, axial coding is the process of crossing or connecting concepts to each other (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) so that patterns and commonalities are identified. Finally, the selective coding is the closing step of analysis for researchers whose research target is theory-construction and entails examining and categorizing through all the documents (journals, teachers' field notes and transcripts) and looking for hints on how all categories might fit together (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

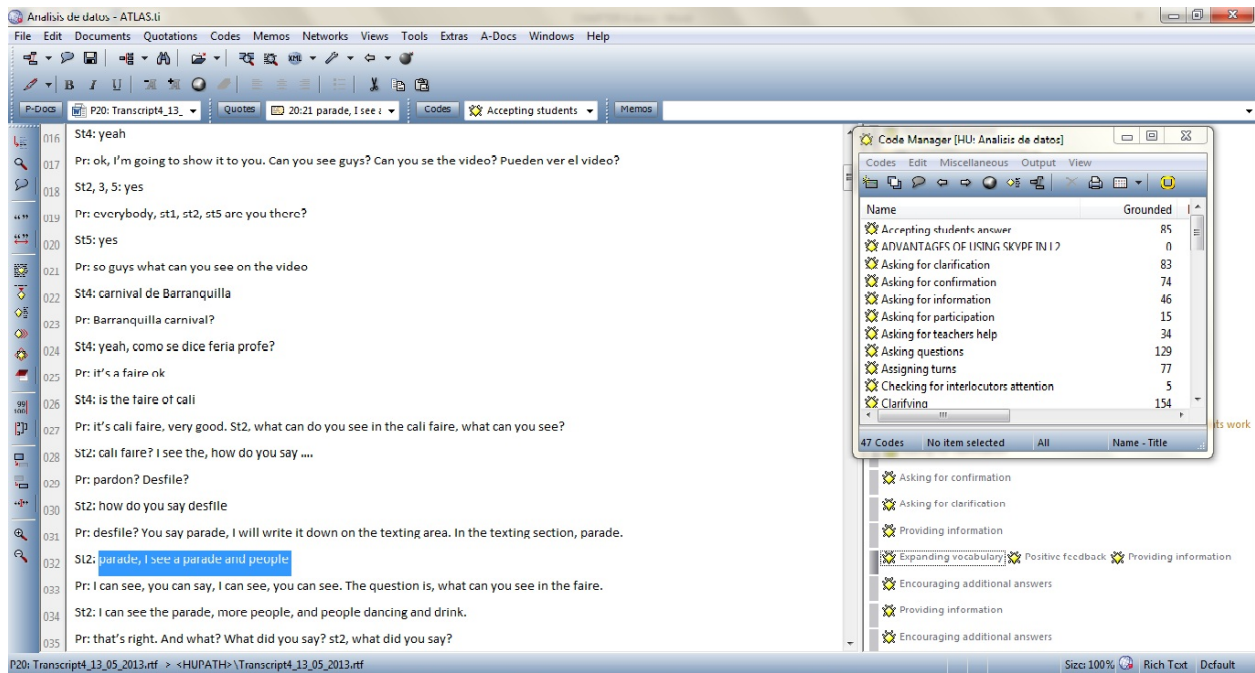
In this sense, in the open coding phase the data collected through the instruments was separated into chunks of information and labeled them with code names. In the axial coding stage, the codes were analyzed in order to check if they appeared in the three data collection instruments (students' journals, Skype sessions transcripts, and teacher researcher's field notes). Finally, as the codes were analyzed the main category and the subcategories emerged in the selective coding stage through the triangulation.

### **Data Reduction**

Data reduction is the process of "*selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data in written-up field notes or transcriptions* (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10). In this sense, Burns (2010) asserts that analyzing action research data is an ongoing process of cutting down information to figure out descriptions and patterns. In order to apply the process named previously, the data collected through the instruments along the intervention phase in this study were thoroughly read to find such descriptions and patterns hitherto mentioned by Burns (2010). In order to start classifying the data gathered at this starting stage of analysis, it must be said that the data was exhaustively examined in order to search for broad

patterns, ideas and trends that appeared to be the answer of the research question (Burns, 2010) of this study.

Corbin & Strauss (2008) refer to the step mentioned above as lower-level concepts and they define concepts as “an analyst’s impressionistic understanding of what is being described in the experiences, spoken words, actions, interactions, problems, and issues expressed by participants” (p.51). In this sense, chunks of data were framed under codes labels in order to identify the relevant information related to the research question and the objectives of the study so that the patterns and commonalities were identified when labeling the data. In this sense, some utterances from the teacher researcher and participants were excluded because they appeared to be irrelevant for the purpose of this study. In this way, this stage of data reduction is a procedure of analysis that refines, categorizes, focuses, rejects and classifies data in order not only to be able to obtain conclusions but also to get them proved (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.11).

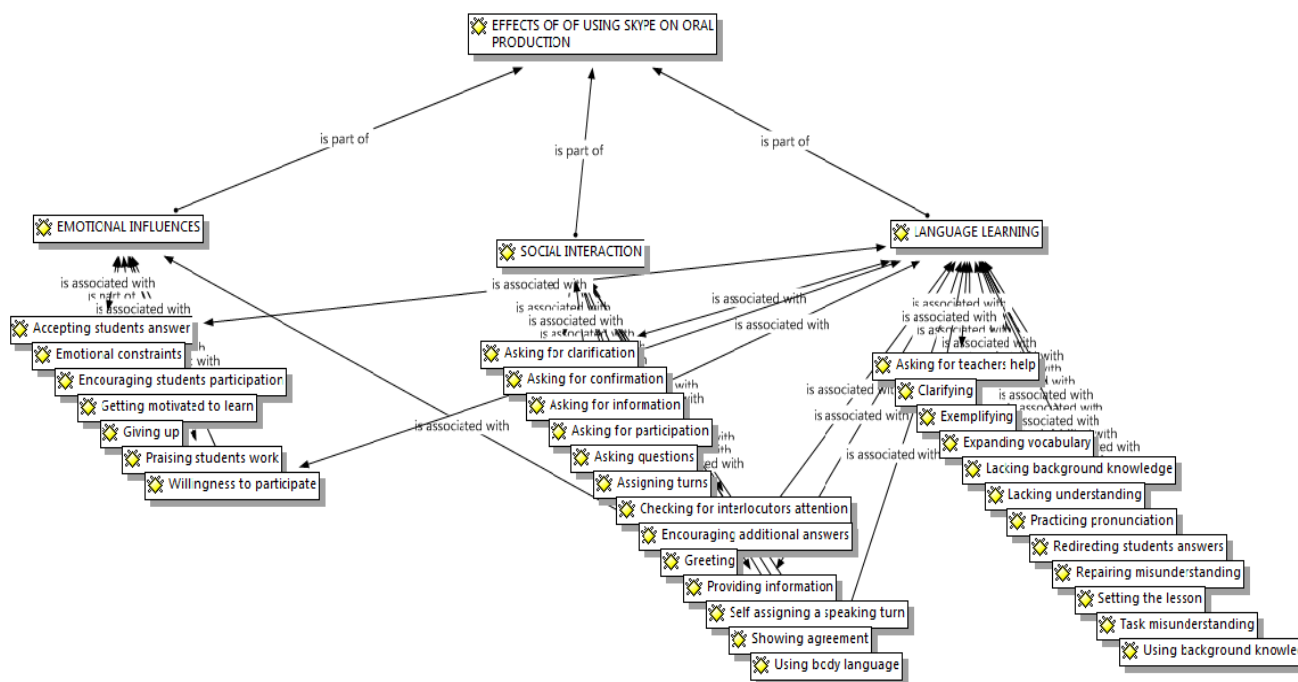


Graph 9: labeling codes



**Atlas.Ti**

As the foundation of this study lies on the principles of Action-Research, this research entails a sense of the improvement of educational issues. It must be said that a qualitative analysis needs to be applied in order to examine, evaluate and codify the data gathered to respond the research question. In this view, a CAQDAS (Computer Assisted/Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software) called Atlas. Ti was implemented to analyze the data in a thorough way. This is often used as a tool for organizing and sorting data through coding. Likewise, according to Woolf (2008) it “is best thought of as a concept database, to which you can provide concept names, or codes, for a multitude of qualitative analysis tasks. The program helps you bring order and structure to your growing list of codes in four main ways”. This software allows discovering patterns and commonalities among the data collected from the students’ journals, teacher-researcher field notes, and the Skype sessions video-call transcripts.

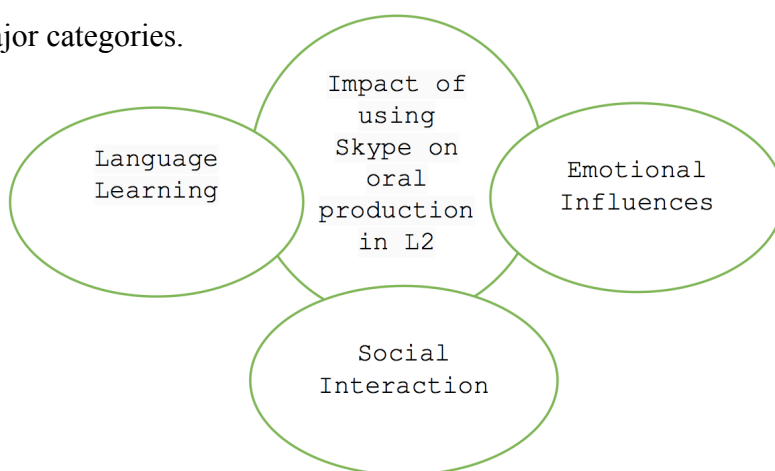


Graph 10: Triangulation of codes using Atlas.Ti

Similarly, Atlas.Ti software permits the researcher to triangulate the information in such a way that it allowed the authors of this study to systematize and refine concepts by turning them into codes to generate categories and subcategories. In this sense, by applying this software, the categories were identified in order to obtain the findings and conclusions of this research study.

## Findings and Results

In order to unveil the findings and results from the data gathered starting from the lower-levels of information (codes) to a broader view of it (categories) Strauss and Corbin (2008) propose certain convenient “techniques such as the use of integrative diagrams that can be used to facilitate identification of the central category and the integration of concepts” (p. 106). The particular procedure that was implemented to identify the main category was the use of integrative diagrams. According to Strauss and Corbin (2008), diagrams can be valuable tools of integration because integrative diagrams are not only abstract but are also visual representations of data. Strauss and Corbin (2008) also affirm that a diagram does not need to enclose every single concept that arose during the data research process, but should aim at on those that could be thought as major categories.

