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## **Editorial**

Opening Writing Doors Journal welcomes Molly Shevlin as the new proof reader. She has joined the Foreign Language Program team as British Assistant. We are certain that her work will contribute to continue providing quality articles to the journal.

This issue starts with a collection of first-time authors describing different research experiences. The first two articles, written in French, report a case study and a phenomenological research study. The former, “La pédagogie des grands groupes: un défi pour l’enseignant et pour les apprenants de FLE” written by Mejía Martínez and Torres



Moya, highlights the challenges that teachers and students face in large classes. The latter, “Le rôle de la recherche éducative dans la formation des futurs enseignants en langues étrangères” written by Latorre Moncada and Delgado Palacio, acknowledges the importance of teaching research competences to FL undergraduate students.

This issue also features four articles written in English. Firstly, Bedoya, Gordillo, Romero and Stiglich share an ethnographic study aimed at helping foreign language learners to become aware of Colombian culture through class activities to reinforce their national identity. Secondly, Ortiz, Rojas, Escobar and Leyva’s article “Fostering students’ English fluency through direct and indirect language learning strategies in EFL contexts” describes the communicative process that private school students go through to improve their speaking skills. Thirdly, Riveros Vega and Orjuela Vargas’ article “Phonological awareness: a step in English language development” explains how specific training can positively impact the development of verbal communication in a foreign language. Fourthly, Barragan Fonseca, Castiblanco Sierra, Castro Pardo, Estupiñan Pinilla and Rodriguez Molina present an online radio program as an educational tool to improve speaking skills among English language learners.

Finally, Laura Torres, based on the Mariama Bâ’s novel *Une si longue lettre*, reflects on the role of women in the Muslim society .

It is our hope that the articles presented here will probe a valuable contribution to your professional endeavors.



**La Pédagogie des Grands Groupes: un Défi pour l'Enseignant et pour les Apprenants de FLE**

Steffy Juliette Mejía Martínez\*

Omaïrys Torres Moya\*\*

L'enseignement dirigé sur un grand groupe est devenu un type d'enseignement pouvant entraîner des défis touchant tant l'enseignant que les apprenants. Ces défis peuvent être d'ordre pédagogique et d'ordre affectif. Cette étude a visé à identifier les défis trouvés par l'enseignant et par les apprenants à l'intérieur d'un grand groupe et à mettre en évidence les perceptions des étudiants face à ces défis. Le type d'étude adoptée a été l'étude de cas, laquelle s'est développée dans un cours de Français Élémentaire niveau A1 d'une université publique en Colombie dont quatre étudiants et le professeur titulaire ont composé l'échantillon. Ainsi, les instruments utilisés pendant la collecte de données ont inclus l'observation, l'entretien et l'enregistrement sonore.

L'information recueillie à partir de différents instruments permet de constater que les principaux défis trouvés à l'intérieur d'un grand groupe concernent la gestion de la discipline et de l'autorité, la planification de la classe et le temps ; et le maintien d'une bonne relation dans la classe. Afin de faire face à ces défis, le professeur implémente certaines stratégies telles que l'explication sur le tableau, la lecture silencieuse et à haute voix, l'exposé et les jeux de rôle.

**Mots-clés :** pédagogie, grand groupe, pédagogie des grands groupes, défi pédagogique, défi socioaffectif, perception.

## **Abstract**

Teaching to large classes has become a type of teaching that involves pedagogical and affective challenges presented for both teachers and students. The aim of this study was to identify the challenges found by teacher and students in a large class, as well as evidencing students' perceptions face to these challenges. This research adopted a case study design carried out in an A1 level French Class at a Public University in Colombia, in which four key informants and a FFL teacher composed the sample. The instruments implemented to collect data were observations, interviews and recordings.

The information gathered from the various instruments shows that the main challenges found inside of a large group concern the management of discipline and authority, the planning of classes, time, and maintaining a good relationship in the classroom. In order to face these challenges, the teacher implements certain strategies such as the explanation on the board, the silent reading and the loud reading, oral presentations and role plays.

**Key Words:** Pedagogy, Large Classes, Pedagogy of Large Classes, Pedagogical Challenge, Socio-affective Challenge, Perceptions.

## **Resumen**

Enseñar a un grupo numeroso se ha convertido en un tipo de enseñanza en el que se pueden presentar retos de carácter pedagógico y socio-afectivo. El objetivo de este estudio consistió en identificar los retos encontrados por el profesor y los estudiantes dentro de una clase numerosa y en evidenciar las percepciones de estos últimos frente a dichos retos. Esta investigación fue llevada a cabo utilizando un estudio de caso, y desarrollada en un curso de Francés Elemental nivel A1 de una Universidad Pública en Colombia, en la que el profesor titular y cuatro estudiantes conformaron la muestra. Los instrumentos utilizados durante la etapa de recolección de datos fueron la observación, la entrevista y las grabaciones.

La información obtenida mediante de los distintos instrumentos utilizados muestra que los principales retos encontrados al interior de un grupo numeroso conciernen el manejo de la disciplina y de la autoridad, la planificación de las clases, el tiempo, y mantener una buena relación al interior del aula. Con el fin hacer frente a estos retos, el profesor implementa

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ciertas estrategias como la explicación sobre el tablero, la lectura silenciosa y la lectura en voz alta, presentaciones orales y dramatizaciones.

Palabras Clave: Pedagogía, Grandes Grupos, Pedagogía de los grandes grupos, Reto Pedagógico, Reto Afectivo, Percepciones.

## Introduction

L'enseignement dirigé sur un grand groupe, mieux connu comme la Pédagogie des Grands Groupes est devenu un type d'enseignement relativement commun à l'université, notamment en raison du processus de mondialisation entamé depuis les années 90 qui a produit une massification universitaire. Une classe composée par une quantité considérable d'apprenants peut entraîner des défis touchant tant l'enseignant que les apprenants. Ces défis peuvent être d'ordre pédagogique, incluant ici la gestion de la discipline, l'autorité de l'enseignant, la planification de la classe et les stratégies d'enseignement ; et d'ordre affectif, concernant plutôt la socio-émotivité, cela veut dire, la relation établie entre l'enseignant et les apprenants à l'intérieur de la salle de classe.

Pour la réalisation de cette recherche, il a été nécessaire de s'informer au sujet de la thématique à travers un processus de lecture d'études préalables ayant une relation très proche avec le sujet de recherche. Les études menées par Perron (2005) et Blatchford, Bassert et Brown (2011) nous ont permis de mieux identifier les défis inhérents aux grands groupes. Les études faites par Ngamassus (2005) et Fofana (2011) nous ont également montré un ensemble de stratégies qui nous ont aidé à comparer les stratégies implémentées par le professeur étant observé et celles montrées par les études préalables.

Subséquemment, cette étude de cas a visé à identifier les défis trouvés par l'enseignant et par les apprenants de niveau A1 de FLE à l'intérieur d'un grand groupe et à mettre en évidence les perceptions des étudiants face à ces défis. Afin d'accomplir ce but, cette étude a été conduite dans une Université Publique en Colombie, où un cours de FLE de niveau A1 a été choisi. De cette population quatre étudiants et le professeur titulaire ont composé l'échantillon. Cette recherche s'est inscrite sur l'approche qualitative et le type d'étude adopté a été l'étude de cas. Ainsi, les instruments utilisés pendant la collecte de données ont inclus l'observation directe et non-participante, l'entretien et l'enregistrement sonore.





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Afin de faciliter la compréhension de notre étude, nous présenterons d'abord les définitions supportant le cadre théorique de cette recherche et les études préalables qui ont permis de mieux comprendre la thématique abordée, puis nous montrerons la méthodologie suivie pour le développement de cette étude et finalement, nous nous centrerons sur la présentation des résultats obtenus, de même que sur les implications pédagogiques.

### Révision Littéraire

Le *Dictionnaire de didactique du français langue étrangère et seconde* (2003) laisse voir que « la pédagogie englobe tout ce qui a trait à l'action éducative auprès de l'enfant ou de l'adulte. ». Tardif et Mukamurera (1999) complètent également cette définition quand ils affirment que « la pédagogie est une activité sociale plus ou moins institutionnalisée selon les époques et les sociétés » En partant de ce concept, on s'appuie sur la conception que l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère se construit de manière collective, ce qui nous amène à donner de l'importance aux grands groupes. À ce sujet, Dah (2002) considère qu' « aujourd'hui, on parle d'un grand groupe lorsque, dans une situation d'enseignement-apprentissage donnée, le nombre d'étudiants peut devenir un obstacle à la communication. ».

Ainsi, en tenant compte des idées présentées dans le *Dictionnaire de didactique du français langue étrangère et seconde* (2003) autour de la pédagogie et de la définition de grand groupe proposée par Dah (2002), on s'accorde à dire que la pédagogie des grands groupes est une pédagogie qui devrait être consacrée à la création de stratégies pour que l'enseignement et l'apprentissage soient efficaces et qui a pour objectif d'éviter que la taille du groupe empêche d'accomplir les objectifs de la classe. Conséquemment, l'enseignement et l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère dans un grand groupe entraîne des défis tant sur le domaine pédagogique qu'affectif. D'un côté, Herington et Weaven (2008) soutiennent que les défis d'ordre pédagogique font référence à « gérer et maintenir la consistance de la classe » Donc, ces défis touchent la gestion de la classe en incluant la gestion de la discipline, la planification de la classe, l'autorité du professeur, et les stratégies proposées par l'éducateur. D'un autre côté, Chouinard (2001) explique que les défis socioaffectifs concernent la socio-émotivité consistant essentiellement « à la qualité

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de la relation établie entre l'enseignant et les apprenants à l'intérieur d'une salle de classe [...] où les relations positives ont une importance considérable »

Dans cette recherche nous nous sommes intéressées à étudier les défis pédagogiques et socioaffectifs trouvés à l'intérieur des grands groupes. À ce sujet, Perron (2005) a mené une étude qui avait pour but de donner une possible réponse en cas d'indiscipline : il a rapporté que les problématiques liées à cette dernière incluaient essentiellement le brouhaha, le chahut, et les conflits. De même, Chevalier (2006) a lié la discipline à l'autorité et dans son étude il a distingué quatre types d'enseignants selon leur mise en pratique de l'autorité : le manager, le chef du chantier, le bon parent et le socio-pédagogue. Galand (2006) par contre, a présenté un point de vue négatif autour de la question de l'autorité. Les résultats de sa recherche ont montré que la mise en pratique de l'autorité à l'intérieur d'une salle de classe provoque une relation de contrôle unilatéral entre l'enseignant et les apprenants, ce qui amène à une attitude de méfiance entre eux. En suivant ce même fil conducteur, Gaudreau (2012) souligne l'importance d'une relation positive dans une classe à fort effectif et met en relief deux facteurs importants influençant l'apprentissage et la qualité de la relation établie entre l'enseignant et les apprenants : la gestion de la classe et la qualité des interactions. Blatchford, Bassert et Brown (2011) complètent cette dernière information quand ils affirment que la taille de la classe influence la relation entre l'enseignant et les apprenants dans la mesure où elle restreint la focalisation de l'enseignant sur l'apprenant et augmente la présence de comportements négatifs chez les étudiants.