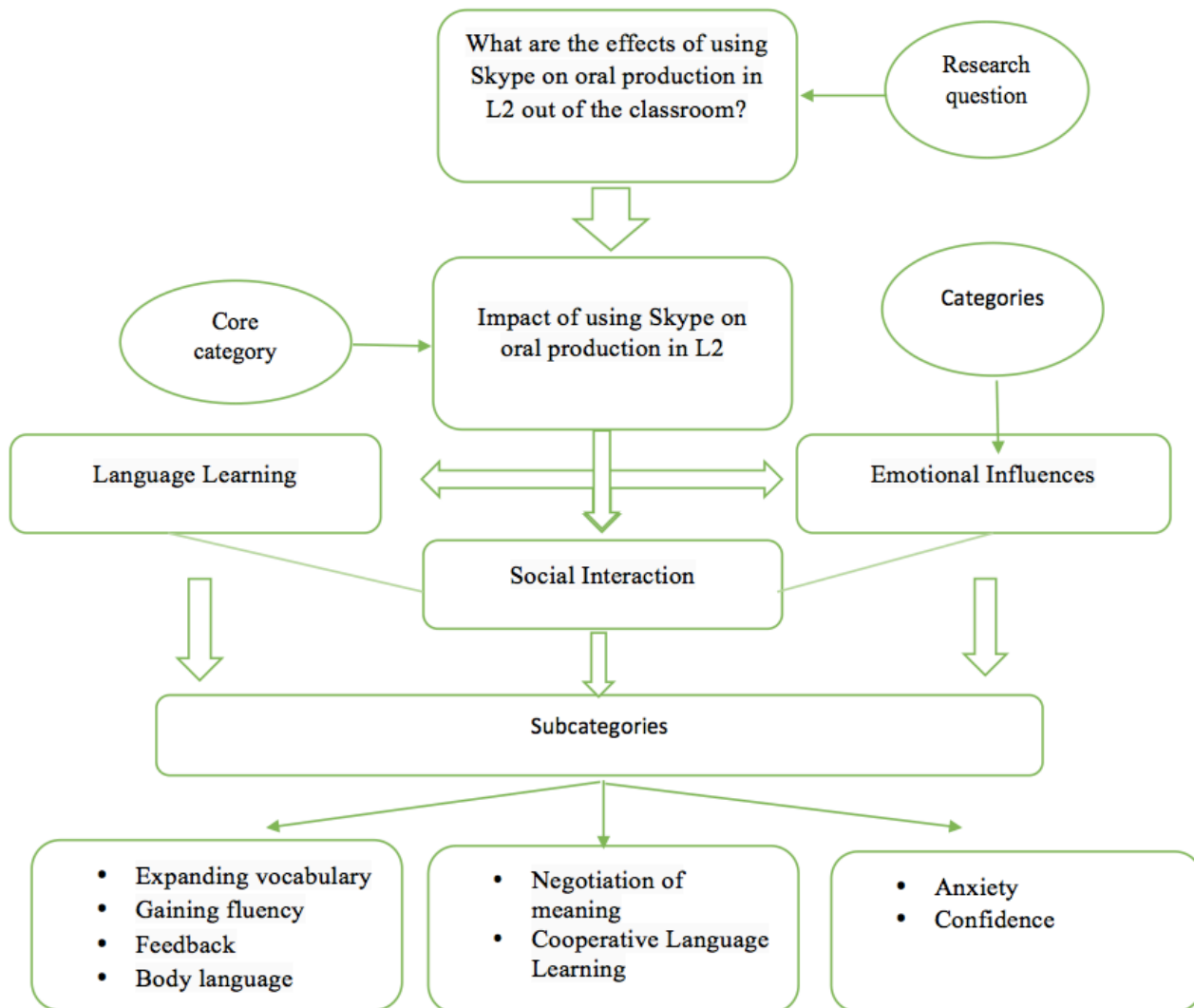


Graph 11: Emerging core category and supportive categories after triangulation with Atlas.Ti

The core category that emerged from this research study was: *impact of using Skype on oral production*. This core category is connected with three more categories and it also has the capacity to ground theory to what the research study is about (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). The idea previously stated means that the connection of the categories with the theoretical framework of the study is relevant when supporting the results of the study. In this vein, the major categories and subcategories identified in this study, which resulted into the core category mentioned before, were these ones: first: *Language learning*, second: *Social Interaction* and, the last one: *Emotional Influences*. It must be said that all the categories outlined above are directly connected and respond to the research question: What are the effects of using Skype on oral production out of the EFL classroom?

Each one of the categories is supported with its subcategories. In relation to the first category, *Language Learning* the subcategories that emerged were: a) expanding vocabulary, b) gaining fluency, c) feedback, and d) body language. In regards to the second category, *Social Interaction* its supporting subcategories are: a) negotiation of meaning and b) cooperative language learning. Finally, regarding the third category *Emotional Influences*, its supporting subcategories are: a) anxiety and, b) confidence. This categories and subcategories are discussed in depth below.

The following diagram shows the core or central category of this study as well as its main supporting categories and subcategories:



Graph 12: Core category, categories, and supportive subcategories

**Analysis of results**

In order to analyze the results, it must be said that this research study comprises two cycles of pedagogical interventions. Each one of them had different characteristics in terms of contents and students participation. The first cycle of the Skype sessions was conducted under the instructions of the teacher researcher. Also, in the first cycle, the topics were chosen by the teacher according to the university English curriculum. Hence, the students had background

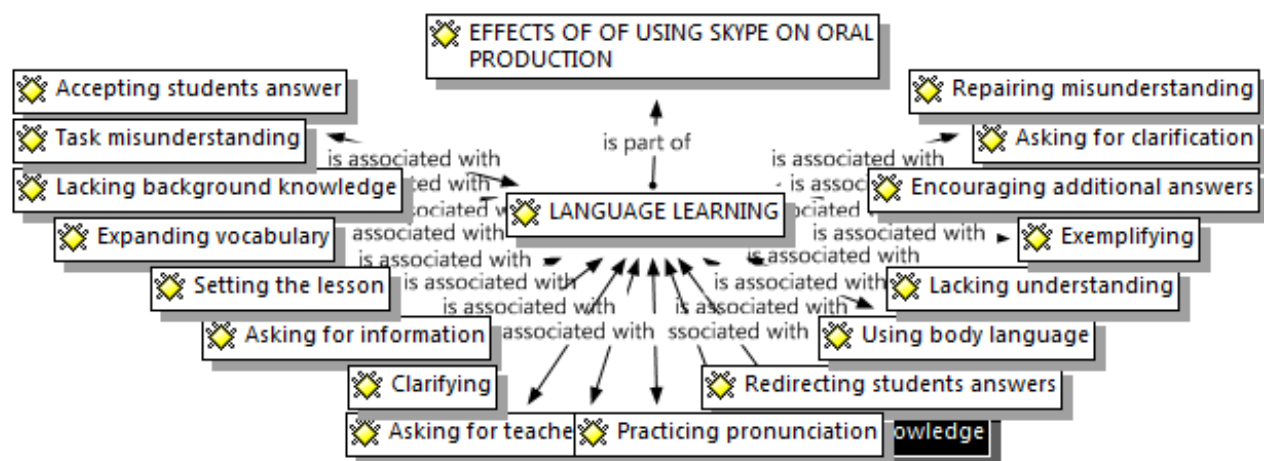
knowledge in order to make the topics more contextualized and meaningful for them. At the end of the first cycle, the data gathered from the research instruments allowed the authors of this study to discover students' perceptions, activity engagement, and performances, that undoubtedly led the teacher researchers to take further actions to enhance the second cycle. During the second cycle, the sessions turned to be more inclusive for students in the sense of allowing the students to choose the topics to be addressed. By doing so, students' interests and likes were taken into account to make the videoconferences, attractive, provoking, and meaningful. Nonetheless, the students' names were not shown in the present study following the standards of ethical principles in qualitative research. Instead, their names were replaced with numbers. Besides, students' identity was protected and their privacy was not violated despite the consent form they signed to take part of the study.

Then, by triangulating the data between the two cycles including students' journal excerpts, videoconferences transcripts, and the teacher-researcher field notes, the emerging categories and subcategories mentioned in graph 12 appeared.

The core category named as *Impact of using Skype on oral production in L2* is the category, which contains the main theoretical ground. Such category shows that students expressed their perceptions and maintained that Skype in fact had an effect in the development of language skills specifically in their oral production. Furthermore, there is written evidence that the effects are not only limited to language learning but also to their emotional aspects. These included anxiety and confidence.

In regards to the research question: What are the effects of using Skype on oral production out of the EFL classroom? The categories and their subcategories are listed below:

**Language learning.** This category shows that the use of Skype conference calls has a positive effect in language learning in a general view on students. First, through the data analysis, it was exposed that students took advantage of the Skype sessions to clarify doubts in terms of vocabulary and grammar structures. Secondly, the participants made use of Skype to practice pronunciation with the help of the teacher-researcher and from their peers. In this sense, feedback (subcategory) was relevant when students made mistakes in order to have an immediate response to correct them.



Graph 13: Main category, subcategory and emerging codes

The previous graph demonstrates the emerged codes of the category. Based on this, it can be considered that students used Skype to improve their language skills practices mostly on oral production. In line with this category, Elia (2006) concluded that “Applications of technological advances have always found a direct use in language learning” (p.265). In this sense, the graph above shows that by using Skype (technological advance) learners had a positive impact in terms of language learning (in their pronunciation, grammar doubts clarification, among others) along the process.

The excerpts collected from different students in different data collection provide clear example of how participants made use of Skype in their language learning practices.

*But, after, we started to talk about how we describe ourselves, how we behave with people, my classmates spoke really good, I like how much my partner (S5) has improved and this really catch my attention in order to keep going with this process and being faster when speaking in English.*

*Excerpt 1. Student journal, student 2, October 5<sup>th</sup> 2015*

*I kept on making mistakes because I said things like "I am more lazier" but thanks to the session I was able to clear up the topics and resolve my doubts.*

*Excerpt 2. Student journal, student 2, October 9<sup>th</sup> 2015,*

*They all three managed to express their ideas with just a few corrections of pronunciation. Also, they were asked what they like to wear at the university. They spontaneously expressed ideas about their outfits for the university.*

*Excerpt 3. Teacher-researcher field note, October 9<sup>th</sup> 2015*

Out from the excerpts, students and the teacher researcher agreed on the idea of Skype as a tool to improve some features of language learning such as grammar, syntax, and pronunciation. In this regard, language learning is directly linked with Cuestas (2013) when she concluded, "using digital in pedagogically informed ways can be beneficial for language learning practices" (p. 65). This study resembles Cuestas' conclusion in the sense of the benefits participants obtained while using Skype as a significant tool in their language learning practices and performance. What can be asserted according to the results in the data analysis is that students enhanced their language learning practices through the implementation of Skype as a

complementary activity. In this sense, this study confirms what Romaña (2014) states in terms of taking Skype as a powerful CMC tool to increase self-efficacy towards language learning.

The following subcategories are associated with the category language learning: a) expanding vocabulary, b) gaining fluency, c) feedback, and d) body language.

**Expanding vocabulary.** The students that took part in this research study concurred that they could be able to expand their vocabulary throughout the whole process using Skype as a means of communication. As noticed in the following graph (14), the subcategory expanding vocabulary appears 30 times in the different data collection instruments which means that participants made use of Skype as a significant tool to increase their vocabulary along the study.

✦ Planning what to say	7	0	Super	24/03/20...	02/06/20...
✦ Peer feedback	13	0	Super	24/03/20...	14/06/20...
✦ LANGUAGE LEARNING	0	20	Super	24/10/20...	24/03/20...
✦ Lacking understanding	20	1	Super	24/10/20...	14/04/20...
✦ Lacking background knowledge	19	1	Super	24/10/20...	14/06/20...
✦ L1 interference	4	0	Super	24/03/20...	26/03/20...
✦ Greeting	2	1	Super	09/10/20...	24/10/20...
✦ Giving up	8	1	Super	09/10/20...	14/06/20...
✦ Getting motivated to learn	17	1	Super	24/10/20...	14/06/20...
✦ Gaining fluency	21	0	Super	24/03/20...	14/06/20...
✦ Expressing ideas	29	0	Super	24/03/20...	14/06/20...
✦ Expanding vocabulary	30	1	Super	24/10/20...	14/06/20...
✦ Exemplifying	39	1	Super	25/09/20...	14/06/20...
✦ Encouraging students participation	68	1	Super	09/10/20...	14/06/20...
✦ Encouraging additional answers	147	2	Super	25/09/20...	14/06/20...
✦ EMOTIONAL INFLUENCES	0	8	Super	24/10/20...	24/03/20...
✦ Emotional constraints	6	0	Super	24/03/20...	14/06/20...
✦ EFFECTS OF OF USING SKYPE ON ...	0	3	Super	24/10/20...	04/06/20...
✦ Confidently interacting	47	0	Super	24/03/20...	14/06/20...
✦ Clarifying	174	1	Super	25/09/20...	14/06/20...
✦ Checking for interlocutors attention	5	1	Super	25/09/20...	26/03/20...
✦ Assigning turns	80	1	Super	25/09/20...	14/06/20...

Graph 14: Frequency of expanding vocabulary subcategory

The excerpts below provide support to the idea previously expressed:

*I took advantage of this session in order to ask for some words that I did not have in a clear way to describe in specific*



*situations, but with the help of my teacher and my partners, I have more vocabulary now.*

*Excerpt 4, student journal 3, student 2, April 9<sup>th</sup> 2015*

*(TR: Teacher Researcher)*

**TR:** *I visited*

**St4:** *I visited, in Algeciras in san pedro, the festival is happy, is very ... como se dice masivo profe, grande*

**TR:** *it's massive, grande, you can say huge. You can say huge, massive, colossus.*

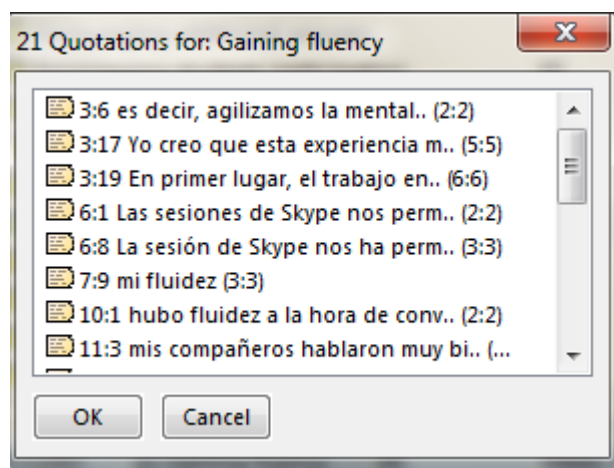
*Excerpt 5, transcript session, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015*

*One of the advantages of Skype sessions is that I can improve my vocabulary when speaking*

*Excerpt 6, student journal 1, student 4, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015*

These excerpts give support that the Skype sessions have a direct influence on students' vocabulary expansion. This can be noticed in the students' journals and transcripts that by means of Skype video-calls encounters, they could enlarge and add a number of words they did not know before taking the Skype sessions. Similarly, Wu et al. (2012) found that through the use of Skype sessions "students increased motivation, thought critically about the subjects discussed in class and improve their fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and content knowledge" (p. 12). In this respect, this study is similar with Wu's (2012) findings in the sense that Skype helped participants to increase their content knowledge in terms of not only expanding their vocabulary but also improving other aspects of the target language that are mentioned in the language learning category.

**Gaining Fluency.** The participants of this study also agreed that through the use of Skype sessions they could increase their fluency during the whole process. It could be observed in the data analysis (graph 15) that due not only to the constant effort to participate but also the fact of feeling comfortable with their peers their fluency was promoted. In this sense, one of the factors of language learning that were affected positively by the implementation of Skype as a complementary activity was the improvement in oral communication between participants.



Graph 15: Quotes from students' journal entries that formed the subcategory

The previous graph presents and evidences the students' opinions about how they felt when speaking with their classmates. Also, on the left upper corner of the graph, it is shown the times (21) that students expressed their perception in terms of fluency as a positive aspect on oral production. This was possible not only due to the activities proposed in each of the lesson plans made for the sessions but also due to the fact that the topics chosen for the sessions were familiar for them and meaningful too. The background knowledge helped them to express ideas fluently since they had something to talk about as well.

The excerpts below show the students' insights taken from their journals, referring to the relevance of Skype sessions experience on their oral production enhancement in terms of fluency.

*I think that this experience helped me a lot in terms of English use and because I can have a good performance in a dialogue and speak fluently.*

*Excerpt 7, student journal, student 1, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015,*

*What I like the most about the session was that I felt more fluid when speaking and I felt less nervous*

*Excerpt 8, student journal, student 4, May 13<sup>th</sup> 2016*

*I had no problem when answering due to the fact that session after session and with practice, we can learn to speak fluently and naturally.*

*Excerpt 9, student journal, student 5, May 13<sup>th</sup> 2016*

Taking graph 15 and students' journals samples as relevant information to support and give evidence that Skype influenced participants' oral production in the sense of gaining fluency. In this relation, Wu et al (2012) concluded "that students thought critically about the subjects discussed in class, and improved their fluency" (p. 12). Regarding Wu's (2012) conclusion, this study also demonstrated that Skype is a powerful tool to promote students' fluency. Furthermore, students' critical thinking and their knowledge about the world (background knowledge) encouraged them to speak fluently along the sessions of the process. The activities were relevant to motivate them to speak since they were topics that participants were interested in and most of all because they were accustomed to them as well. Saying this, students improved their fluency as the sessions were covered. Evidence is reflected in their journals as shown in graph 15.

**Feedback.** In terms of feedback, learners expressed that there was a continuous and ongoing process of feedback, not only from the teacher, but also from their classmates. Also, the feedback they were given was delivered during the sessions without interrupting the flow of the conversation taking place. This process was done by the teacher researcher or peers by repeating the word, or expression, repeating what the participants said wrong and then rephrasing it correctly. In this way, the participants could realize about the mistakes they made and then they were able to correct it instantly without interfering the communication. In this sense, Romaña (2014) concluded that “learners also acknowledged that they used the Skype™ conference calls independently in order to help each other in the accomplishment of their own language learning activities and goals and their knowledge building experiences through an online environment”. (p. 87). This underlies the importance of feedback in this study, since it was not very likely that students improved their oral skills without having any feedback from the teacher or from their classmates to build their own knowledge.

Asking questions	141	1	Super	25/09/20...	14/06/20...
Assigning turns	80	1	Super	25/09/20...	14/06/20...
Checking for interlocutors attention	5	1	Super	25/09/20...	26/03/20...
Clarifying	174	1	Super	25/09/20...	14/06/20...
Confidently interacting	47	0	Super	24/03/20...	14/06/20...
EFFECTS OF OF USING SKYPE ON ...	0	3	Super	24/10/20...	04/06/20...
Emotional constraints	6	0	Super	24/03/20...	14/06/20...
EMOTIONAL INFLUENCES	0	8	Super	24/10/20...	24/03/20...
Encouraging additional answers	147	2	Super	25/09/20...	14/06/20...
Encouraging students participation	68	1	Super	09/10/20...	14/06/20...
Exemplifying	39	1	Super	25/09/20...	14/06/20...
Expanding vocabulary	30	1	Super	24/10/20...	14/06/20...
Expressing ideas	29	0	Super	24/03/20...	14/06/20...
Gaining fluency	21	0	Super	24/03/20...	14/06/20...
Getting motivated to learn	17	1	Super	24/10/20...	14/06/20...
Giving up	8	1	Super	09/10/20...	14/06/20...
Greeting	2	1	Super	09/10/20...	24/10/20...
L1 interference	4	0	Super	24/03/20...	26/03/20...
Lacking background knowledge	19	1	Super	24/10/20...	14/06/20...
Lacking understanding	20	1	Super	24/10/20...	14/04/20...
LANGUAGE LEARNING	0	20	Super	24/10/20...	24/03/20...
Peer feedback	13	0	Super	24/03/20...	14/06/20...
Planning what to say	7	0	Super	24/03/20...	02/06/20...

Graph 16: Peer feedback and clarifying codes

As it can be seen in graph 16, the codes peer feedback and clarifying that are highlighted (clarifying was the label given to the teachers feedback) provides evidence to support the subcategory. The numbers that appear in front of each code mean the number of times they were mentioned in the three data collection instruments. Also, this subcategory can be supported with excerpts taken from a session transcript, a students' journal and a teacher-researcher field note.

*TR: what happen with the people, with the audience*  
*St4: the people?*  
*TR: the attendance, who goes to the parades? Nobody?*  
*St5: the people who lives in the city interested*  
*TR: uhu, enjoy, they enjoy*  
*St5: the parade, they enjoy the parade*

*Excerpt 10, transcript session 5, May 13<sup>th</sup> 2016*

*The teacher help us to correct our mistakes we had and in that way, I could understand some things.*

*Excerpt 11, student journal, student 4, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016*

*Something that I loved was that one of the female students mispronounced a word and Sebastian corrected her and she immediately pronounced the word in a right way.*

*Excerpt 12, teacher field note, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015*

Ritchie and Bhatia (2009) asserted that “learners today can contact a native speaker in any part of the world and receive highly individualized feedback in spoken and written language”. (p. 547). Even though this study does not have any native speaker participant, a non-native speaker (classmates and teacher) can also provide significant feedback in improve their language skills. This study is about oral performance and hence feedback is a relevant aspect to be considered when talking about oral communication. Aspects such as vocabulary, expressions

and, grammar structures can be developed if there is someone that is more knowledgeable in those particular features to provide accurate feedback.

**Body Language.** The following excerpts collected from different transcripts in different sessions in the first and second cycle, and a teacher field note can corroborate that through body language learners could understand meanings more easily when interacting in a face-to-face Skype session.