Afin de faire face à ces défis, il est nécessaire que l'enseignant implémente des stratégies qui l'aident à gérer une classe nombreuse. Ainsi, Ngamassus (2005) a opté pour l'implémentation de la fragmentation de la classe en sous-groupes, où chacun comptait avec la participation d'un représentant ou tuteur chargé de renforcer les connaissances des membres de son sous-groupe. Pour sa part, Fofana (2011) a préconisé la création d'un espace de conversation possible à travers trois activités spécifiques : le chant, l'utilisation d'aides visuelles, et la pose de questions, lesquelles chercheraient principalement à améliorer la qualité de l'interaction entre les apprenants et le professeur. Winstone et Millward (2012), quant à eux, privilégient l'implémentation de l'exposé magistral au contact de grands groupes, mais liée à l'apprentissage actif, lequel favoriserait la participation des apprenants dans la séance, de même que Nadeau et Turcotte (2009) qui proposent l'utilisation de l'exposé magistral en ligne comme une stratégie permettant de rendre l'apprentissage plus individualisé, en plus de véhiculer une quantité considérable d'information en une courte période de temps. Finalement, d'autres stratégies incluent



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celles mises en place par Surgenor (2010), comme les Buzz group, consistant à la création de petits groupes de discussion, le Jigsaw où l'enseignant constitue des groupes qui devront répondre à différentes questions sur des sujets divers, et le Three minutes each way, consistant à organiser des couples qui discutent autour d'un sujet donné pendant trois minutes.

### Méthodologie

Cette étude s'est inscrite sur l'approche qualitative qui selon Cresswell (1994), cité par Farooq et al. (2011) constitue un type de recherche applicable au champ de l'éducation, qui cherche à comprendre des problématiques sociales et humaines à travers la collecte de données descriptives, telles que les paroles écrites ou dites, généralement en milieu naturel. Le type d'étude utilisé a été l'étude de cas défini par Cresswell (2007) comme une approche qualitative basée sur l'exploration d'un bounded system (sujet déterminé et limité par le temps et le contexte) à travers la mise en place d'instruments multiples de collecte de données, tels que des observations, des interviews, des documents, des reports, des matériaux audiovisuels, etc.

Cette recherche a eu lieu dans une Université Publique en Colombie, qui offre le Programme de Licence en Langues Étrangères Anglais-Français, appartenant au Département de Langues et Communication, et lequel est inscrit à la Faculté d'Education de cette université. Pour le développement de cette étude, un cours de français niveau A1, c'est à dire du premier semestre du programme, a été choisi. Ce cours de nature théorico-pratique a été conduit sous la modalité présentielle, avec une intensité horaire de huit heures par semaine. Ce cours était composé par 25 étudiants et le professeur titulaire. En ce qui concerne leur âge, il oscillait entre 17 et 21 ans, et la plupart d'entre eux venaient de différents départements de la Colombie. De cette population choisie, quatre étudiants et le professeur titulaire ont composé l'échantillon, pour la sélection duquel nous nous sommes basées sur l'aide du professeur chargé du cours afin de connaître et de choisir les étudiants qui s'engageaient le mieux dans les activités proposées dans la salle de classe, et qui participaient le plus activement à l'intérieur du cours. Cependant, il faut souligner que le professeur titulaire devait tenir compte de certains critères au moment de faire la sélection des participants de l'étude. Ces critères incluaient d'assister à toutes les classes, de montrer

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de l'intérêt à l'apprentissage de la langue française et de s'engager de manière responsable aux activités qui seraient développées pendant la collecte de données.

Les instruments de collecte de données ont inclus l'observation non-participante, l'entretien individuel semi-dirigé et l'enregistrement sonore. L'observation a été utilisée afin de relever les défis tant pédagogiques que socio-affectifs trouvés à l'intérieur d'une classe nombreuse. Cela s'est fait principalement dans le but d'examiner si les défis mis en évidence dans la révision littéraire étaient ceux qui se présentaient réellement dans les classes à fort effectif. L'entretien a été réalisé afin de recueillir les perceptions des apprenants face aux défis présents à l'intérieur des classes à fort effectif, et de collecter de l'information quant aux stratégies utilisées par l'enseignant.

L'enregistrement sonore finalement, a été utilisé comme un complément des interviews, afin d'enregistrer l'information demandée dans les entretiens.

Enfin, dans le but d'analyser l'information recueillie, on a utilisé l'analyse typologique qui selon Hatch (2004) « consiste à diviser les données recueillies en des groupes ou des catégories basées sur des typologies déterminées auparavant. À partir de ces typologies, il faut trouver des relations qui donneront lieu aux généralisations finales »

### **Résultats**

#### **Les défis pédagogiques toujours présents à l'intérieur d'un grand groupe**

Notre première question de recherche s'est centrée sur les défis d'ordre pédagogique trouvés à l'intérieur d'une classe nombreuse. Lors des observations et des entretiens, quatre défis ont été trouvés: a) La gestion de la discipline ; b) La gestion de l'autorité ; c) La planification de la classe et d) Le temps.

En ce qui concerne la gestion de la discipline, quatre aspects l'influencent : a) L'usage des rappels verbaux et non-verbaux ; b) La géographie de la classe ; c) Les déplacements de



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l'enseignant à l'intérieur de la salle de classe ; d) Le rythme de travail. En premier lieu, en ce qui concerne l'usage des rappels verbaux et non verbaux de la part de l'enseignant, deux types d'intervention ont été identifiées : les rappels non-verbaux et les rappels verbaux. D'une part, les premiers consistent à l'utilisation de la part du professeur de mouvements de tête ou de gestes soit avec le visage ou soit avec les mains afin d'indiquer aux apprenants de faire silence ou de s'asseoir. D'autre part, les rappels verbaux se font en mentionnant des shhhh qui permettent à l'enseignant de maintenir les apprenants en silence, mais pendant une période de temps très courte (deux minutes environ). Pour cela, quand ce type d'intervention verbale se rend ineffective, le professeur utilise des phrases comme « S'il vous plait, faites attention un moment » et sa voix devient plus grave. Ainsi, les apprenants font silence immédiatement pour écouter ce que le professeur dit. Cependant, quand les apprenants se lèvent de leurs places, le professeur utilise des ordres comme « Tu t'assois » (Observation systématique 3). Cette information permet de voir qu'afin de maintenir la discipline dans la salle de classe, l'enseignant emploie diverses manières qui commencent avec des gestes qui se rendent inefficaces et qui l'amènent à utiliser des interventions verbales. Néanmoins, ces interventions se font sans recourir au mauvais traitement des apprenants étant donné que ceux-ci obéissent quand l'enseignant parle. Il est nécessaire d'ajouter que même si les cas d'indiscipline présentés dans la salle de classe ne sont pas considérés comme graves, le professeur intervient dans les petits indices de désordre (les chuchotements, les déplacements d'une place à une autre), afin d'éviter que ceux-ci deviennent des cas d'indiscipline sérieux. À cet égard, le P1 exprime : « Même si mon contrôle de la discipline des apprenants n'est pas si stricte, il faut que j'intervienne dans les petits cas d'indiscipline » En relation à cette idée, Dessus (2002) considère que pour que la discipline soit mieux gérée à l'intérieur d'un grand groupe, il faut intervenir en fonction des causes du comportement perturbateur chez les apprenants.

En ce qui a trait à la géographie de la classe, les observations systématiques menées permettent de constater que l'organisation des chaises à l'intérieur de la salle de classe se fait toujours en demi-cercle, sauf quand les classes ont lieu dans le laboratoire, où les apprenants s'organisent selon la disposition des chaises déjà établie (en rangs). La plupart du temps, ils ont le choix de s'organiser eux-mêmes et de choisir le copain à côté duquel ils veulent s'asseoir ; cette disposition cause des chuchotements répétitifs parmi eux : ils ne font attention ni à l'explication des sujets, ni aux présentations orales de leurs copains. À ce sujet, le P2 soutient que « Pendant les exposés, les étudiants bavardent avec ceux qu'ils ont à côté » (Entretien 3). Cette organisation des chaises dans la classe influence également l'attention des apprenants face aux explications de l'enseignant. Alors, les apprenants qui se installent sur les premières chaises en face du tableau ont plus de possibilités d'écouter et de comprendre ce que l'enseignant explique, cas contraire à ceux qui se placent au fond de

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La salle de classe, lesquels ont tendance à se distraire avec les bruits provenant de l'extérieur. À ce sujet, le P3 exprime : « Dans une classe nombreuse, ceux qui sont sur les premières chaises en face du tableau feront plus attention que ceux qui sont placés au fond de la salle de classe » (Entretien 3).

En ce qui concerne les déplacements de l'enseignant à l'intérieur de la salle de classe, les observations permettent de se rendre compte que la plupart du temps le professeur reste en face du tableau, debout, en surveillant les activités réalisées par les apprenants, en faisant l'explication des sujets ou simplement, en donnant les consignes des activités. On constate que le professeur s'approche des apprenants pour éclaircir leurs doutes ou répondre à leurs questions, ce qui l'amène à contrôler la discipline et à éviter le désordre pouvant être provoqué en raison des déplacements des étudiants vers lui. En outre, il est nécessaire de dire que quand l'enseignant cesse de se déplacer à l'intérieur de la salle de classe afin d'écrire sur le tableau, les apprenants en profitent pour parler avec ceux qui sont à côté ou pour se déplacer d'un côté à un autre.

Un quatrième aspect présent lors de la gestion de la discipline est le rythme de travail. À ce sujet, les activités suivent un ordre et elles sont enchaînées, ce qui donne à l'enseignant la possibilité d'engager les apprenants dans les activités ayant lieu dans la classe et d'éviter la présence de comportements perturbateurs chez eux. Par ailleurs, lors des observations on soutient que les intervalles de temps entre une activité et une autre influencent le comportement des étudiants : la longueur de ces intervalles est déterminée par la vitesse avec laquelle le professeur organise les ressources étant utilisées pendant les activités. Ainsi, quand l'intervalle de temps est court (trente secondes environ), les apprenants suivent le professeur avec le regard et ils attendent le début de la prochaine activité ; quand l'intervalle est un peu plus long (deux ou trois minutes environ), les apprenants parlent parmi eux et font du bruit ; et quand cet intervalle de temps est encore plus long (cinq à six minutes), les apprenants n'ont rien à faire, alors, ils préfèrent chahuter avec les autres, aller d'une place à une autre pour commencer à discuter avec leurs camarades, ou même se divertir avec leurs téléphones portables. À cet égard, Grenoble (2002) étaye qu'un des aspects nécessaires pour maintenir la discipline à l'intérieur de la salle de classe consiste à gérer un rythme de travail adéquat, cela veut dire que l'enseignant doit faire en sorte que tous les événements de sa classe se succèdent, qu'ils s'organisent de façon continue.

La gestion de l'autorité constitue un autre défi d'ordre pédagogique. Trois aspects la composent : a) Le contrôle sur la prise de parole des apprenants ; b) Le pouvoir d'expert ; c) Le pouvoir légitime. D'après les observations et les entretiens, le contrôle sur la prise de parole des apprenants permet à l'enseignant d'éviter des cas d'indiscipline dans la classe dans la mesure où il peut contrôler qui parle et à quel moment. Pour cela, il demande



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premièrement des volontaires, mais quand les apprenants ne veulent pas participer, il les appelle de leurs noms pour leur faire prendre la parole.

Un deuxième aspect présent lors de la gestion de l'autorité est le pouvoir d'expert. À cet égard, le professeur maîtrise les différents sujets abordés pendant la classe et il est capable de répondre aux questions des apprenants. Il est évident qu'il connaît ce qu'il explique et ses étudiants sont satisfaits quand ils lui demandent de leur réexpliquer quand des doutes subsistent. De plus, le vocabulaire employé par le professeur est compréhensible et simple et son ton de voix est toujours fort, ce qui lui permet de rendre l'explication compréhensible et que tous les apprenants arrivent à l'écouter. À ce sujet, le P4 explique : « Le professeur sait ce qu'il explique et sa façon de le faire est facile à comprendre » (Entretien 2).

Quant au pouvoir légitime de l'enseignant, les apprenants demandent toujours la permission de l'enseignant chaque fois qu'ils ont besoin de sortir de la salle de classe, ce que lui permet d'établir un ordre et d'éviter que tous les étudiants sortent en même temps et causent du désordre. Également, les apprenants reconnaissent que le seul fait d'être l'enseignant lui attribue une certaine autorité légitime acquise par culture et par reconnaissance du rôle du professeur dans la salle de classe. Par exemple, le P2 dit : « Il y a des raisons évidentes qui donnent au professeur la gestion et le contrôle de la classe. Il est clair qu'il a de l'autorité parce qu'il est le professeur » (Entretien 3). Cela indique que ce pouvoir légitime est une convention sociale et culturelle qui lui donne de l'autorité dans la salle de classe pour le seul fait d'être l'enseignant.