*TR: maybe ... maybe, tal vez ... ok, what about honest. You know honest, like you say the truth (mimics swearing) I promise it is true. Who is more honest than who?*

*St5: I am liar than Karen and Carmen*

*TR: you are ...*

*Excerpt 13, transcript session 5, May 11<sup>th</sup> 2016*

*TR: it is cured for months. It's ... listen, you see? Shark meet which has been cured. (playing the same video). It is fermented, st2 it is fermented and hung, fermentado y colgado for several months, January, February, March, April. (play video) it smells quite strong, it smells very bad.*

*St2: que es smell?*

*TR: this, (doing mimics)*

*St2: mmm ok*

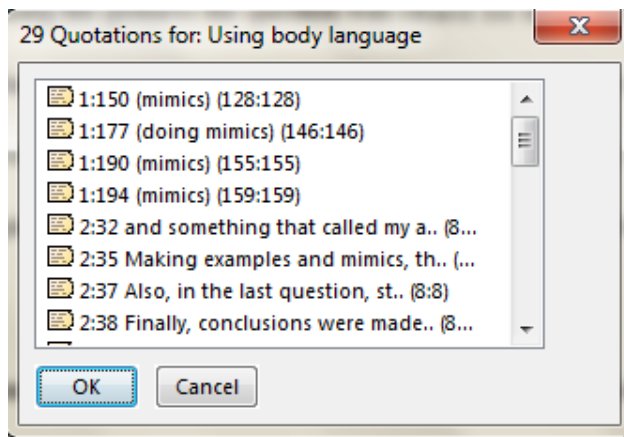
*Excerpt 14, transcript session 6, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016*

*Making examples and mimics, the students liked the fact that Carmen could understand the question and of course she answered it.*

*Excerpt 15, teacher-researcher field note September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015*

From this, it can be taken as certain that body language is an important technique to use when the learner does not know the meaning of a word or expression. In this regard, we can relate

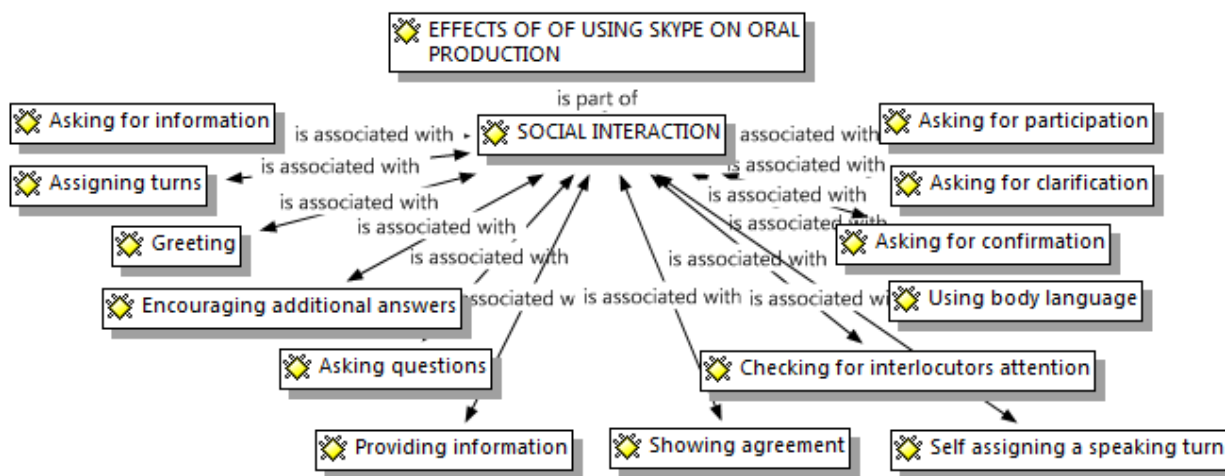
the outlined subcategory with theory. For example, Taillefer and Muñoz (2013) concluded in their study about developing oral skills through Skype that “non-verbal communication was key for mutual understanding when L2 level was low”. (p. 263). Following the previous idea, this study demonstrates that body language is a relevant non-verbal communication technique among students and teachers in order to make themselves understood when there is not another option.



Graph 17: Number of quotations that appeared in the instruments for body language

**Social Interaction.** This category shows that through the use of Skype learners can reach social communication skills out of classroom settings. Fitch and Sanders (2005) describe social interaction as a diverse and adaptable conjunction of interests that comprises speech analysis, pragmatics, discourse analysis, ethnography, and the subarea of social psychology called language and social psychology. In this study, it was intended to take Skype as a complementary activity to make students use their oral competences as it is described by Fitch and Sanders (2005). Thus, through the data analysis it was evidenced that a creation of social skills sense was produced, which allowed them to build a stronger social interaction. In other words, the results of this study verified that by using Skype they could interact socially even though they knew each other. This could be noticed in the Skype sessions when they asked for clarification, provided

information to the teacher or classmates or when they asked questions to their peers as well. This social interaction can be proved in the following graph.



Graph 18: core category, category and emerging codes

The following excerpts taken from different learners through journals data collection instrument and corroborated by a teacher-researcher field note entry, show in depth what has been outlined above in the sense of social interaction.

In the session where we talked about cultures, festivals and Colombian customs and the world, I felt very good because it is a diverse and recognized topic, it was a dynamic and fluid conversation and because we asked each other about what we would like to experience and what we would not, we established a conversation.

Excerpt 16, student journal, student 1, May 13<sup>th</sup> 2016

Listening to my classmates, answer them and interacting with them, we learn new ways to communicate.

Excerpt 17, student journal, student 5, October 5<sup>th</sup> 2015

They seemed to enjoy talking about this topic because they all wanted to participate but taking turns on their own and

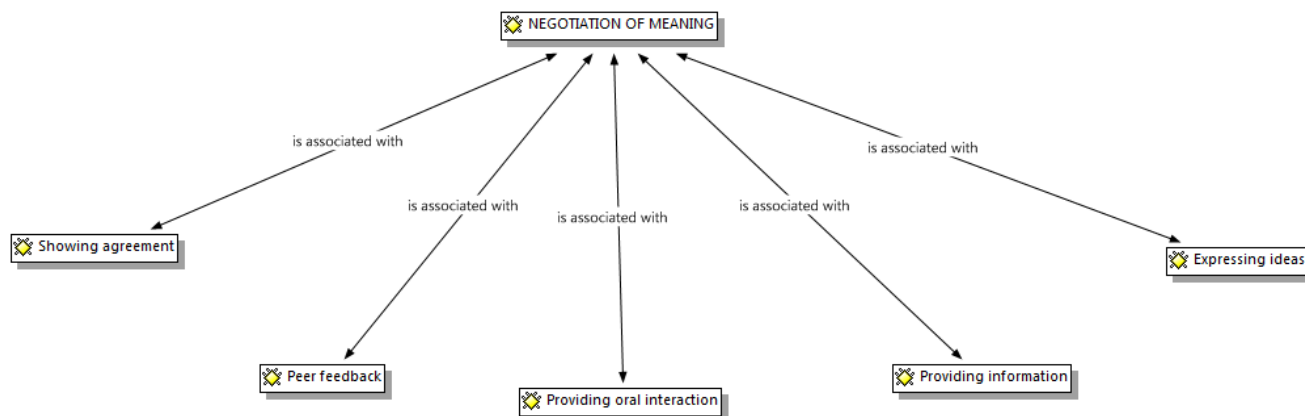


without the TR having to tell them what to do or insisting on them to participate.

Excerpt 18, teacher-researcher field note, October 9<sup>th</sup> 2015

In relation to the category language learning, Kern (1995) states “CMC is not the solution for a perfect language acquisition, nor a substitute for normal classroom practices, but it offers restructured classroom dynamics and a new context for social use of language” (p. 470). In this regard, this study can reflect that students were able to raise their social practices even though such practice was taking place out of the L2 classroom setting. Moreover, with the evidence exposed with the excerpts and the graph previously shown, they interchanged ideas, learned from each other, and shared real experiences they have had. What can be asserted from this study is that Skype certainly does not offer to L2 learners a total immersion in the target language, but it can provide a means to exchange ideas and build social practices.

**Negotiation of Meaning.** With regards to this subcategory, this study gives evidence that students took Skype as a means of negotiation of meaning. In this vein, Maslamani (2013) concludes that “Skype may provide learners with more opportunities for communicative interpersonal interaction that is rich in the meaningful negotiation of meaning”. (p. 77). To this study, the negotiation of meaning among students in order to avoid and correct misunderstandings and to ensure that messages were correctly received was relevant when providing information or expressing ideas. In the following graph (19) *negotiation of meaning* is shown with the emerging codes namely peer feedback, providing information, providing oral interaction, expressing ideas among others.



Graph 19: negotiation of meaning subcategory and emerging codes

The following excerpts taken from the teacher researcher field notes and a student journal entry also provided support to graph 19 in regards to negotiation of meaning.

Carmen had a misunderstanding because she thought the footballer Lionel Messi was the center of the conversation and she asked why not to talk about Michael Jordan. Then, the word Messy was clarified with simple examples as an adjective to used in making comparisons.

Excerpt 19, teacher-researcher field note, October 5<sup>th</sup> 2015

What I enjoy the most in this session, was to listen to my classmates speaking in English because it clarified doubts.

Excerpt 20, student journal, student 1, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

In this sense, the excerpts support evidence that students used negotiation of meaning in order to clarify doubts and repair misunderstandings. Additionally, we can consider that the L2 participants were engaged in negotiation when there was a clear misinterpretation of words as

shown in excerpt 15. In order to clarify meanings, there must be an interest to agree from the parts involved in their interactions. In this sense, Blake (2000) indicates that negotiation of meaning is also materialized in CMC, which further enables real communication in the L2 among language learners. As this study was conducted in terms of Skype as a CMC tool, it can give us lights in the sense of how students and teachers can take advantage of this tool to make sense of the spoken language. It was also evident from the data analysis that the participants used negotiation of meaning when there was confusion due to the lack of knowledge of the topics covered in the sessions, when they provided information as well as when they gave feedback to their peers.

**Cooperative Language Learning.** Regarding this subcategory, the excerpts taken from different data collection instruments from different students' journal entries are exposed in order to give evidence as follows:

Also, speaking in English with my classmates make the topics more interesting.

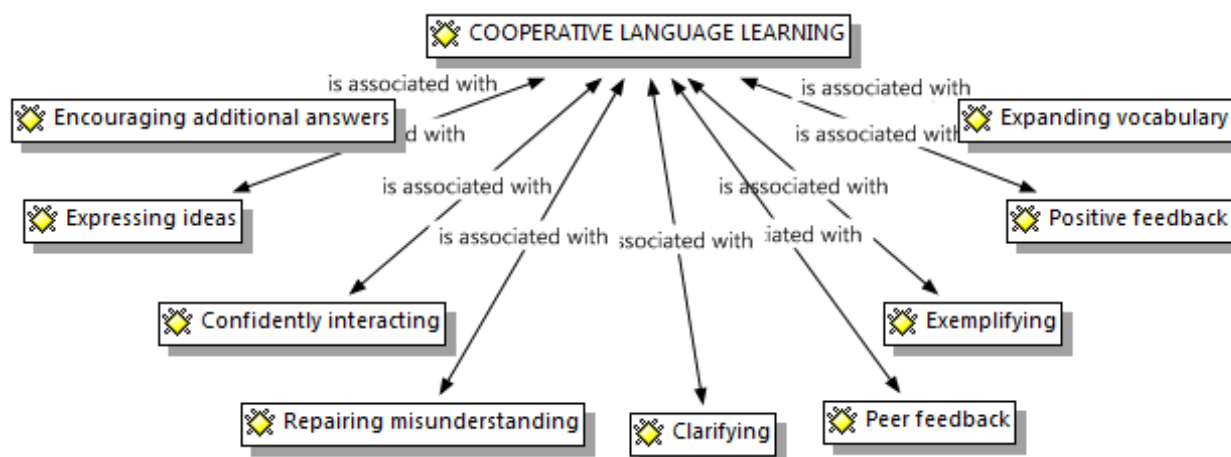
Excerpt 21, student journal, student 2, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

As the sessions passed by my classmates and I understand more each other, it helps to the engagement in a more fluid conversation

Excerpt 22, student journal, student 1, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016

In order to give lights about this subcategory, it is significant to clarify as it was identified in the theoretical framework that Skype could be considered as a social network. In this sense, Leonard (2012) asserts that “both cooperative learning and social networking, social interaction

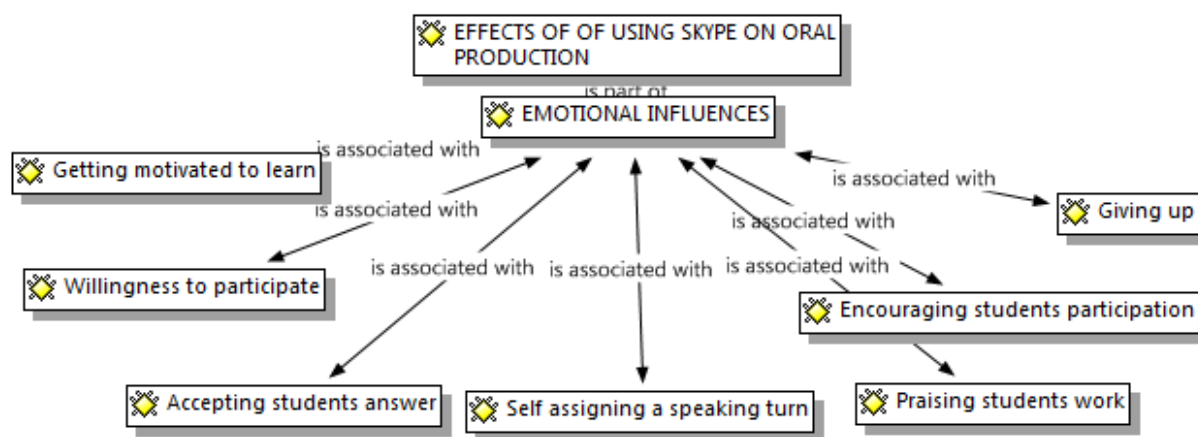
encourages a sense of community, which is the nucleus of both strategies.” (p. 38). For the purpose of this study, the Skype sessions were significantly an influential factor to make students work cooperatively. In graph 20, it can be seen that they worked cooperatively when expressing ideas, when giving feedback or giving vocabulary, and even exemplifying, among others. Also, Leonard concluded that “with the usage of collaboration and cooperation, retention efforts are aided because students are more motivated to remain in a class or program if they are receiving help from a group of their peers” (p.39). In this sense, this study matches the authors’ conclusion since by working cooperatively the participants were co-constructing meanings and gaining fluency too since they felt comfortable talking to each other. Time availability and the motivation to be engaged in this process were also reflected in this subcategory as all the participants excepting one, completed the process until the end.



Graph 20: Cooperative language learning subcategory and emerging codes

**Emotional Influences.** This last category shows that the effects of Skype in the emotional aspect in the participants were relevant for this research study. Derks et al (2007) concluded that emotional communication in an online and in F2F (face-to-face) way are

surprisingly similar and that online communication even seems to reinforce rather than inhibit the expression of emotions. Although this study sought the factors that were influenced in oral production through the use of Skype, it was also evidenced that emotions was a factor that influenced participants' performance. Furthermore, a comparison can be made with this study in the sense of emotions as a significant feature in the development of language skills since if the emotion was a negative one, namely, anxiety, the learner confidence was affected negatively. On the other hand, if the emotion was positive such as confidence, the participant oral performance was more accurate.



Graph 21: Emotional influences category and emerging codes

From the graph above, the participants' emotions were an influential aspect in their oral performance. The data analysis allowed the authors of this study to unveil that students felt confident when the teacher researcher praised them orally. Also it could be noticed that participants were self-assigning a speaking turn which means that they were confident to communicate something to the teacher and their classmates. However, it was also seen that, when they were trying to communicate something they did not know, they gave up easily and remained silent.

The following excerpts taken from different instruments also provide support to the graph 21 in terms of the emotional influences category.

I felt nervous at the session I had not interacted directly with other people before, also because I did not have enough knowledge about the topic and because I did not feel confident with my pronunciation

Excerpt 23, student journal, student 1, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

In addition, it is completely free, I just need my disposition. Likewise, you integrate with your classmates and the conversation is fun. In addition, there is no pressure to speak accurately; otherwise, you are in confidence with your classmates.

Excerpt 24, student journal, student 3, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

*What I liked the most about this session was that I was more fluent when speaking and less nervous*

Excerpt 25, student journal, student 1, May 13<sup>th</sup> 2016

In relation to emotional influences, Derks et al (2007) concluded that “we seem to survive pretty well in our social interactions and accompanying emotional expressions in CMC.” (p. 16).

In relation to Derks’ conclusion, this study conveyed emotions on participants and more important that was reflected by the learners in the interactions they were engaged through the Skype sessions. In addition, emotions showed to be a powerful trigger in the use of the target language in the sense of oral production depending if the emotion was positive or negative.

**Confidence.** This subcategory is about how students can build a strong sense of feeling secure when speaking through an online platform (Skype). Saying this, this study also shows that Skype could provide confidence on the participants since the feeling of being in a group that was looking for the same purpose (practicing English to improve oral skills) could grow a sense of self-confidence. The following graph shows the highlighted subcategory and the number of times that confidence was mentioned by the students in their journal entries which at the same time provided support to the subcategory.

Name	Grounded	De...	Autl
Assigning turns	80	1	Sup
Checking for interlocutors attention	5	1	Sup
Clarifying	174	1	Sup
Confidently interacting	47	0	Sup
EFFECTS OF OF USING SKYPE ON ...	0	3	Sup
Emotional constraints	6	0	Sup
EMOTIONAL INFLUENCES	0	8	Sup
Encouraging additional answers	147	2	Sup
Encouraging students participation	68	1	Sup
Exemplifying	39	1	Sup
Expanding vocabulary	30	1	Sup

Graph 22: Confidence subcategory

The following excerpts give lights of participants’ confidence in the Skype sessions and support graph 22 as evidence. The instruments selected to support the subcategory were journal entries from different students and an entry from the teacher-researcher field notes.

Sebastian wanted to assign himself the turn and took the initiatives.

Excerpt 26, teacher-researcher field note, October 5<sup>th</sup> 2016

Among the advantages of using Skype in the sessions is to increase my confidence when speaking English since my biggest motivation is to learn speaking in English.

Excerpt 27, student journal, student 2, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

I could notice that the last student, has excellent speaking skills, he is really confident and he never hesitated when expressing his ideas.

Excerpt 28, teacher-researcher field note, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

In this regard, positive social interactions, including student-to-student collaboration and student-teacher interaction, allow learners to change their knowledge grounds and thus, motivation, confidence and satisfaction are improved (Browstein, 2001). As it was shown in the excerpts and graph 22, this study proved that the participants confidence was increased when communicating and expressing ideas or providing information in the Skype sessions. This can be exposed with the number of times they referred to in their journals and in the excerpts presented subsequently. Even though, students expressed in the journals that they felt nervous but they could overcome the problem along the duration of the study. In this sense, oral performance is directly related with students' confidence in the sense of the more confident the participants were, the more frequently and accurately they expressed ideas.



**Anxiety.** This last subcategory shows a negative aspect in students' personal emotions. Although this subcategory was expressed by the students in their own journal entries, it must be said that anxiety happened in the diagnostic and first cycle of pedagogical intervention, as the participants did not mention the problem in the subsequent journals. However, anxiety has to be highlighted in the sense of students' performance. That is to say, anxiety in a prolonged way could affect in a negative way the learner confidence and it could not allow the participant to take part in a conversation. The following excerpts, (students' journals and teacher-researcher field notes data collection instruments) show how anxiety affects oral production on participants.

I felt nervous in the session because I had never interacted in a direct way with other people before.

Excerpt 29, student journal, student 1, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

*The second session was about comparing personalities, it was very educational because we expressed our opinions with our classmates. Sometimes I did not understand anything, I felt overwhelmed and nervous ...*

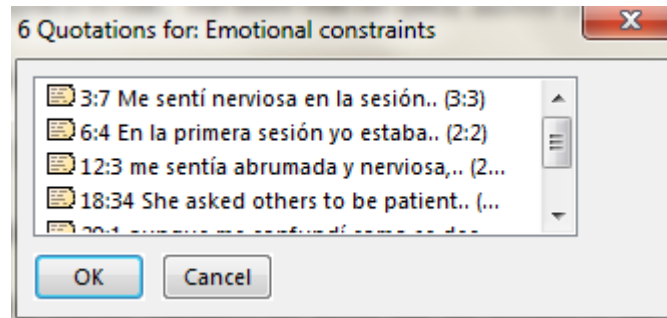
Excerpt 30, student journal, student 3, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

*In the first session a was nervous and frightened because I didn't know how to say some things or I was afraid of making mistakes.*

Excerpt 31, student journal, student 4, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

As noticed from the excerpts above, it can be interpreted that anxiety is a normal emotion when trying to communicate in a L2. As observed in the excerpts, more precisely in excerpt 25, anxiety can interrupt the flow of communication among L2 learners. In this regards, Horwitz (2001) recognized anxiety as an emotive influence with the possibility to affect significantly the learning process. Furthermore, according to Sheen (2008) anxiety can interfere with L2 students' ability to recognize feedback and hence reproduce it. That is to say, that a learner who is anxious

when communicating, it is likely to get stuck and hence it is probable for the participant not to receive feedback from the teacher or peers. There is evidence from the data of this study that there were times when students could not interact appropriately because they were nervous. As this study was intended to explore effects of using Skype on oral production, we can say that anxiety could be a real challenging aspect when it occurs very often.