Intéressons-nous maintenant à la planification de la classe comme défi pédagogique à l'intérieur d'un grand groupe. Plus particulièrement, d'après les observations systématiques trois étapes sont suivies lors du déroulement des classes : a) Étape d'ouverture ; b) Étape d'exécution ; c) Étape d'évaluation. En premier lieu, l'étape d'ouverture consiste à réviser le devoir assigné la classe précédente et à rendre des travaux. En deuxième lieu, l'étape d'exécution se compose d'une partie d'explication et d'une partie d'exploitation. D'une part, quand les classes ont lieu dans une salle de classe normale, le professeur utilise le tableau et le manuel afin d'expliquer les sujets de grammaire et de résoudre les doutes des apprenants par rapport à l'écriture de certains mots. Dans le laboratoire en revanche, le professeur se centre sur la révision des thématiques abordées pendant les classes précédentes, en prenant avantage des outils technologiques à disposition. D'autre part, pendant la partie d'exploitation, le professeur demande aux apprenants de travailler sur le livre de l'élève ou de faire des exercices en ligne quand ils se trouvent dans le laboratoire.

En troisième lieu, l'étape d'évaluation se compose d'une part d'une activité de mise en pratique consistant de manière générale en des activités de production orale ou de

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production écrite ayant une relation directe avec le sujet de grammaire étudié pendant la classe. D'autre part, pendant cette phase d'évaluation, le professeur assigne un devoir incluant des activités diverses pour s'assurer que l'apprenant comprend bien les thématiques abordées pendant la séance. Le P3 constate cette idée quand il affirme : « Premièrement, le professeur utilise la méthode, cela veut dire, le livre de l'élève, à partir duquel il tire des lectures ou des documents audio afin d'expliquer le sujet de grammaire. Ensuite, on fait des exercices de pratique, et finalement, le professeur assigne le devoir » (Entretien 3)

Finalement, le temps constitue un autre défi pédagogique dans une classe nombreuse. Premièrement, en raison du nombre d'étudiants, l'attention que le professeur donne à chaque apprenant est limitée dû au temps dont il dispose pour répondre à ses questions et résoudre ses doutes, ce qui affecte l'interaction dans la salle de classe : cela l'empêche de s'approcher de chaque étudiant et de rendre l'apprentissage de la langue plus individualisé. À cet égard, le P4 exprime : « L'interaction est affectée dans un grand groupe étant donné que le temps que le professeur dédie à chaque apprenant est limité » (Entretien 3). De plus, le temps dédié à la pratique de la production orale est un autre aspect lié au temps comme un défi pédagogique étant donné qu'il est difficile pour l'enseignant d'écouter tous les apprenants de façon individuelle. Ainsi, afin de surmonter ce défi, il divise la classe en de petits groupes pendant les présentations orales afin d'arriver à écouter tous les apprenants. Cependant, il est encore difficile de se centrer dans la correction des fautes de chaque apprenant, raison pour laquelle il recourt à une correction plus généralisée des fautes linguistiques.

### La socioémotivité dans une classe à fort effectif

L'axe de notre deuxième question de recherche était les défis d'ordre affectif trouvés à l'intérieur d'une classe nombreuse. Lors des entretiens, la socio-émotivité dans une classe nombreuse se caractérise par deux aspects: a) La relation de départ ; b) La relation de retour.

En ce qui concerne la relation de départ, les entretiens ont permis de connaître que cette relation se caractérise par la qualité du traitement que les étudiants reçoivent de la part de leur enseignant. Ce traitement même dans un grand groupe se base sur le respect, la confiance et la tolérance quand le professeur reconnaît que les apprenants se trompent souvent, au moment de corriger leurs fautes et de leur réexpliquer les sujets quand cela est nécessaire. Les entretiens révèlent également que le fait que le professeur négocie avec les apprenants les décisions prises dans la classe et les appelle par leurs noms, crée chez eux une ambiance d'appartenance à la classe qui augmente notablement leur participation et





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leur engagement aux activités proposées dans le cours. De même, la façon dont le professeur corrige leurs fautes favorise la relation à l'intérieur du cours dans la mesure que celle-ci se fasse correctement et amène les apprenants à accepter les corrections et les commentaires faits par l'enseignant. Ainsi, le P1 affirme que « Pour qu'il y ait une bonne relation dans la classe, il faut que le professeur donne de la confiance aux apprenants et leur permette de prendre le risque de se tromper au moment de demander » (Entretien 2).

D'autre part, la relation de retour se caractérise par le climat de respect, de tolérance et de confiance dans la classe, lequel favorise l'interaction entre l'enseignant et les apprenants. À cet égard, les observations systématiques et les entretiens permettent de constater que les apprenants demandent au professeur de manière respectueuse de mieux leur expliquer quand ils n'arrivent pas à comprendre certains sujets ou consignes, ou quand ils demandent sa permission pour sortir de la salle de classe. De plus, les apprenants respectent l'absence du professeur quand celui-ci sort de la salle de classe et continuent à travailler, en évitant de cette façon de décevoir la confiance qu'il leur donne. Finalement, le fait qu'il n'y ait aucune pression de la part du professeur permet aux étudiants de participer beaucoup plus, en créant une ambiance de partage d'idées. À propos de la relation de retour, le P1 exprime : « Je dirais que la relation de retour doit être basée sur la confiance et le respect » (Entretien 2).

### **Les stratégies d'enseignement : une manière de répondre aux défis issus d'une classe à fort effectif**

Un des axes de notre projet de recherche s'est intéressé à mettre en évidence les stratégies d'enseignement implémentées à l'intérieur d'une classe nombreuse. Lors des observations et des entretiens, des stratégies plutôt cognitives ont été trouvées.

D'après les travaux de CYR (2008), « Les stratégies cognitives impliquent une interaction entre l'apprenant et la matière d'étude en vue de résoudre un problème ou d'exécuter une tâche d'apprentissage ». Dans cette étude, les stratégies cognitives identifiées ont été classées selon la compétence à développer : Les compréhensions écrite et orale, la compétence linguistique et la compétence de production orale.

Premièrement, trois stratégies par rapport aux compétences de compréhension orale et écrite ont été identifiées : a) La lecture d'un livre de littérature ; b) La lecture silencieuse ; c) La lecture à haute voix. Le livre de littérature est utilisé en suivant ces étapes : mise en relief des mots inconnus, écriture de ces mots sur le tableau, lecture à haute voix et correction de la part du professeur. Cette stratégie consiste à écouter et à lire en même



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temps un livre de littérature. Alors, le professeur reproduit le document audio et l'arrête pour que les apprenants trouvent les mots inconnus. Pour donner la signification de ces mots, il utilise des synonymes et finalement, il demande des volontaires pour faire la lecture à haute voix et il corrige l'apprenant qui lit. Les autres apprenants écoutent attentivement pendant qu'ils suivent la lecture faite par leur copain.

Quant à la lecture silencieuse, le professeur demande aux apprenants de lire des textes contenus dans le livre de l'élève, pour répondre ensuite à des questions. Selon la longueur du texte, le professeur donne un temps déterminé pour qu'ils puissent arriver à répondre complètement aux questions posées. Finalement, en ce qui a trait à la lecture à haute voix, l'enseignant demande aux apprenants de lire à haute voix des textes contenus dans le livre de l'élève. Il utilise cette stratégie en suivant trois étapes : il assigne qui lit ; pendant la lecture, il corrige les fautes de prononciation de l'apprenant en arrêtant la lecture chaque fois que celui-ci se trompe ; quand la lecture est finie, le professeur demande aux apprenants de trouver dans le texte des mots inconnus.

En ce qui concerne la compétence linguistique, ici divisée en compétence grammaticale et phonologique, deux stratégies ont été reconnues : a) L'explication sur le tableau des sujets de grammaire ; b) L'explication sur le tableau de la phonétique. En ce qui touche à la compétence grammaticale, l'enseignant lit des exemples tirés du livre de l'élève ayant une relation avec le sujet de grammaire pour arriver à l'expliquer sur le tableau en utilisant des exemples de la vie quotidienne, afin d'assurer la compréhension des apprenants. Ensuite, afin de permettre aux apprenants de mécaniser ces sujets abordés pendant la séance, le professeur leur demande d'écrire sur le cahier personnel d'apprentissage des phrases ayant une relation avec le sujet étudié. Quand les apprenants finissent, le professeur leur demande de partager un par un à la classe ce qu'ils écrivent : les étudiants lisent et le professeur corrige leurs fautes linguistiques.

Quant à la compétence phonologique, afin d'expliquer la phonétique, le professeur écrit sur le tableau des symboles phonétiques étant difficiles à prononcer pour les apprenants, et à côté, il écrit des exemples ayant un rapport avec ces sons problématiques. Alors, il demande à la classe entière de prononcer correctement après lui. Il est nécessaire d'ajouter que la compétence phonologique est fréquemment travaillée en classe plutôt à travers de lectures à haute voix. Alors, les apprenants lisent les différents textes assignés par le professeur, et immédiatement il corrige leurs fautes de prononciation et leur demande de prononcer de la façon correcte avant de continuer avec la lecture.

Finalement, en ce qui a trait à la compétence de production orale, trois stratégies ont été trouvées : les jeux de rôle, les exposés et le travail collaboratif. Ces stratégies sont

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implémentées par le professeur afin de fragmenter le grand nombre d'étudiants en de petits groupes et d'arriver à travailler la production orale. Néanmoins, il est nécessaire d'ajouter que même si ces groupes sont formés, l'évaluation de la production orale se fait de façon individuelle.

### **Les apprenants réagissent aux défis d'un grand groupe**

Notre troisième question de recherche s'est intéressée aux perceptions des apprenants face aux défis trouvés dans une classe à fort effectif. D'après les entretiens, deux types de perceptions ont été reconnues : a) Perceptions face aux défis pédagogiques ; b) Perceptions face aux défis socioaffectifs.

En ce qui concerne la première catégorie, d'après les perceptions des apprenants, la gestion de la discipline est bonne, même s'il y a des fois certains cas d'indiscipline, qui sont la plupart du temps surmontés grâce aux interventions verbales faites par le professeur et grâce au climat dans la salle de classe. De même, les stratégies implémentées par le professeur développent toutes leurs compétences, en plus de créer une ambiance agréable dans la salle de classe.

En ce qui a trait aux perceptions des apprenants face aux défis socioaffectifs, l'explication des différents sujets de grammaire et le traitement que les apprenants reçoivent de la part du professeur permettent de créer un climat agréable dans la classe. D'une part, l'explication claire des sujets donne aux apprenants l'assurance de ce qu'ils apprennent. D'autre part, le traitement qu'ils reçoivent, lequel est basé sur la confiance, le partage et la sécurité, permet de fortifier leur relation avec le professeur. De plus, la patience de l'enseignant au moment d'expliquer les sujets et de les réexpliquer quand cela est nécessaire constitue un autre aspect permettant de maintenir une bonne relation dans la salle de classe. À cet égard, le P2 soutient : « Quand nous avons des questions, généralement le professeur arrête l'explication, et il réexplique de manière détaillée » (Entretien 2).

Néanmoins, un aspect négatif chez l'enseignant est le temps insuffisant dont il dispose pour faire attention à chaque étudiant au moment de répondre à ses besoins linguistiques.