Graph 23: Quotes written by the participants and number of times

The graph above also provides support to the excerpts in the sense of students feeling overwhelmed because they were nervous and hence they could not present a good use of their oral communicative skills. Also, it must be said that the number of times they felt anxious were just a few since this negative emotion was shown by the participants mainly in the first cycle.

## Chapter V

### Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

#### Conclusions

The present research study targeted to answer one research question: What are the effects of using Skype on oral production out of the EFL classroom? After analyzing the results from the data, the following conclusions were drawn to meet the two main research objectives: 1) to find out the benefits or drawbacks of the implementation of Skype as a complementary learning activity to foster oral production and 2) to establish the impact of the use of Skype as a means to meet the students' needs for extra language practice beyond the classroom.

Altogether, Skype should be considered as a compensating tool for their face-to-face lessons because students are indeed able to expand the language exposure they need to develop their oral skills. As it was evidenced in the previous chapter about findings, from an overall perspective, the impact Skype had on students' need to have additional opportunities to use the language was positive. Not only in terms of the development of oral skills but also in terms of the emotional effects the development of the Skype sessions had in their attitude towards learning. Consequently, teaching communities should consider how beneficial using Skype for different purposes can be connected to students' emotions. Also, it could be noticed that participants working all together with the teacher researcher leading the process indeed promoted cooperative learning. Hence, when there is a clear structure in which the leader knows exactly what to do and how to do it with a clear-shared goal in mind, it is very likely to succeed in the learning process of a few students.

Thus, a small group of students taking part in video conference calls via Skype on an ongoing basis share the desire to learn as a whole thanks to the social bonds over time. However,

it is important to point out that not every student is willing to take risks as personality traits of a learner may differ a lot from others’.

It is also important to bear in mind that some students may be reluctant to talk about personal topics and may find this intrusive and/or intimidating. Therefore, the introduction of topics of conversations via Skype needs to be made carefully to elicit positive responses from their students. Teachers need to be fully attuned to students’ leaning needs and ensure the lessons are more student led. As exemplified by Romaña (2014) and Elia (2006) whose research studies stipulate that students are likely to engage, participate and understand more if they are interested in the topic being taught.

Undoubtedly, the more contact with the language students have, the more likely they accumulate vocabulary to their repertoire. Nevertheless, it is clear that spending a lot of hours on Skype does not guarantee the retention of vocabulary. The ambience on Skype offers low social pressure and students feel at ease to ask for help but the chances of successful vocabulary retention depend on the strategies used by teachers. For example, not all teachers are good at making mimics or gestures to explain a word without using the students’ mother tongue or effective written or oral examples. The self-assessment of teachers’ particular skills is a major aspect when designing the lesson plans and activities to develop in Skype.

As noted by Romaña (2014) and Wu et al. (2012), students’ fluency in the target language was gained through Skype video conference call teaching sessions. Nonetheless, students and teachers have to take into consideration that to become fluent, intrinsic motivation and confidence are not the only variables that play a role in language learning.

There should be clear criteria to select topics that students are enjoyable, comfortable and familiar with. As previously mentioned and emphasized by Romaña (2014) and Wu et al.'s (2012), by proposing topics that students enjoy, it is more likely that students develop fluency because it is meaningful for them however it should not be taken for granted that all learners develop fluency in this way. Skype users should be exposed to topics that demand a level of grammar knowledge a little higher than they currently possess otherwise students are not challenged to learn new structures.

Skype is also useful as a feedback tool. Teachers and students are able to instantly provide feedback to each other as well as peer feedback in conference call situations. In essence, Skype is helpful to provide opportunities for a teacher to offer corrective feedback to students or they can correct each other. Nonetheless, in Skype session, the way this feedback is given is a very relevant aspect to keep in mind. That is, if the teacher does not find the appropriate way to offer feedback, the learner could feel threatened, intimidated or embarrassed. In contrast, if the teacher is tactful in the way feedback is presented, it is more likely that the students internalize such feedback and put it into future practice. The way feedback is given can vary depending mostly on the receiver. Some students would rather get feedback in private while others do not mind getting feedback directly in front of their peers - essentially students' personalities are different. This goes in accordance with Ritchie and Bathia (2009) who claim that nowadays learners can receive highly individualized instant feedback anywhere through CMC practices. Again, Skype enables teachers more opportunities to better understand their students' individual personality traits and therefore with this understanding can optimize the individual students' learning experiences.

When incorporating Skype in ELT, a relevant aspect is how body language, gestures and mimics can serve to remember, learn the meaning of new words, or understand sentences. There are students who value this effort from the teacher, while there are others who ignore this extra help. Taillefer and Muñoz's (2013) ideas relating to how effective body language is when students have low levels of English, hence beginners. Their findings corresponded to this study in that the students with the lowest level appeared to appreciate the use of mimics and gestures, in order to understand the learning material and it seemed they found it enjoyable. Body language, mimics and gestures via Skype also have limitations because the webcam only captures the upper area of the body. So, the teacher researcher in this study had to be very creative using this kind of strategy.

The benefits of using Skype include the social interactions that take place as learners are able to develop social communication skills. This is corroborated by Romaña's (2014) findings about how Skype as a CMC tool promotes social interaction beyond the classroom. It can be concluded from the results that participants feel good about being able to exchange their ambitions, wishes, and plans with their peers. Once again, when students find the activities on CMC meaningful, there is shared feeling of joyfulness.

Following Kern's (1995) study states that though CMC is not the solution, it provides new classroom contexts for social use of the language, it can be deduced that it does not matter that they are not in the physical classroom, they still have the chance to exchange ideas, learn cooperatively and share their experiences. Moreover, students acknowledge that by listening to others, answering their questions, social interaction is strengthened. Hence, we cannot deny that CMC tools offer opportunities to interact similarly to the way face-to-face lessons do.

Negotiation of meaning is a beneficial feature of Skype. This idea is supported by Maslamani (2013) who states that Skype might provide students more opportunities for interpersonal interaction for promoting negotiation of meaning. Undoubtedly, in this sort of settings (Skype), participants are prompted to negotiate meaning with the teacher researcher or their peers more effectively because of the small size of the group. Nevertheless, it is essential that all the participants share an interest in learning in order to actively participate. In addition to this, as teachers we need to have full understanding of the potential of negotiation of meaning because it is a promising way for learners to clear doubts and correct misunderstandings that sometimes may cause discouragement or disappointment in a way that learners stop feeling engaged. This is where teachers need to take an active role to address the issue of negotiating meaning better.

It is reckoned that cooperative language learning also takes place in Skype video conference calls. Participants certainly value how they are able to make progress by working along with their peers and this led to a more fluent conversation as stated by the participants in their journals. This conclusion goes in line with Leonard's (2012) statement about how a sense of community emerges in social networks like Skype and cooperative learning is present too as they are able to co-construct meaning as they feel comfortable with their classmates.

Equally important, the third category named 'Emotional influences' gives us interesting insights in relation to the capacity of Skype to reinforce rather than inhibit the expression of emotions as suggested by Derks et al. (2007). Students' emotions in Skype sessions can be either positive or negative depending on the cause of such emotions. Then, it is urgent to pay attention to these subtle expressions of emotions that can sometimes lead to negative consequences if they are not handled appropriately, for example causing loss of motivation. It is necessary to create an

ambience of tranquility and comfort in the Skype sessions, which are primarily led by the teacher but requires students to bring positive attitudes.

Connected to emotional influences, confidence in Skype session seems to arise when there is no need for the teacher to assign turns to talk hence they feel confident enough to contribute in lessons. This perception is supported by Browstein (2001) who asserts that student-to-student and student-teacher interaction allow learners to expand their knowledge, which results in confidence gained by participants. It is important to point out that confidence is gained little by little. Finally, anxiety appears to be a drawback in participation that can inhibit effective learning. This can occur in both Skype and classroom settings, particularly at the start of the course. It is significant in Skype situations as there is a level of uncertainty from students e.g. they may be unsure about what to expect as they may not be used to this kind of communication. However, like the expectations many teachers have on their students in the classroom, the same applies for Skype – students need to bring with them a positive attitude towards learning. Sheen (2008) states that negative emotions can interfere with L2 students' to internalize and thus it is vital for teachers to be able to make students feel at ease.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

If any teacher or institution is interested in applying Skype to improve their teaching practices and/or promote any aspect of language learning, the following implications need to be taken into consideration.

*ICT literacy:* From the beginning of the conduction of this study, it was evident that if any of the participants lacked expertise in the use of ICT's, several difficulties could take place. For this reason, before implementing this sort of procedures, it is urgent to ensure that all the parts



involved fulfill the following requirements. First, they need to have a command of this CMC tool. Second, they should know the different tools available within Skype. Third, They need to be able to manage basic tasks connected to ICT literacy. The tools within this software need to be well managed depending on the purpose and objective of every activity. Thus, teachers should consider carefully how to get the best out of Skype to reach the proposed goals.

*Teachers' expected profile:* Teachers who advocate for Skype in ELT have to assess their own teaching strengths and skills they possess and use them in videoconferences. Above all, the teacher leading the activities should have wide knowledge about how the development of oral skills takes place in this particular setting. Theoretical foundations serve as the main basis to make the best choice in terms of what methodology needs to be adopted. On top of this, a very good command of the language is expected from teachers in order to ensure that the given feedback and corrections actually scaffold students to improve their oral skills. Besides, it is essential for teachers to clearly identify students' strengths and assign roles in order to establish strategies to achieve goals as a group.

*Technical Requirements:* language teachers should consider using computers or digital devices such as mobile phones or tablets that meet all the requirements to run the Skype software. This involves having audio and video devices working properly such as a high quality microphone, earphones and webcam, taking into account that this is crucial to get the best out of this CMC tool in the sessions. Teachers and students have to be aware of the fact that there should a special arrangement of the place where they log in to take part of the session as any interruption should be avoided as much as possible.

*Number of participants:* As suggested by other authors like Romaña (2014), the number of participants should be limited. In this study, there was no intention from the authors to have four participants but this was certainly convenient for the present study. This has relevance in the sense that during this study, there were various difficulties to arrange meeting times among only five people. Besides, in order to have of a well-designed pedagogical intervention, it is vital to have a small group of participants, between three and six to obtain the best expected outcomes. It has been evident in this and other research studies that the number of participants plays a major role as each student can have more opportunities to interact with each other in the sessions.

*Commitment from all parts involved all along the process:* as results could be evident after a high number of encounters, teacher and students must be broadly committed to take active roles in the Skype sessions. Also, teachers should carefully establish clear rules from the beginning to lessen the probability of having students who give up along the process and to have an organized process. Students' willingness to take part in the sessions is a decisive aspect that teachers need to be concerned about from the beginning until the end of the implementation of Skype sessions.

*Engaging Activities:* Teachers who rely on Skype to have extra practice should consider the designing of engaging, motivating and provoking activities that keep the students' interest during the Skype sessions and along the process. Certainly, a thorough needs analysis is crucial to establish clear short term and long-term objectives. So, the audio visual aids should be carefully chosen depending on the nature of the activities and L2 teachers using Skype have to provide students with opportunities to take advantage of those aids. For instance, a video or a set of pictures should be selected to attract students' attention and keep their focus on specific patterns of language or any other intention as needed.

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**APPENDICES**

## Appendix 1

### Lesson Plan Samples

Universidad Surcolombiana  
 MA in English Language Teaching  
 Lesson Plan- Research Thesis

Teacher-Researchers: Sergio Ramiro García Trejos- Rolney Leonardo Díaz Pascuas Date: Sept 17<sup>th</sup> 2015- 21:45- 22:15  
 School: CORPORACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA DEL HUILA CORHUILA Grade: Second semester students  
 Lesson Subject: English  
 Teaching Time: 15 mins

*Lesson Concept: What should we do to help?*

<i>Objective</i>	<i>Assessments</i>
1. In this lesson, students will be able to use should and should not effectively to give suggestions and recommendations about an environmental problem and a political problem through a Skype videoconference.	1. Students will use should and shouldn't correctly to express suggestions and recommendations about a current problem.
2. In this lesson, students will elicit their opinions and points of view about the present situation in the Colombian border and the refugees escaping from war in Syria.	2. Students will present their ideas clearly and discuss others' ideas through a Skype videoconference.

**Materials:**

Laptop or desktop computer, full-headset/earphones and built-in microphone, pencil and paper, slides on PPT show, video-clips, Skype™ software (previously installed), broadband connection (over 512mb)

**Anticipatory Set**

1. First, students will place themselves in a comfortable and quiet place away from noise or other interruptions to log in to Skype. Then, students will make some testing on their computers to make sure video and audio are clear prior to the beginning of the video-conference.

Rolney Leonardo Díaz Pascuas  
 Sergio Ramiro García Trejos

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Universidad Surcolombiana  
 MA in English Language Teaching  
 Lesson Plan- Research Thesis

**Activating Prior Knowledge:**

1. Students will be asked to remember and elicit the vocabulary they already know about environmental problems.

**Procedure:**

1. Students will look at some pictures of the present fires in many regions of Colombia through the screen mirroring and they will have to describe briefly what they can see.
2. Students will have to start making suggestions and recommendations about what citizens, environmental authorities and/or government should do in order to overcome this critical situation. This will be done by assigning turns to students.
3. Students will be shown a video about the problem with the people emigrating from Syria to find a better place to live. Next, they will express their ideas about how the governments can deal with this situation.
4. Students will be shown some provoking statements about different perspectives in relation to this political problem. Then, they will discuss their ideas showing agreement or disagreement following instructions from teacher-researcher.

**Closure:**

5. The teacher-researcher will ask students to propose brief conclusions about both problems after having discussed the pros and cons of their ideas.

**Additional Concept Related Activity:**

Students will be assigned to make a written report about the experience they had in the Skype session including the advantages and disadvantages, perceptions, pros and cons or any other ideas.

Rolney Leonardo Díaz Pascuas  
 Sergio Ramiro García Trejos

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Universidad Surcolombiana  
 MA in English Language Teaching  
 Lesson Plan- Research Thesis

Teacher-Researchers: Sergio Ramiro García Trejos- Rolney Leonardo Diaz Pascuas Date: October 1<sup>st</sup> 2015- 19:00- 19:30  
 School: CORPORACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA DEL HUILA CORHUILA Grade: Second semester students  
 Lesson Subject: English  
 Teaching Time: 25 mins

*Lesson Concept: What are you like?*

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Assessments</b>
1. In this lesson, students will make a brief description of their personalities and compare them with others' through a Skype videoconference.  2. In this lesson, students will compare their personalities with their peers in the Skype session.	1. Students will use adjectives correctly to describe their personality and they will compare themselves with close relatives or friends.  2. Students will use comparative adjectives applying the correct grammatical rules through a Skype videoconference.

**Materials:**

Laptop or desktop computer, full-headset/earphones and built-in microphone, pencil and paper, slides on PPT show, Skype™ software (previously installed), broadband connection (over 512mb)

**Anticipatory Set**

1. First, students will place themselves in a comfortable and quiet place away from noise or other interruptions to log in to Skype. Then, students will make some testing on their computers to make sure video and audio are clear prior to the beginning of the video-conference.

Rolney Leonardo Diaz Pascuas  
 Sergio Ramiro García Trejos

1

Universidad Surcolombiana  
 MA in English Language Teaching  
 Lesson Plan- Research Thesis

**Activating Prior Knowledge:**

1. Students will be presented a picture of the characters of the famous TV program "El Chavo del Ocho". A list of adjectives will be shown to them through the screen mirroring option of Skype as well as a short explanation to remember the rules to make comparisons. Next, students will be asked questions about their personalities. For example: What is El Chavo like? Then, comparisons will be made about these characters. E.g. Kico is taller than Ñoño

**Procedure:**

1. Students will start by making a brief description of themselves in relation to their personality traits.
2. Students will have to describe personality of people close to them, for example, their brother or sister, mom or dad.
3. Students will make comparisons of them with the person they previously described.
4. Students will express comparisons among them (the participants in the Skype session)

**Closure:**

5. The teacher-researcher will ask students to express their ideas about the importance of tolerance, accepting differences to avoid rejection, bullying and discrimination.

**Additional Concept Related Activity:**

Students will be assigned to write a journal about the experience they had in the Skype session in which they describe how they felt, how they performed and express any concern or additional comments.

Rolney Leonardo Diaz Pascuas  
 Sergio Ramiro García Trejos

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Universidad Surcolombiana  
 MA in English Language Teaching  
 Lesson Plan- Research Thesis

Teacher-Researchers: Sergio Ramiro García Trejos- Rolney Leonardo Diaz Pascuas Date: May 11<sup>th</sup> 2015  
 School: CORPORACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA DEL HUILA CORHUILA Grade: Third semester students  
 Lesson Subject: English  
 Teaching Time: 35-40 minutes  
 Lesson Concept: *Where would you like to travel?*

<b>Objectives</b>
1. Students will be able to discuss their travel ambitions and ask their partners about theirs.
2. Students will be able to express their habits and opinions about travelling.

**Materials:**

Laptop or desktop computer, full-headset/earphones and built-in microphone, pencil and paper, slides on PPT show, Skype™ software (previously installed), broadband connection (over 512mb)

**Anticipatory Setting**

1. At least 3 days before developing this lesson plan, students will be told that the topics for this coming session is about their travel ambitions for the future, travel options, and their habits when travelling. Besides, students will be told to prepare their opinions about how they plan their holidays, their choices when planning a trip and their favorite activities when they go on a trip.
2. First, students will find a quiet place away from noise or other interruptions to log in Skype. Then, students will make some testing on their computers to make sure video and audio are clear prior to the beginning of the video-conference. Also, students will be sent a list with different topics to discuss during the Skype session.

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**Activating Prior Knowledge:**

1. Students will be greeted by the teacher-researcher. The topic of the session is re-stated clearly to gather background knowledge. Then, the teacher-researcher will start showing some pictures about him when he visited London to engage students to talk about holidays and travelling.

**Procedure:**

1. First, students will be shown some pictures of famous tourist destinations around the world. Then, the pictures that are familiar to them will be discussed and several questions about these places will be made, e.g.: Karla, Do you know where the Eiffel Tower is? If so, what do you know about it. Then, one by one will try to describe the different places they have visited in Colombia.
2. Second, students will be asked about the place that they would like to visit and explain why. Their classmates will be engaged to discuss if they have similar or different ambitions. For instance, they can explain why they like it or why not. Besides, students will be encouraged to make questions about these famous places around the world. Students will also be able to ask their peers and teacher-researcher for detailed information about their choices. For example: what activities can you do in this place? When is the best time of the year to go?
3. Third, students will express what kind of activities they like doing when they go on holidays or their favorite city to visit in the future and their choice in relation to means of transportation.
4. After each student's intervention, the others will express if they find it interesting or not and why and they will defend their position whether this person is actually important or not for personal or general reasons.

**Closure:** Finally, students will be asked to discuss the causes and consequences and they are free to express their opinions when the teacher-researcher asks them to do it.

**Additional Concept Related Activity:**

Students will be assigned to write a journal about the experience they had in the Skype session in which they report what they learnt through this activity, the outcomes, perceptions, opinions, etc.

Rolney Leonardo Diaz Pascuas  
 Sergio Ramiro García Trejos

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Universidad Surcolombiana  
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 Lesson Plan- Research Thesis

Teacher-Researchers: Sergio Ramiro García Trejos- Rolney Leonardo Diaz Pascuas  
 School: CORPORACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA DEL HUILA CORHUILA  
 Lesson Subject: English  
 Teaching Time: 35-40 minutes

Date: May 16<sup>th</sup> 2016  
 Grade: Third semester students

*Lesson Concept: Do you know festivities and customs around the world?*

<b>Objectives</b>
1. Students will be able to express their likes about food and traditional plates around the world.
2. Students will be able to exchange ideas about food from their own country or a foreign one.

**Materials:**  
 Laptop or desktop computer, full-headset/earphones and built-in microphone, pencil and paper, slides on PPT show, Skype™ software (previously installed), broadband connection (over 512mb)

**Anticipatory Set**

1. At least 3 days before developing this lesson plan, students will be told that the topics for this coming session is about strange customs, carnivals and festivities in Colombia and around the world. Besides, students will be told to get ready to talk about a strange custom, carnival or festival they found interesting through a web quest.
2. First, students will find a quiet place away from noise or other interruptions to log in Skype. Then, students will make some testing on their computers to make sure video and audio are clear prior to the beginning of the video-conference.
3. Students will be sent a couple of links for two YouTube videos to be discussed during the Skype session.

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 Sergio Ramiro García Trejos

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**Activating Prior Knowledge:** Students will be greeted by the teacher-researcher. The topic of the session is re-stated clearly through questions to gather background knowledge. For instance, what festivities do you know here in Colombia and around the world? What is particular about these events? Doing this, they will know what the topic will be about.