### **Bilan et Implications Pédagogiques**



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Notre étude s'est intéressée à connaître les défis pédagogiques et socioaffectifs trouvés à l'intérieur d'une classe nombreuse, et à mettre en évidence les perceptions des apprenants face à ces défis. Lors de l'information recueillie, nous avons constaté que les principaux défis pédagogiques et socioaffectifs dans une classe à fort effectif touchent plutôt la gestion de la discipline et de l'autorité, la planification et le développement de la classe, le temps dont le professeur dispose pour faire attention aux besoins de chaque apprenant, et le maintien d'une bonne relation à l'intérieur du cours. Nous avons également découvert qu'un nombre important de stratégies sont implémentées afin de faire face à ces défis. Ces stratégies mises en place selon les compétences de compréhension orale et écrite, linguistique, et de production orale, incluent la lecture silencieuse et à haute-voix, l'explication sur le tableau, les jeux de rôles, les exposés, et le travail collaboratif. De plus, les apprenants perçoivent que l'explication des différents sujets de grammaire et le traitement reçu de la part du professeur sont des aspects permettant de créer un climat agréable dans la classe.

Après avoir connu les défis se présentant à l'intérieur d'un grand groupe et de leur effet dans le processus d'apprentissage du FLE, il serait nécessaire de réduire le nombre d'étudiants à dix ou quinze apprenants afin de mieux travailler de façon individuelle la compétence de production orale des apprenants.

Même si le professeur doit recourir à la fragmentation du grand groupe en raison du temps limité pour écouter de façon individuelle toutes les présentations orales des apprenants, il serait mieux de dédier un temps plus ample à la pratique de la production orale.

Nous conseillons également aux futurs enseignants de FLE travaillant avec des grands groupes d'implémenter les stratégies ci-présentées. Il faut ajouter que chaque enseignant est autonome et qu'il a la liberté de les modifier selon le contexte et les besoins de ses apprenants.

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**Annexes**

**Annexe 1:** Grille d'entretien

**ENTREVISTA SEMI-DIRECTIVA N.3**

**Fecha:** Mayo 29 de 2014

**Hora:** 8: 00 a. m.

**Duración de la entrevista:**

**Lugar:** **Investigadoras:** Steffy Juliette Mejía Martínez y Omairys Torres Moya

**Participante:**

**LA PEDAGOGIE DES GRANDS GROUPES : UN DEFI POUR L'ENSEIGNANT ET POUR LES APPRENANTS EN CLASSE DE FLE**

***Instrucciones:** La entrevista que se realizará a continuación contribuirá al proceso de recopilación de información de la investigación previamente expuesta a través de una carta firmada y aprobada por usted. En esta ocasión se propondrán 8 preguntas relacionadas con las percepciones de los estudiantes frente a los retos encontrados dentro de una clase numerosa. Es necesario mencionar que todas sus respuestas serán grabadas con el fin de evitar la pérdida de información.*

*Durante esta entrevista, usted podrá responder con toda libertad a las preguntas expuestas. De igual forma, las investigadoras estarán dispuestas a aclarar todas las dudas que se presenten durante la realización de la entrevista.*

**Objetivo de la entrevista:** conocer las percepciones de los estudiantes frente a los retos encontrados dentro de una clase numerosa.

**Preguntas**

1. ¿Para usted, qué es una clase numerosa?
2. ¿Qué retos considera usted se pueden presentar dentro de una clase numerosa?
3. ¿Cómo cree usted que se maneja la disciplina dentro del grupo de Francés A1?
4. ¿Considera usted que el profesor posee autoridad dentro del aula de clase?
5. ¿Cómo percibe usted el manejo de la autoridad dentro del aula de clases?
6. ¿Cuáles son los pasos que el profesor sigue para llevar a cabo su clase? (Aula de clases, laboratorio).
7. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las estrategias de enseñanza implementadas por el profesor dentro de la clase de Francés A1?
8. ¿Cómo cree usted que estas estrategias le han ayudado en su proceso de aprendizaje del francés?

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Commentaires</b>

**Annexe 2:** Grille d'observation

**Date:**

**Heure:**

**Salle:**

**Objectif de la classe:**

**Objectif de la grille :**

**Participants :**

Indice à observer	Description
Règles fixées à l'avance	

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Arrangement de la salle de classe	
Contrôle des activités de la classe	
Rythme de travail	
Interventions de l'enseignant face aux cas d'indiscipline	
Facteurs externes à la classe	



# Le Rôle de la Recherche Éducative dans la Formation des Futurs Enseignants en Langues Étrangères

## Le Rôle de la Recherche Éducative dans la Formation des Futurs Enseignants en Langues Étrangères

Angie Latorre Moncada\*

Paola Delgado Palacio\*

### Résumé

Cette étude phénoménologique a visé à analyser l'influence du processus d'investigation chez les étudiants du programme de Licence en Langues Etrangères d'une université publique en Colombie, en partant de l'idée que la recherche est une source d'expériences enrichissant la réflexion et l'esprit critique des apprenants. Quatre étudiants faisant leur stage professionnel ont donné leurs perspectives face à la recherche éducative et à son rôle dans leur formation. De plus, ils ont signalé les bénéfices et les difficultés y trouvés. Ces perceptions ont été recueillies à travers les entretiens et journaux de bord. D'ailleurs, l'information a été analysée sous la technique typologique et les résultats montrent que la recherche éducative contribue positivement à la formation des enseignants en divers aspects d'ordre académique, personnel et professionnel.

**Mots clés :** Formation professionnelle, Futurs enseignants, Recherche éducative, Formation réflexive, Projet de recherche.

### Abstract

This phenomenological study analyzes the influence of the investigative process among students of the Foreign Languages Program of a public university in Colombia, recognizing research as the main source of enriching experiences towards reflection and critical



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attitudes for students. Four students making their professional training gave their perspectives about educational research and its role in their education, as well as the benefits and difficulties found on it. These perceptions were collected through interviews and diaries. Furthermore, the information was analyzed through the typological technique and the results show that educational research contributes positively to teachers' professional training in various academic, personal and professional aspects.

**Key words:** Professional formation, Future teachers, Educational research, Reflexive formation, Research project.

## Resumen

Este estudio fenomenológico analiza la influencia del proceso de investigación en los estudiantes del Programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras de una universidad pública en Colombia, teniendo en cuenta que la investigación es una fuente de experiencias enriquecedoras para la formación reflexiva y el espíritu crítico de los alumnos. Cuatro estudiantes que realizaban su práctica profesional dieron sus diferentes perspectivas sobre la investigación educativa y su papel en la educación, además, ellos sacaron a la luz beneficios y dificultades encontradas. Estas percepciones fueron recolectadas a través de entrevistas y diarios de campo. Además, la información fue analizada a partir de la técnica tipológica y los resultados muestran que la investigación educativa contribuye positivamente a la formación de profesores en diversos aspectos de orden académico, personal y profesional.

**Palabras clave:** Formación profesional, Futuros docentes, Investigación educativa, Formación reflexiva, Proyecto de investigación.

## Introduction

La recherche occupe aujourd'hui un lieu relevant dans toutes les sociétés, puisqu'elle est présente dans plusieurs domaines de connaissance comme une source d'analyse et de compréhension des problèmes. En ce qui concerne l'éducation, elle voit en recherche



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qualitative un outil pour mieux comprendre les sujets qui affectent toutes les dimensions éducatives. Grâce aux bénéfices trouvés, la recherche a commencé à se développer au sein de la formation d'enseignants, et est comprise comme «une investigation menée par un étudiant en formation avec la collaboration d'un tuteur qui fait une contribution intellectuelle, originale et créative à la discipline.» (Wenzel, 1997). La recherche dans le domaine de langues étrangères est chargée d'étudier les phénomènes qui font partie du processus d'enseignement et d'apprentissage d'une deuxième langue.

Il y a plusieurs études qui se rapprochent à ce sujet, en effet quelques-unes sont strictement dirigées vers le phénomène sous étude. Les auteurs autour du monde se sont penchés sur l'importance de la recherche éducative comme une source d'expériences d'apprentissage et un outil de réflexion.

Les études liées à la formation en recherche des futurs enseignants en langues étrangères prouvent que l'inclusion de programmes de recherche à la formation des enseignants contribue positivement à plusieurs aspects académiques, personnels et professionnels des étudiants, Lopez et Zuluaga (2005) et Abello et Baeza (2007) s'entendent sur la formation investigatrice laquelle stimule le développement des compétences de recherche ainsi comme l'appropriation de modèles d'investigation et le développement de la pensée autocritique et autonome.

D'autre part, on trouve des études liées à la conduite d'un projet de recherche chez les apprenants qui nous montrent des expériences vécues par les étudiants dirigeant un projet de recherche. Celles-ci peuvent avoir un caractère soit positif « l'amélioration des compétences intellectuelles, la communication et le travail d'équipe, la tolérance aux obstacles cognitifs, la pensée de façon indépendante et la formulation des idées propres » (Lopatto, 2010) ou négatif « les sentiments de confusion au début d'un projet, la peur vers les processus investigateurs, les relations avec les autres camarades, et la complexité des théories à étudier » (Faustino et Cardenas, 2008).

Cette étude phénoménologique s'est intéressée à analyser les contributions du processus de recherche chez les étudiants du programme de Licence en Langues Étrangères d'une



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université publique en Colombie, en tant que chercheurs, dès l'étape de conception de la proposition de recherche jusqu'à la présentation finale des résultats, tenant compte principalement les expériences de terrain des étudiants car pas tous ont la même perception de l'importance de cette composante en tant qu'aspect fondamental d'une formation réflexive et critique chez les futurs enseignants en langues étrangères.

Ce projet bénéficie les étudiants en langues étrangères, parce qu'ils peuvent connaître l'influence de la conduite d'un projet de recherche dans leur formation comme futurs enseignants, de la même façon, une personne suivant un projet de recherche éducative peut trouver affinité avec cette étude, aussi elle bénéficie les professeurs car ils peuvent identifier les aspects les plus importants dans le développement des projets de recherche afin d'offrir un meilleur support académique aux étudiants.

Le but de cette étude était d'analyser les contributions de la recherche à la formation professionnelle des futur enseignants, but supporté par des objectifs comme la description des contributions de la recherche éducative à la formation professionnelle des futurs enseignants en langues étrangères, l'identification des expériences qui contribuent à la formation réflexive, les bénéfices que la recherche apporte à la formation et en plus, les défis que la recherche présente pour les futurs enseignants.

Ensuite cette introduction on trouvera des sections consacrées au développement des aspects liés à la méthodologie, la révision littéraire, les résultats et finalement des considérations pédagogiques à tenir compte.

### **La Formation en Recherche Chez les Futurs Enseignants en Langues Étrangères**

Selon le dictionnaire de didactique du Français langue étrangère et seconde la formation désigne « l'action de former c'est à-dire de développer les qualités, les facultés d'une personne sur le plan physique, moral, intellectuel, et professionnel mais aussi des résultats de ce processus. »





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Dans le cas de l'université sous étude la formation en langues étrangères est fondée sur la construction d'un individu intégral, un être humain conscient de sa réalité individuelle et de son environnement, un maître agent de changement, et un être scientifique-réflexif capable d'intervenir dans une réalité éducative. Cet objectif est identifiable dans la composante de recherche quand les étudiants sont confrontés aux problèmes réels dans la salle de classe. Pour Nunan (1991), la recherche orientée au cours de deuxième langue présente au moins l'un des deux traits définitoires suivants : les données ont été recueillies en salle de classe et la recherche tente d'apporter une réponse à des questions de pédagogie des langues.

En ce qui concerne la formation en recherche on a suivi une étude réalisée par Lopez et Zuluaga (2005) «Impacto de la formación investigativa en los estudiantes de licenciatura de idiomas de la universidad de Caldas» où ils ont constaté que les stagiaires ont renforcé leur développement professionnel à travers l'analyse et la réflexion des processus d'enseignement-apprentissage dans la classe.

D'autre part Rodriguez (2009) dans son étude intitulée «La formación de docentes investigadores: lineamientos pedagógicos para su inserción en los currículos » suggère que l'inclusion des lignes directrices pédagogiques visant la formation des chercheurs contribue aux processus éducatifs pédagogiques et au stage professionnel. Le développement des compétences de recherche influence le processus d'appréhension des connaissances, tout en encourageant «situations de conflit» dans lesquelles l'étudiant doit définir les concepts et les appliquer à une réalité donnée.

## Recherche Éducative : Processus de Développement du Projet de Recherche

La recherche éducative peut être considérée comme un type de recherche dans laquelle le problème choisi, et le sujet à étudier ont une relation étroite avec les différents domaines de l'éducation. Pour développer un type de recherche valide, avec reconnaissance institutionnelle et scientifique, les chercheurs en éducation ont adopté la logique de la

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recherche scientifique en utilisant les principales étapes pour la conduire mais ils choisissent des sujets présents dans un contexte éducatif.

Le développement de recherches dans le domaine éducatif vise une prise de conscience chez les chercheurs de leur rôle, à savoir que la recherche en éducation doit aussi se faire ailleurs que dans des laboratoires et que le savoir doit être construit par les stagiaires eux-mêmes. (Lessard et Lévesque, 1998).

Creswell (2005) dans son livre intitulé *Educational Research, Conducting and Evaluating a Quantitative and Qualitative Research* affirme que « la recherche est un processus utilisé pour recueillir et analyser de l'information afin d'augmenter la compréhension d'un sujet ou d'un problème ». Selon cet auteur il y a dans le niveau le plus général trois étapes à suivre:

1. La proposition d'une question.
2. Le rassemblement de l'information pour répondre à la question.
3. La présentation des réponses finales à la question posée.

Dans le développement des recherches en langues étrangères les expériences des enseignants-chercheurs jouent un rôle très important, à ce sujet Lopatto (2010) dans son étude « Undergraduate Research as a High-Impact Student Experience » indique que la plupart des expériences de recherche aident à améliorer les compétences intellectuelles, la communication et le travail en équipe.

En revanche, l'étude de Faustino et Cárdenas (2008) nous montre que certains étudiants se sont sentis troublés au début du processus de recherche, subséquemment des difficultés ont été identifiées, comme les relations avec les autres camarades, l'assimilation de nouvelles connaissances et la peur vers le processus de recherche. Cependant, ils mentionnent qu'il y a des bénéfices de recherche qui vont au-delà de la préparation d'un projet, une grande quantité d'étudiants a exprimé que cette composante a contribué énormément à leur dégageant dans le domaine de la recherche, dans le développement des conduites

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autonomes, comme êtres réflexifs, critiques et analytiques, et des changements positifs dans la vie académique et le domaine de l'enseignement.

## Méthodologie

Cette étude s'inscrit dans l'approche qualitative, laquelle selon Kakai (2008) « renvoie à une méthode de recherche intéressée par le sens et l'observation d'un phénomène social en milieu naturel ». Cela veut dire que les études qualitatives se centrent sur les phénomènes sociaux qui sont les plus proches aux gens. De cette manière, la recherche qualitative implique une approche interprétative du monde, elle étudie les choses dans leur milieu naturel, en essayant de donner un sens, ou d'interpréter les phénomènes en termes des sens que les gens leur donnent.

En suivant cette perspective ce projet a adopté le design phénoménologique qui décrit la signification des expériences vécues par plusieurs personnes sur un concept ou un phénomène et met l'accent sur la description de ce que tous les participants ont en commun quand ils réagissent face à un phénomène (Creswell, 2012). Ce qui s'avère avec notre projet, étant donné que l'objectif principal est celui de décrire les expériences vécues par un groupe d'étudiants développant un projet de recherche dans une université publique.

L'épicentre de cette étude a été le programme de Licence en Langues Étrangères Anglais-Français, qui est une licence présentielle divisée en 10 semestres incluant les composantes suivantes: la composante socio-humanistique, pédagogique, de langue maternelle, de recherche, de langues et cultures étrangères, et d'approfondissement.

Les participants de ce projet ont été un groupe de 4 étudiants, âgés de 21 à 26 ans, ayant étudié tous les cours de la composante de recherche ; cela veut dire, ils ont été les étudiants faisant le stage professionnel (dixième semestre).



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Cette étude s'est centrée sur le projet de recherche développé par les étudiants pendant les cours de «Recherche Ethnographique en Langues Etrangères», « Projet de Recherche en Langues Etrangères » et « Recherche Appliquée aux Langues Étrangères» lesquels suivent les objectifs suivants : mettre en œuvre la base théorique et méthodologique pour la conception d'un projet de recherche, recueillir les données et organiser l'information, et analyser, interpréter et écrire un rapport final, respectivement.

Les participants ont été choisis au hasard parmi les élèves qui ont accompli les conditions suivantes: avoir fini le projet de recherche, avoir des connaissances sur le processus de développement du projet de recherche et se trouver en développant le stage professionnel dans le même lieu où les chercheuses de cette étude phénoménologique se trouvaient. En plus, la participation a été volontaire et les participants ont partagé les expériences lesquelles ils ont considérées les plus adéquates pour l'étude.

Afin de recueillir l'information qui a répondu à nos questions de recherche, on a utilisé des instruments tels que l'entretien semi-structuré individuel, l'enregistrement audio et le journal de bord. Un entretien semi-structuré introductoire et trois entretiens semi-structurés ont été conduits afin de connaître les perceptions des participants vers la recherche éducative, la formation réflexive et les bénéfices et défis présents dans le processus de conduite d'un projet de recherche. Ces entretiens ont été conduits de façon individuelle où le participant interviewé a eu l'opportunité d'exprimer ses expériences et ses perceptions de manière personnelle en langue maternelle. Pendant les entretiens, l'information a été collectée à travers les enregistrements sonores.

Finalement, on a utilisé des journaux de bord en collectant des réflexions écrites faites par les participants pendant sept semaines autour de sept questions proposées par les chercheuses au début du processus de collecte de données. Cet instrument a été utilisé dans le but de faire réfléchir les participants vers le processus de recherche.

Pour la procédure d'analyse des données, on a adopté l'analyse typologique, selon Hatch (2003) l'analyse typologique implique la division en groupes ou catégories des informations observées sur la base d'une règle de décomposition de phénomènes ; les

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catégories sont générées dès la théorie, le sens commun et les objectifs du projet de recherche. Cette analyse est la plus adéquate pour notre projet étant donné que l'information provient des entretiens semi-directifs et les objectifs de recherche sont bien fixés et spécifiques.

## Résultats

### La Recherche Éducative : Un Processus Complexe dans la Formation des Futurs Enseignants

Il est important de tenir compte les perceptions des participants vers le processus de recherche lesquelles ont été exprimées à travers les entretiens et les journaux de bords, entre elles on a distingué trois sujets qui s'en dérivent : la signification de recherche éducative pour les participants, l'importance de la recherche et les étapes menées lors du processus de recherche.

La recherche éducative est considérée comme l'étude systématique de phénomènes éducatifs, utilisé par les apprenants ou enseignants pour identifier des problèmes dans la salle de classe et leurs possibles solutions. Par rapport à ce sujet, Charlotte affirme qu'« Elle est définie comme l'explication rationnelle des problèmes de la réalité éducative, à travers la recherche des nouvelles connaissances, de l'analyse des fonctions, des méthodes et des processus éducatives » En plus, Elle exprime que « La recherche se concentre sur les diverses études qu'un étudiant ou un professionnel peuvent développer pour aider à identifier et résoudre les problèmes ou situations particuliers de l'enseignement». (Journal de bord).

L'importance de la recherche éducative dans la formation des futurs enseignants en langues étrangères est manifestée à travers adjectifs qui accentuent ses qualités, permettant de la concevoir comme un processus qui permet de penser et de conduire des projets de manière plus critique et dans un contexte réel. Bastian remarque qu'« Elle est un processus à long



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terme, elle est très utile étant donnée qu'elle nous permet de nous confronter à une expérience... réelle ».

De même, la complexité du processus de recherche est toujours remarquée sans oublier son utilité, comme le mentionne Bastian « tout le processus de recherche a été très utile, la première partie (la rédaction de la proposition de recherche) était un peu compliquée mais à la même fois très importante ». Ce début du processus de recherche est parfois aperçu comme négatif, pour certains étudiants. Quant à ce sujet, Bastian exprime qu'«Honnêtement, au début, ce processus me semblait quelque chose de très ennuyante». Par rapport à cette idée Faustino et Cardenas (2008) assurent que certains étudiants se sont sentis troublés au début de l'étude. Ces perceptions vers le processus de recherche sont fondées sur le manque des connaissances de procédures d'investigation, elles changent tandis qu'ils acquissent les connaissances nécessaires comme l'assure Bastian «La recherche est cool, comment elle est belle, elle a quelque chose de dur, quelque chose de compliquée, mais en même temps elle est amusante ». (Entretien introductoire).

Les perceptions face au processus de recherche ont été issues des étapes que les participants ont suivis lors de la conduite de leurs projets, ces étapes sont organisées en : la rédaction de la proposition ; la collecte de données ; l'analyse des données, rédaction de l'article et soutenance des résultats. Dans la première étape, les jeunes chercheurs doivent choisir un sujet et un design de recherche lesquels ils développent en fonction des objectifs proposés et en suivant une structure déterminée. En deuxième lieu, ils doivent choisir et mettre en place des instruments pour la collecte de données. Finalement, les chercheurs analysent les données en tenant compte des objectifs initiaux et font la rédaction d'un article académique. L'expérience d'avoir conduit un projet de recherche est devenue bénéfique, utile et bonne permettant aux étudiants de connaître l'importance et l'impact que les projets ont pour la communauté éducative. De plus, ce processus de recherche permet de donner une valeur différente à chaque étape, à cet égard, Charlotte affirme que «La troisième étape est la plus significative de la recherche, parce qu'à ce moment-là on se rend compte, en effet, si le projet qu'on a fait est bon ou mauvais» (Entretien 2). Même si chaque étape à une valeur différente pour les participants, en fin de comptes, tout le processus garde une grande importance comme l'exprime Nathan « Je considère vital... tous le processus, parce que les détails les plus petits dans un processus de recherche sont les importants ». (Entretien 1). À ce propos, Macnulty et Usma (2005) ont constaté que les perceptions des apprenants à l'égard de la composante de recherche, sont généralement positives.

### **Les Expériences, une Manière d'Enrichir la Conduite du Projet de Recherche**

Les expériences significatives des chercheurs lors du développement du projet de recherche se sont construites à partir des étapes du processus de recherche. Dans la première étape les apprenants choisissent un sujet qui sera l'aspect central de leurs propositions de recherche ; le choix de leurs sujets joue un rôle très important et les raisons qui ont guidé leurs décisions appartiennent aux multiples sources de motivation: le support académique de l'enseignant chargé du cours, la curiosité et l'expérience personnelle. Quant à cette idée Bastian raconte : « Mon conseiller est celui qui m'a dit: « ah, non, ce que vous voulez travailler est l'oral. J'ai pensé à cette autre idée, et je l'ai aimée». Zoé exprime que la raison pour laquelle elle a choisi son sujet: «En raison d'une expérience, ou mon expérience en tant qu'étudiante de langues étrangères» (Entretien 1). L'importance du sujet pour les apprenants est la possible implémentation de ce sujet dans une communauté éducative apprenant une langue étrangère.