**Procedure:**

1. First, students will be shown two videos (previously watched) to ask them about the festivals or carnivals portrayed in them. In one of these videos, we can observe the difference between a carnival and a festival, so there will be questions to lead this discussion. Then, the teacher-researcher will start by asking them what they usually do on holidays and if they ever get place where there are festivities taking place here in Colombia. Then, participants are asked them to share the experiences they have had in these festivities or carnivals in their own towns or department. Also, they will be engaged to talk about a festivity they would like to go and explain why.
2. Second, students will see some pictures about festivities around the world. They will be engaged to describe and the teacher-researcher will ask them where they belong to, in case they do not know, they can try to guess. Once they find out, they should explain what helped them to know what country each picture belonged to. Also they can be asked if they know any other festivals around the world. They can express if they want to go there or not and if they would wear the costumes they see on the pictures.
3. Third, students will take a look at some pictures about Colombian famous costumes and outfits (traditional clothing), namely *rey momo*, *paisas* one, the one from the bambuco dance, or the *llanero* one. The following questions could be asked: -What do you like about your culture? -What don't you like about your culture? Next, participants will be asked what traditional costumes they know from Colombia and around the world. Teacher-researcher will ask them if they would wear those kinds of costumes and why. Questions to arise discussion may be asked along this stage.
4. Finally, students will see a video (previously seen) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fu49hHbEvgg>) By playing this video about weird, extreme customs and traditions around the world, they will be asked what they think about it. Also, they will be asked if these customs are linked with culture or something. Lastly, some pictures about strange customs will be shown and the teacher-researcher will elicit answers about their opinion in relation to the saying: "when in Rome, do as the Romans do". Then, they might be asked: Do you think this is always good advice? Why or why not?

**Closure:** The teacher-researcher will ask the four participants some of these questions: What customs do you practice? -What are your favorite customs? -What customs do you think should be revised? -What customs do you think should no longer be practiced

**Additional Concept Related Activity:** Students will be assigned to write a journal about the experience they had in the Skype session in which they report what they learnt through this activity, the outcomes, perceptions, opinions, etc./

Rolney Leonardo Diaz Pascuas  
 Sergio Ramiro García Trejos

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## Appendix 2

### Consent Form



**AUTORIZACIÓN**  
 Investigación: **EXPLORACIÓN DEL**  
**IMPACTO DE USAR SKYPE EN LA PRODUCCIÓN ORAL**  
 Maestría en ELT  
 Universidad Surcolombiana

Nosotros, los docentes de inglés Sergio García y Leonardo Díaz, queremos informarle sobre el desarrollo del proyecto de investigación **“EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF USING SKYPE ON ORAL PRODUCTION”**, dirigido a los estudiantes de segundo semestre de la Corporación Universitaria del Huila CORHUILA de la ciudad de Neiva. Esta investigación se desarrollará durante 6 sesiones virtuales desde septiembre 9 hasta mayo 30 del siguiente año. Por consiguiente, presentamos a su consideración el presente documento como constancia de su consentimiento para que su hijo(a) participe en este proyecto de investigación.

Lea este formulario en su totalidad y realice cualquier pregunta que usted pueda tener antes de acceder a dar su autorización.

#### Propósitos

- Desarrollar la investigación “Exploración del impacto de usar Skype en la producción oral” como requisito de tesis de grado en la maestría en didáctica del Inglés de la Universidad Surcolombiana.
- Objetivo General: Determinar los beneficios y limitantes de la implementación de Skype como actividad de aprendizaje complementaria sobre la producción oral.

#### Objetivos específicos:

- Descubre las ventajas o inconvenientes de la aplicación de Skype como una actividad de aprendizaje complementarias para fomentar la producción oral .
- Establecer el impacto del uso de Skype como medio para satisfacer las necesidades de los estudiantes para la práctica del idioma adicional más allá del aula

#### Autores

Sergio García, docente catedrático de inglés de la universidad CORHUILA y Leonardo Díaz docente de inglés en el municipio del Agrado, ambos estudiantes de la maestría en didáctica del Inglés de la Universidad Surcolombiana.

#### Procedimientos

La participación de su hijo implicará las siguientes acciones:

- Completar encuestas, responder cuestionarios y entrevistas y escribir reportes sobre videoconferencias en Skype para uso del idioma extranjero inglés. En algunos de los instrumentos anteriormente nombrados no tendrá que proporcionar el nombre; por lo tanto será totalmente anónimo. Los resultados se utilizarán para fines de tesis,





**AUTORIZACIÓN**  
**Investigación: EXPLORACIÓN DEL**  
**IMPACTO DE USAR SKYPE EN LA PRODUCCIÓN ORAL**  
**Maestría en ELT**  
**Universidad Surcolombiana**

publicación y presentación. No se proporcionará información de identificación. Sólo se publicarán los resultados generales.

- Desarrollar intervenciones en línea via Skype las cuales serán guiadas y supervisadas por los investigadores. Estas sesiones se realizaran a lo largo de 9 meses de instrucción. Las video conferencias estarán orientadas a identificar los aspectos
- Participar en grabaciones de audio y video como mínimo seis veces durante el período de investigación. Las observaciones y grabaciones son un componente necesario de la investigación con el fin de validar que los planes de clase estén siendo implementados apropiadamente. Las observaciones serán realizadas por un equipo de dos personas. Todas las observaciones son confidenciales y no tendrán ningún impacto en las notas de su desempeño académico.

#### Beneficios

La participación en este estudio puede beneficiar el uso y aprendizaje del idioma inglés en cada estudiante.

#### Confidencialidad

Todos los registros de este estudio serán confidenciales. Los resultados de las encuestas y entrevistas no serán compartidos con agentes externos. Las observaciones y grabaciones en línea serán confidenciales entre el equipo de observadores y no serán compartidos con ningún personal administrativo. Algunas de las respuestas obtenidas de los participantes se tomarán de las observaciones, grabaciones en Skype y los diarios no serán compartidos con fines diferentes a los de la investigación.

#### Participación Voluntaria

La participación en este estudio es voluntaria y su hijo(a) puede retirarse en cualquier momento. Si decide que no permitirá su participación, su decisión no afectará de ninguna manera la relación actual con el mediador del área de inglés y el estudiante.

### AUTORIZACIÓN

He leído y comprendido la información anterior. El(la) investigador(a) me ha explicado el estudio y ha contestado mis preguntas. Voluntariamente doy mi consentimiento para que mi hijo(a) \_\_\_\_\_ participe en el proyecto de investigación "Promoción de la instrucción diferenciada a través de ambientes virtuales de aprendizaje"

Firma padre de familia: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Firma del Investigador: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 3

Likert Scale Samples



## Appendix 4

## Journal Entry Samples

## Sesión: Culturas

En la sesión donde hablamos sobre culturas, festivales, y costumbres de Colombia y el mundo me sentí muy bien porque es un tema conocido y diverso, fue una charla fluida y dinámica ya que entre nosotros nos preguntábamos sobre lo que nos gustaría experimentar y lo que no, entablamos la conversación. En algunos momentos los fallos técnicos fueron notorias ya sea mía o de algún compañera. Una vez más esta sesión en skype me ayuda a practicar mi inglés para pensar en inglés y también hablarlo. Lo que más me gustó de la sesión es que fue dinámica por el video y sus imágenes, lo que menos me gustó fue que en algunos momentos fue difícil para mí entender lo que me preguntaban.

Estoy segura que esta sesión son de gran ayuda para mi vocabulario en inglés y mi fluidez a la hora de tener una conversación.

Viajes

Esta Sección de Skype me pareció muy interesante ya que era algo diferente me gusta hablar de las diferentes partes del mundo que hay en estos sitios como: convivir con diferentes personas, las comidas que hay allí. Hubo fallas técnicas con las compañeras quizás había mucha interferencia. Hubo en algunas ocasiones no entendía lo que decía el profesor Sergio estaba muy pendiente de lo que cada uno decía o lo ayudaba a cada uno con lo que intentaba decir, algunas correcciones.

Me gustó la dinámica que el profesor utilizaba en tanto videos como en imágenes que las colocaba en el computador y así poder dar la opinión cada y se era agradable, asombroso, impresionante, divertido, diferente etc. A donde nos gustaría ir, cuál era nuestro sitio favorito que nos gustaba hacer, con quien compartimos más estos viajes y como era la mejor manera de llegar allí. El video que vimos era sobre turistas que compartían sus experiencias con grupos étnicos, como ellos obtenían. Luego seguían las preguntas como: ¿te interesaría a comer tribal? ¿compartir esta experiencia? el cual apoyaba mucho a la iniciativa de experimentar estas vivencias.

Durante la sesión fue una experiencia completa, pues aprendí a organizar los diálogos en línea, a relajarme y a tener confianza con mis compañeros, más que memorizar textos, fue dejar soltar mi mente, sintiéndome en confianza, aprender a hablar de mi misma, aprendí de mis errores y de lo que mis compañeros sabían.

Fue una experiencia excelente, una muy buena técnica para aprender el inglés, ya que los compañeros son un gran apoyo.

Estas sesiones las puedo aprovechar de una manera divertida, y satisfactoria hablando con mis compañeros como cualquier día, aprendiendo a fondo ese idioma, ya que esto se presta para practicar y repasar algunos conceptos sobre gramática y expresiones inglesas.

#### Ventajas:

- Es una excelente técnica para aprender.
- Se agregan palabras nuevas a mi vocabulario.
- Es totalmente gratis, solo necesito de mi disposición.
- Te integras con los compañeros y el diálogo es divertido.
- No es nada tensionado, no hay que ser correcto hablando, de lo contrario entros en confianza.

Cuando me preguntaron que ¿que me gustaba hacer? siento que respondí con confianza a pesar de que a la última podía expresar más ideas, para tener un buen argumento.

En el momento que nos preguntaron que cosas no nos gustaba; mis ideas eran vagas y faltaba más herramientas de comunicación y creatividad.

También cuando el profesor preguntó que si queríamos hacernos preguntas entre nosotros, y ya que nadie preguntaba decidí tomar la iniciativa, para que el ambiente no fuera tan incómodo, preguntándole a cada uno para que todos pudieran participar y así poder ampliar el vocabulario de inglés.

> La experiencia de video Conferencia en skype para practicar inglés me pareció muy entretenida por el tema tratado, porque hubo un dialogo entre mis compañeros y yo, también me pareció interesante porque interactuamos de manera directa y con esto practicamos la pronunciación y organizar mentalmente la estructura antes de decirlo. Con esto agilizamos la mentalidad y el lenguaje en inglés.

Me sentí nerviosa en la sesión porque no había interactuado directamente antes con otras personas, también porque no tenía un amplio conocimiento sobre la tematica tratada y porque no me sentía segura con mi pronunciación, pero no toda la sesión fue así, Hubo momentos en los que me sentí confiada tanto respondiendo como preguntando en especial con mis compañeros.

Lo que más disfruté de esta sesión fue escuchar hablar a mis compañeros en inglés, porque con esto aclaraba dudas para la pronunciación y la estructura de la oración, también cuando hubo un dialogo fluido entre todos, lo que menos me gustó fue que en ocasiones no entendía lo que me preguntaban y que no sabía el significado de algunas palabras en inglés.

Creo que mi desempeño fue bueno porque contesté las preguntas fluidamente y logré entablar la conversación con mis compañeros.

Me sentí a gusto con la temática tratada porque apesar que mi vocabulario en inglés es limitado, este es un tema que me es familiar, así que puedo dar razón sobre ello; Esta experiencia me ayudó bastante en cuanto al uso del inglés porque ahora me es más fácil desenvolverme en un dialogo y hablar fluidamente, además sé un poco más sobre la pronunciación de las palabras y la estructura de una oración.