La deuxième étape est l'étape la plus représentative du processus de recherche parce que c'est le moment où ils ont lié leur processus à la réalité et se sont rendu compte de l'importance de ceux-ci, comme l'exprime Charlotte « La collecte de données, [...] est quand nous nous rendons compte que notre projet de recherche est vraiment important ou pas, nous confrontons tout ce que nous avons étudié avec la réalité, ensuite, il nous emmène à l'analyse.» (Entretien 1)

À l'étape finale les chercheurs prouvent la validité de leurs projets ; leurs soutenances au public améliorent la perception des étudiants-chercheurs vers la recherche, enrichissent le programme en langues étrangères et la pensée critique des étudiants, sur ce point Charlotte affirme que les soutenances « Donnent la possibilité de répondre aux préoccupations des étudiants en suscitant la pensée critique des élèves qui sont sur le point de commencer leur processus de recherche » (Journaux de bord ). Lors de cette étape les conseils qui donnent ces futurs enseignants aux étudiants suivant une formation en langues étrangères ce sont: maintenir une idée de ce qu'on veut faire, tenir compte qu'on peut beaucoup apprendre,



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dépasser les obstacles, avoir de la volonté et discipline, s'intéresser sur la recherche, ne pas ressentir peur vers le processus et avoir beaucoup de patience, par exemple Nathan conseille d'« arriver très motivé au moment où ils commencent à faire leur recherche, car avec la recherche on peut également avoir un bon avenir personnel et professionnel» (Entretien 3).

Finalement, on doit souligner que pendant toutes les étapes des changements ont été expérimentés ; ces modifications ont été liées aux conseils des tuteurs et aux circonstances dehors le contrôle des futurs enseignants, Zoe exprime que « tout ne se passe pas comme vous le planifiez, dans la collecte de données, avec les participants ... vous commencez avec un certain nombre de participants, à travers le processus pour « x » ou « y » raison certains participants renoncent ou disent non». (Entretien 1)

### **La Formation Réflexive ne se Détache pas du Processus de Recherche**

La formation réflexive est conçue comme un outil approprié permettant d'autoévaluer le processus de recherche et de faire une analyse sur la manière d'agir. L'adoption de cette formation chez les futurs enseignants en langues étrangères est un processus qui se mène de manière inconsciente, étant donné qu'ils ne l'aperçoivent pas lors du développement des projets de recherche mais jusqu'à la mise en place des stages professionnels où ils commencent à identifier dans la salle de classe l'importance et les bénéfices issus de la formation réflexive, à propos de cela, Zoé affirme que « Ce processus de recherche est très significatif, étant donné que toute cette étude théorique et pratique nous permettra d'adopter des rôles plus réflexifs. Grâce à ceux-ci, il nous sera plus facile d'observer et de découvrir un problème dans une salle de classe». L'adoption d'une attitude réflexive peut être aussi influencée par la crainte de ne pas faire un bon travail ou de ne pas accomplir les attentes, quant à cela Bastian assure que « Grâce à la recherche non, cela veut dire, je suis devenu comme cela (un chercheur réflexif) par la peur de rien faire, ou de faire quelque chose de médiocre ». (Entretien1).

Même s'il y avait un degré d'inconscience vers l'adoption d'une attitude réflexive, on constate que grâce au processus de recherche certaines qualités sont acquises par les



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étudiants comme l'autonomie, le sens de la responsabilité, et l'opportunité d'adopter un rôle comme chercheurs réflexifs et critiques dans la salle de classe.

Lorsqu'on conduit un projet de recherche une compétence à s'autoévaluer et à analyser les travaux est développée, elle se manifeste en répondant aux questions : Qu'est-ce j'ai fait ? Qu'est-ce que je dois faire? Et Comment je dois le faire ? Par exemple, Bastian expose « Toujours quand je faisais quelque chose, quand je décrivais quelque chose, quand je cherchais quelque chose, toujours, je me questionnais, Cela va me servir ?, Est-ce que je l'ai bien fait ? Est-ce que je suis dans le bon chemin ? ». À propos de cet aspect Faustino et Cardenas (2008) affirment qu'une grande quantité d'étudiants a exprimé que la recherche a contribué énormément à leur dégagement des conduites autonomes.

### **La Recherche Éducative en tant que Source de Connaissances Contribuant à la Formation des Futurs Enseignants**

La recherche apporte certains bénéfices qui sont partie de la formation de futurs enseignants en langues étrangères. D'abord, on trouve des bénéfices d'ordre linguistique tels que l'amélioration des compétences langagières (production et compréhension des écrits), de la capacité d'interprétation de textes et la possibilité de les paraphraser en utilisant un langage plus formel et plus académique. Également, on a aperçu une amélioration des compétences linguistiques, principalement celle lexicale et une augmentation dans la quantité de vocabulaire acquis. Par exemple, Charlotte garantit qu'« En ce qui concerne la production écrite, je pense que j'ai pu améliorer beaucoup de choses dans cette compétence, étant donnée qu'on devait beaucoup lire, il y avait une acquisition de vocabulaire et la maîtrise des temps était très académique ». (Entretien 2) Au sujet des compétences acquises par les chercheurs Lopatto (2010) affirme dans son étude que la plupart des expériences de recherche aident à améliorer les compétences intellectuelles en général.

Le bénéfice le plus important est celui de l'acquisition des techniques de recherche car il apporte des connaissances comme: savoir choisir un design, déterminer les objectifs, faire la révision littéraire, écrire une proposition de recherche, utiliser des instruments de collecte

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de données, analyser les données et finalement faire la rédaction d'un article de recherche. À cet égard Charlotte exprime « J'ai beaucoup appris quant à l'assemblage d'un design, le choix d'un type d'étude, la révision littéraire, les objectifs et tout cela ont apporté leurs fruits » (Entretien 2). Lopez et Zuluaga (2005) indiquent dans leur étude que le travail en tant que chercheurs-enseignants a aidé à améliorer les compétences d'investigation.

À propos des tuteurs chargés du cours, leur aide est considérée très bonne, vitale, et utile ; sa collaboration dans ce champ sert à se réorienter et prendre le bon chemin dans un projet. Par exemple Charlotte exprime « En ce qui concerne le suivi des enseignants, dans mon cas, je pense qu'il a été très bon, il a été une grande aide et un grand soutien pour notre processus de recherche ».

Les connaissances sur les procédures de recherche sont reconnues comme le moyen pour améliorer la formation professionnelle et acquérir des connaissances qui seront utiles dans le futur professionnel. À ce sujet Charlotte a dit « On sait quel type de recherche conduire, on a beaucoup de connaissances, et ces connaissances préalables vont m'apporter pour faire une Master ou pour futur études » (entretien 2). Grâce au processus de recherche et à la conduite d'un projet les apprenants commencent à apercevoir les responsabilités et les rôles d'être un enseignant. Par exemple, Charlotte affirme que « Grâce à la recherche, je me suis rendu compte de l'importance d'étudier les problèmes de l'éducation et trouver une solution possible pour les résoudre, je suis maintenant capable de conduire des recherches avec les connaissances acquises dans ma formation professionnelle » (Journal de bord).

Finalement, cette expérience a été un moyen de développement académique et personnel ; elle a éveillé des attitudes d'auto- confiance, d'autonomie et d'exigence. À ce sujet Bastian expose : « J'ai appris un peu plus à travailler tout seul [...] on apprend à être un peu plus responsable et à se convaincre de ce qu'on fait, il faut bien faire les choses, pour avoir un bon départ et pour bien finir » (Entretien 2). Selon Faustino et Cárdenas (2008) la composante de recherche a un impact énorme sur la formation des étudiants en plusieurs aspects de leur vie académique, professionnelle et personnelle.

### La Recherche Éducative une Démarche Défiante pour les Futurs Enseignants



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Parmi les défis que la recherche présente pour les futurs enseignants on trouve ceux **a)** d'ordre méthodologique ; **b)** d'ordre linguistique, de la même façon on trouve un troisième aspect : **c)** la manière de les surmonter.

Avoir réalisé le projet en groupe ou de manière individuelle a posé un défi. Le travail individuel suscite des sentiments de peur et de frustration à cause de ne pas avoir un camarade qui pourra aider, comme l'exprime Charlotte « D'abord, je voulais le faire avec quelqu'un d'autre, car il était un défi [...] au début j'avais peur et j'étais frustrée de voir que mes collègues avançaient rapidement » (entretien 2). En revanche, le travail en groupe peut créer chez les chercheurs la perception de répéter les informations et de ne pas contribuer au développement du projet car le deux travaillent dans le même propos. À cet égard Nathan affirme « Honnêtement, il ne me semblait pas très bonne idée de faire ce projet en couple, et j'aurais voulu le faire tout seul » (Entretien 2).

Essentiellement dans l'ordre méthodologique, les étapes les plus compliquées ont été : la rédaction de la proposition, à cause des difficultés présentes dans l'écriture du cadre théorique ; et la rédaction de l'article final, étant donné qu'il est compliqué d'organiser toute l'information de façon appropriée. En ce qui concerne la première étape, Zoé expose que « La rédaction de la proposition a été le premier et le plus grand défi, parce que dans mon cas particulier j'avais jamais développé un projet de recherche » (entretien 3).

En ce qui concerne les défis d'ordre linguistique, l'usage de la langue est considéré un obstacle étant donné que le vocabulaire est plus complexe et le changement d'une langue à l'autre est abrupte car le cours était divisé en deux parties, en anglais et en français. A cet égard Zoe assure « il était difficile, parce que nous avons commencé avec un cours de recherche en anglais, qui était «ethnographie » et après nous avons continué notre processus de recherche en français... l'utilisation d'un nouveau langage, et l'approfondissement vers les procédures de recherche étaient vraiment des défis » (entretien 3).

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Pour surmonter les obstacles pendant le développement d'un projet de recherche il est nécessaire certains aspects tels que la persévérance, l'optimisme, travailler dans un propre rythme, faire les choses quand il est nécessaire, être responsable et profiter de l'information collectée. Bastian au moment de surmonter les obstacles affirme qu' « on doit faire les travaux quand il est nécessaire, on doit démontrer à nous-même et démontrer aux gens qu'on peut le faire (le projet de recherche), on peut le faire sans dépendre des autres, avec responsabilité et autonomie » (Entretien 2).

McNulty et Usma, (2005) ont constaté que certaines compétences de recherche ne sont pas en rapport avec le niveau de l'étudiant comme la lecture critique, la conception du projet, l'interprétation des données et la lecture des rapports. À ce sujet, les compétences de recherche qui ne correspondent pas au niveau des étudiants concernent principalement : la mise en œuvre de la revue de la littérature, l'implémentation des instruments de collecte de données et l'utilisation de techniques d'analyse des données.

## Bilan et Considérations Pédagogiques

L'objectif de notre étude était d'analyser les contributions du processus de recherche chez les étudiants du programme de Licence en Langues Étrangères ; ainsi nous avons constaté l'importance, la complexité et l'utilité de la composante de recherche dans leur formation. Le développement des projets de recherche pendant la formation professionnelle assure la consolidation des compétences linguistiques et l'appropriation des techniques d'investigation que les futurs enseignants visent à utiliser dans leurs salles de classes. Nous avons également aperçu que les attitudes réflexives que la recherche suscite chez les futurs enseignants leur permettent d'identifier des problèmes propres à un groupe d'élèves et de continuer des études professionnelles comme le Master. En somme, les participants ont des perceptions positives vers la composante de recherche dans le programme de Langues Étrangères étant donné qu'elle a un rôle fondamental pour la formation réflexive et critique chez les futurs enseignants. Bien que les défis que la recherche représente sont inévitables et ont une relation étroite aux aspects particuliers des chercheurs, il est important d'établir une connexion entre les chercheurs qui ont déjà fini leurs projets et les jeunes chercheurs qui viennent de commencer leur processus, afin de donner aux futurs chercheurs de conseils

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qui seront bénéfiques au moment de surmonter les obstacles qu'ils peuvent trouver pendant le développement d'un projet de recherche.



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**Annexe 1: Format d'Entretien Semi-Directif Introductoire**

**Entrevista Semi-Directiva #1**

**Fecha:**

**Hora:**

**Duración de la entrevista:**

**Investigadoras:**

**Participante:**

La entrevista que se realizará a continuación tomará el rol de entrevista introductoria en el proceso de recopilación de información de la investigación previamente expuesta a través de una carta firmada y aprobada por usted. En esta ocasión se propondrán 6 preguntas en su respectivo orden relacionadas con el proceso de investigación educativa llevado a cabo por el participante en el programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras Inglés – Francés, las cuales están formuladas concisa y claramente de modo que usted será capaz de responder sin problema alguno, sin embargo si existe alguna duda concerniente al siguiente cuestionario, no dude en darla a conocer. De igual manera esta entrevista será grabada como ya era de su conocimiento para un apropiado análisis.

1. ¿Cuál es su percepción respecto al proceso de investigación propuesto por el programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras Inglés – Francés?
  
2. ¿Cuál el tema de su proyecto de investigación?

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3. ¿Por qué seleccionó este tema como objetivo de análisis?
4. ¿Considera usted importante profundizar el conocimiento sobre este tema? ¿Por qué?
5. ¿Ha influido u experiencia personal en la elección del tema?
6. ¿Considera usted su tema de investigación como relevante en el campo educativo en lenguas extranjeras? ¿Por qué?

### Annexe 2 : Format Journaux de Bord



# Le Rôle de la Recherche Éducative dans la Formation des Futurs Enseignants en Langues Étrangères

## Preguntas de Diario de Campo

### Le Rôle de la Recherche Éducative dans la Formation des Futurs Licenciés en Langues Étrangères : Une Étude Phénoménologique

Investigadores: Angie Latorre y Paola Delgado

A continuación propondremos 7 preguntas que deberán ser respuestas en su diario de campo. Cada pregunta será respondida semanalmente en su lengua materna de modo que sea posible para usted expresarse libremente. Los datos recopilados tienen como fin último servir de fuente de información sobre las experiencias previas adquiridas durante el proceso de investigación educativa en lenguas extranjeras.

Objetivo del diario de campo: recopilar información concreta acerca de las reflexiones experimentadas después del proceso de investigación educativa propuesto por su programa de formación profesional.

Preguntas:

1. ¿Según usted qué es investigación educativa?
2. ¿Qué relación encuentra usted entre la investigación educativa y su formación profesional?



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3. ¿Cómo ha contribuido el proceso de investigación educativa a su formación profesional?
  
4. ¿Cuáles son las experiencias más significativas recopiladas en el proceso de investigación llevado a cabo durante su formación profesional?
  
5. ¿Considera benéfica la experiencia de realizar un proyecto de investigación educativa? Si es así ¿Cuáles beneficios trae consigo?
  
6. ¿Cuáles fueron los obstáculos y desafíos encontrados durante la realización de su proyecto investigativo? ¿Cómo los superó?
  
7. ¿Si fuera el caso, qué resaltaría sobre la importancia del proceso de investigación educativa en el programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras Inglés - Francés?

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Langues Étrangères**

**Annexe 3: Format de Transcriptions des Entretiens**

Code	Descriptions	Commentaires



## Colombian Cultural Identity In The Teaching Of English As A Foreign Language

**Andrea Bedoya \***

**Luis Harvey Gordillo \*\***

**Luis Enrique Romero \*\*\***

**Ricardo Stiglich \*\*\*\***

### **Abstract**

This research project presents a fundamental opportunity for high school students in Bogotá and Chia, Colombia to strengthen and build their knowledge of their own culture in the classroom. Through this research project, students are given the opportunity to implement tools and academic learning strategies to improve their learning of English as a Foreign Language. The purpose of this project is to implement didactic units with Colombian cultural content in the teaching English, and thus, to enrich Colombian culture among students who know little of it. The project takes an ethnographic approach to sociocultural analysis in the classroom, and uses topic-based teaching and learning as a methodological approach to the design and implementation of each didactic unit. Results showed the commitment of learners and the leadership of teachers allowed students to expand and

acquire new Colombian cultural concepts and successfully reach the academic goals; as a result, they consolidated their identity as Colombians.

*Key words:* Culture, language, identity, Second Language learning, sociocultural analysis, didactic units, Topic based instruction.

### Resumen

Este proyecto de investigación presenta una oportunidad fundamental para los estudiantes de secundaria de Bogotá y Chía, (Colombia) para fortalecer y construir su propia cultura en el aula; a través de este proyecto de investigación, los estudiantes tienen la oportunidad de aplicar las herramientas y estrategias de aprendizaje académico para mejorar su aprendizaje del inglés como Lengua Extranjera. El propósito de este proyecto es implementar unidades didácticas con contenidos culturales de Colombia en la enseñanza de inglés, y por lo tanto, para enriquecer la cultura colombiana entre los estudiantes que saben muy poco de ella. El proyecto tiene un enfoque etnográfico para el análisis sociocultural del aula, y utiliza el Topic-based instruction como un enfoque metodológico para el diseño e implementación de cada unidad didáctica. Como se ha observado, los resultados fueron muy positivos; consecuentemente, el compromiso de los estudiantes y el liderazgo de los maestros permitieron a los estudiantes ampliar y adquirir nuevos conceptos culturales y con éxito alcanzaron las metas académicas; como resultado, se consolidó su identidad como colombianos.

*Palabras clave:* Cultura, lenguaje, identidad, aprendizaje de la segunda lengua, análisis sociocultural, unidades didácticas, enseñanza temática.



## Introduction

Colombian people have a deep respect for their own identity, for their own culture and for their roots, but the appreciation of these aspects is often uncertain due to the lack of understanding and awareness of collective memory (Edy, 1999); this is what raises the discussion today, not just as an academic problem but as a social disjunction relating to everyone.

One of the reasons why people disregard the beliefs and values of their social environment is due to the impact of globalization and the amount of information that arises every day in academic contexts and non-formal environments. However, this project addresses the social problem in the language field as an aid for the teaching and learning of a second language using appreciation of national themes in the classroom.

Previous studies have provided evidence on how these social factors construct culture through language, and all dimensions which relating to the human experience such as the intellectual or social dimensions which contribute to the development of the language. By all means, culture, identity, ideologies, and heritage are easily constructed through human interaction, supported by social factors and built upon through awareness of their connection with language. However, Colombian students learn English through foreign cultures that use American or British themes.





In a nutshell, this project attempts to address the following matters in relation to Colombian culture and the English language. Firstly, some traditional teachers have continued using material from abroad as a support for foreign language learning, instead of using their own culture to create successful foreign language teaching and learning. Secondly, it is essential to explore background theory about relevant concepts that support this research. Thirdly, this study intends to establish the methods used in order to create different learning and teaching situations in relation to the application of national topic-based didactic units using the connection between different basic English skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and the implementation of national theme-based activities. This study will attempt to expand knowledge of English as a foreign language which enhances the preservation and acquisition of Colombian culture and identity.

Considering the fact that students are completing a formal academic process of foreign language learning which seeks to acquire comprehension and proficiency in content areas such as the relationship of cultural differences between countries, it is essential that educational entities have extensive and wide training on how to create useful syllabi and academic programs, as well as creating successful learning environments and activities for everyone who is interested in learning a foreign language.

In this way, for Colombian English teachers, it is sometimes very difficult to make a link between the national culture and the foreign language course. They have to keep in mind aspects such as the impact of education on the identity of the student and how students obtain information about other cultures in a manner that benefits their lives. Besides, culture is a changing and evolving curriculum due to socialization and cultural-

exchange. In addition to this is the uncertainty of how Colombians recognize their own identity as their culture continues to undergo change. High school students that were involved in this research seemed to be abandoning their principles and customs to adopt foreign ways and different lifestyles contributing to a loss of interest in their roots—roots which are worthy of analysis.

The biggest issue that we are facing now is that we may experience foreign language (L2) learning and teaching, using decontextualized foreign language textbooks during the educational process. To avoid this, it is important to create contextualized material considering three important factors: receptors, resources, and data. First of all, the most important factor is the receptor: the students. They are the ones who receive the information and whose acquisition of the language is the reflection of a successful process. Secondly, there is the language itself as the resource. Finally, data is the factor that encompasses all the knowledge that needs to be transmitted through the resource to the receptors. In this case, the data is Colombian themes.

The transmission of self-knowledge generates culture which directly affects the development of experiences and personality itself; all of these academic activities support this development, especially in reading and comprehension skills. The implementation of didactic units with information about Colombia and its culture, using English as a target language and the core subject as the main topic, allowed the researchers to find the answer to the research question. English content books usually develop foreign cultural knowledge, therefore, it is important to create material that contributes to strengthening Colombian

culture and at the same time, contributes to efficient, highly contextualized EFL learning processes.

Considering these issues, this research project, following Topic Based Instruction as an approach to instructional design for classes, came up with a set of well-structured and organized lesson plans with didactic units that focus on Colombian culture and at the same time address the improvement of English skills. It generates a meaningful approach to language acquisition as it immerses the student in his or her cultural context. From the perspective of future teachers, the project allows us to develop our own material based on relevant knowledge of the students' context. Furthermore, this exercise trains us in the field of material development through Topic Based Instruction, which focuses on aspects of Colombian culture. Both learning and teaching are enhanced as the teacher is actively engaged in designing material based on clearly identified students' needs, which revolve around learning English and developing their identity. Moreover, as this approach requires the students to apply language skills as they learn, not only will they learn about the English language, but they will learn to use it as they talk and write about Colombian culture.

In summary, this project addresses the effect of English teaching by applying cultural didactic units focusing on only Colombian themes as the content of their education in English as a foreign language. Information about Colombian society will be explored in each lesson plan, and this information will help with the development and teaching of English classes as a core subject, focusing on the improvement of English skills during the whole process. This will allow learners to acquire foreign language knowledge, and also,



their own cultural identity awareness. It is important to recognize that elementary education in schools is imperative and viewed as being only important in terms of instilling norms in students. This traditional approach is often associated with a monotonous learning environment as materials are not that meaningful or engaging.

## Literature Review

This chapter will explore theoretical concepts directly connected to the main topic, and propose a conceptual discussion defining concepts from different perspectives and involving different authors to complement notional ideas, in order to describe the main constructs of the pedagogical characteristics of language, foreign language, culture and identity in order to make a theoretical framework of all the primary features which substantiate this project.

Language is the element that allows humans to share thoughts and ideas, and there are different ways people define this concept. Language is a special kind of cipher or ‘standard code’; it consists of different groups of symbols which are possible to connect in order to become phrases. (Caplan, 1985) For this reason, human language is special due to its use of many codes that can be joined to form words and sentences, thus creating the ability to say anything and express any idea in any context. “Language is a complex code due to all these types of representations interacting to determine the meaning of each sentence in each context” (Caplan, 1985, p. 85) Human beings have the necessity to communicate among themselves to be part of the society in which they exchange ideas and thoughts.



In a language classroom, there must be a neutral position between the mother tongue (L1) and the Target language (L2). This means that the studied language and its contained cultural identity must be apart from, and not interfere with, the own criteria of the students. However, students must realize and be aware of the differences that 2 contrasting languages may have. And in the context of daily language use, they must know and adapt language depending on the context in which it is regularly applied. (Norton, 2000). Certainly, the neutral place between the two languages L1 and L2 should be evident and contrasting in the language environment, and in the social and cultural context.

In regards to foreign language learning in Colombia, the MEN (2006) published the basic standards called: “Estandares Basicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Ingles” (Basic Standards of Competence in Foreign language: English). The main purpose of this document is to show the level that students have achieved and the content students have covered in a certain time, while simultaneously learning their culture (a multiliteracy process). In Colombia, the national plan is addressing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) due to its implications for technology, wider communication, economic power, scientific knowledge and so on, around the world.

On the other hand, identity is the way people conceive of themselves as individuals or feel part of a group or community; it is also the way in which one perceives and categorizes people different from themselves. Identity refers to how people understand their relationship with the world and recognize how it is constructed across time and space. West (1992) declares that identity relates to the desire for recognition, the wish for affiliation, and the longing for security and safety. A person's identity will shift in accordance with

changing social and commercial relations. Language and identity are extremely interrelated. Language is a feature of human identity. Gender, education level, age, profession, and place of origin are features that all constitute aspects of one's personal and collective identification. Language is a powerful symbol of national and ethnic identity (Spolsky, 1999).

Neither identity nor languages are used as fixed notions; both are dynamic, depending upon time and place (Norton, 1995). The way people perceive themselves changes with the passing of time, allowing us multiple identities over the years or even within a day. Commonly, an ethnic group identifies itself with a specific language. For the majority of Hispanics, the Spanish language goes deeply into cultural and personal identities. The work of the sociologist Goffman (1963) has been influential in showing that the self is constructed entirely through discourse, making our language choices of supreme importance for identity construction. In fact, Goffman states that personal identity is defined by how others identify an individual, not how people identify themselves.

Cultural environment involves not only ways of expressing oneself, but how people live and try to interact with society, and how they can understand each other in one place. According to Damen (1987) "Culture is learned and shared human patterns or models for living; day- to-day living patterns. These patterns and models pervade all aspects of human social interaction. Culture is mankind's primary adaptive mechanism" (p. 367). Based on this, the culture is an adaptive mechanism that provides every human with their respective day to day living patterns and with models of living to be able to cooperate with the development of the society. In a nutshell, the main idea exposes the importance of culture



in life because this is the pattern that models the respective values and beliefs of each person.

## Research Design

In order to achieve the objectives of this research project, the research team has chosen an Ethnographic action-research design. This is a methodology that permits researchers to evaluate the observed population in a more accurate and precise manner. According to Tacchi, Salter & Hearn, this approach “is based on combining two research approaches: ethnography and action research. Ethnography is a research approach that has traditionally been used to understand different cultures. Action research is used to bring about new activities through new understandings of situations” (2003, p. 1). Large amount of data can be analyzed in attempting to bridge the gap between EFL and cultural identity; using this method, engaging communities and overcoming the problematic situation will be easier. Mainly, this research method relies primarily on observational analysis used in an environmental setting, where students (the research community) defined the problem. To further investigate the effect of Colombian culture on English class, this project was addressed to high school students in private institutions located in Bogota and Chía, who wished to achieve high academic standards of education. Students were aged between 15 and 18 years old and they learned English through the use of foreign textbooks from A1 level of proficiency until B1 (according to the Common European Framework).

## Instructional Design

In order to understand the meaning and the main goal of this methodology that is applied with these didactic units, it is appropriate to discuss and explain the basis and the implementation support of this process; Topic-Based instruction fulfills and recreate the Whole Language Approach (Edelsky, 1993) wherein it is essential to connect the four main skills “reading, writing, listening and speaking” as one, instead of seeing and processing language in pieces.

The procedures following data were collected to determine the problem and identify the substantial changes during development of the project. Firstly, surveys were taken to determine awareness of students’ prior knowledge of Colombian culture. Following that, a specific topic-based interview about Colombian themes gave the learners the opportunity to produce direct and straightforward answers. Finally, topic-based didactic units were applied according to a linear progression of grammar topics (based on lesson plans). At the conclusion, the application of these methods assisted in the development of language support for the students and provided a basis for the elaboration of this paper.

After applying these instruments, researchers decided to create and design lesson plans and didactic units focusing on the results of the survey and the interviews, considering topic-based instruction as a way to plan every single unit. The didactic unit was divided into three parts; these activities were the warm-up (which is the pre-activity), followed by the explanation of the topic and finally, the practice and production based activities. Furthermore, considering the all-inclusive language approach, each student



participated in reading, speaking, writing and listening comprehension exercises. In that way, these activities were analyzed focusing on the critical production of the students during the class. The design of different types of cultural activities was focused on engaging actively between them; all students contributed to the development of each didactic unit.



### **Data Analysis and findings**

Three categories of information were selected and analyzed in order to measure the impact of the lessons on both language and culture acquisition during the period of intervention. This data enabled us to compare and contrast the validity of English lessons incorporated with aspects of Colombian culture. Ultimately, the data generated demonstrates improvements in both areas. During the duration of a semester, student's oral and written output in terms of language usage and cultural knowledge was analyzed through inventories of prior knowledge about culture using English, and Spanish when students were unable to express themselves.

### **Transition between traditional methods to topic based instruction based on Colombian cultural didactic units in the EFL classes.**

This section explores the way in which the activities such as role-plays, interviews, games, posters, etc., were implemented. After designing the curriculum units with Colombian themes with language learning, these were adapted to the English program, while considering the time available for activities during the class hour and the independent work of the students when they were not in the classroom. Additionally, the activities contributed to the interaction between classmates who had the opportunity to have conversations related to their context; there were some topics that the students did not know very well, and for that reason, they responded positively in class.



In spite of having a short range of themes (Colombia), limited knowledge and prior understanding of specific topics, as well as unfamiliarity with culture-mixing lessons, students proved interested and motivated by the experience of participating in the project's implementation of these units. In the following excerpt from a class transcript, the teacher started the lesson asking for background knowledge about Myths and Legends. Then, students discussed for about two minutes and they recognized four stories which were El Moan (S6, La Llorona (S7), La Madre Selva (S8) and La Bola de Fuego (S1). After this, they were concentrated on the teacher's reading about the topic. At last, they made a distinction between a Myth and a Legend.

S5: For example with Myth, is related with the religious and political...

T: Religious and?

S5: Religious things; and...With Legends, is more like a symbolic thing, is not related with, I don't know...

T: With history meaning, yes?

S5: Yeah!

(Didactic unit #1, Myths and Legends, Recording-Class 01/didactic unit

Video 01,8 Minutes. 27-10-14 )

It can be observed in this conversation that the Student (S5), though he did not answer the question, is connecting English language with the topic, trying to employ the previous knowledge that he had. However, the student on the final recording answered the last question with a story called "La Bola de Fuego" which is originally from Mexico.

Consequently, in each class process, even if students had prior knowledge about the topic of the class (and their own national folk traditions), they were able to express their ideas, although they had some difficulties with the topic because they did not know much about the content. However, they showed interest in the topic, and what is more; they connected new knowledge of language and cultural content.

The students gave positive feedback throughout the implementation of cultural short stories. Most students made a positive distinction between the legends and myths of the topic; the following are some of their answers to the question: “Which one of the ghost’s stories was more interesting for you?”:

S1:” I preferred the Antioquia’s Evil Chicken, because it was the funniest legend I had heard, when the teacher said “Pollo Maligno” I laughed a lot. Also it was funny that the only way to dispatch the chicken was praying a novena of Archangel Miguel.” (S3 – 27/10/14)

S2: “The evil chicken is the most interesting story because it can be interpreted as a signal of disfortune and we don’t know why we can be followed by this creature [*sic*].” (S9 – 27/10/14)

S3: “The pollo maligno because I considerate the chicken as a very weak creature, and because the chicken is a very pacifical creature. And because it was the only story that I’ve don’t know until now [*sic*].”

S4: “I found more interesting was the “Antioquia’s evil chicken” the Mysticism that involves over a small creature.” (S7 – 27/10/14)

(Didactic unit # 1, Colombian Myths and Legends, Question ·1)

The use of adjectives (funny, mysticism, small, weak, pacifically, misfortune) can be observed as an indication that the students successfully understood the class due to the learners' precise opinions and descriptions and their ability to develop reading comprehension through a personal view of interest. On the other hand, it is evident by S4 student's answer that he had linked up his definition of the animal "Chicken" with his new perception of this creature by the story; he compares his old concept with the one which the story is explaining, then he explains it and makes a meaningful distinction. Even though there are grammatical errors in these students' answers, they communicated their interest and curiosity for these new thematic stories (The Antioquia's Evil Chicken story in particular). Consequently, it is not difficult to extract from this data sample that their writing production involves a conceptual relation to previous thoughts and also, sharing meaningful positive feedback in terms of the content of this specific didactic unit.

However, when learners listened to Colombian songs, most of the reactions were quite negative, because the majority of them did not like this type of traditional Colombian music. However, as Colombians, they recognized why this music genre is an important symbol of our country. Nowadays, teenagers listen to different music genres and just a small number of people around the whole country like listening to traditional music. The most important aspect of this activity was that learners felt identified with our traditional music and despite the fact that they did not like this kind of music they know it and can distinguish it just by listening. As the following response:

Q1: "Why is this music important for Colombian people?"



S1: “Is important because Colombian musics create the songs [*sic*].”

S2: “Colombia has the music that is from us and that is important because we can show this to the world as Colombian music.”

S3: “Is music for old people but is our music from a long, long time ago.”

S4: “Because is our identification as Colombia people.”

(Didactic unit # 4, Colombian Typical Music, Question 1)

Based on these answers, it is notable that all the students have some idea that led them to understand the importance of this type of music culturally. In order to recognize this as a traditional value of our country the four answer (S1, S2, S3 and S4) reflected that their knowledge has something in common: they noticed this music as their own Colombian music; on the other hand, students were not using the correct way to express their ideas, but they were able to transmit them without any difficulties to their classmates. Even though learners did not relate to the songs and the type of music, students valued them for their connection to Colombia.

As can be seen from the intervention with students, most participated in creating a good environment for the development of the class; even the students who did not have a good grasp of the pronunciation wanted to read the slides or give opinions on visualizations of the presentation.

Following this, the teacher explained the importance of the roots in a nation, talked about the cultural heritage and tried to explain where Colombian natives come from. The students who participate actively, for example at the beginning of the lecture, start reading

the slides aloud; in this way, people who do not know how to pronounce or say the word can listen to their partners. Furthermore, this is not sufficient assistance, the teacher could give a deeper explanation of the grammar aspects, meanings and pronunciation relating to the topic.

### **Relation between English knowledge and Colombian cultural appropriation**

The relation between English knowledge and Colombian cultural appropriation is an essential component in this project, mainly because students are learning English through the lens of studying national culture. For us, it was a challenge to relate English language with Colombian culture since there was a list of terms that could not be translated directly into English, such as terms relating to Colombian arts or the different kinds of typical Colombian musical instruments. The implementation of a cultural-enriching curriculum brought several advantages such as providing relevant, significant vocabulary and the identification of new and unknown aspects of a specific culture and the assessment of the cultural features presented.

S3: I believe teacher that most of us haven't heard about the carnivals that Colombia has. The first thing that comes to my mind is the Río de Janeiro carnival, it is just because the beaches and the.....fun people of Brazil can get when they are having fun...

S2: Well actually, I remember some of the carnivals of Colombia, like the green moon in San Andres or the “Carnival de Blancos y Negros en Pasto, or the “festival de las flores.

S5: “Teacher, it is the same carnival and fair?”

T: Well, actually when people hear the word Carnival, it is directly related with people, culture, customs, phenomenon for having fun in different places and cities of Colombia so, I think we can refer to a carnival as a feast.

(Didactic unit # 2, Colombian Carnivals, Recording-Class 02/, 6 Minutes.  
10-11-14)

Regardless of the differences presented in the speech of the students and the contrasting level of knowledge about the target language, students refer to and talk about the topic freely and spontaneously, taking into account their own knowledge and memories of Carnivals in Colombia. It is also worth mentioning that the intervention and thoughts given in class are done by students with much more knowledge and confidence in the L2. It is also relevant to note that the group of students has a heterogenic knowledge of English, from level A1 to B2. The implementation of the Cultural-enriching Curriculum provided students a space to interact, contribute and utter diverse points of view of the theme. As a pedagogical strategy, it worked, and they expressed ideas freely about their own experience.



Students were as open to learning different perspectives about Colombian culture, as they were interested in sharing their different ideas. This encouraged them to participate and be active while they were using English.

S2: “I did not know that Colombia there be a place like that (referring to Caño Cristales located in Meta,) this is the first time that I heard this place is really interesting to know more of that because is our country. There are many places that I do not know. And this place is nice, has many colours, I like it [*sic*].”

(Didactic unit # 5, Colombian Art, Warm-up activity)

In this activity, students shared prior individual knowledge and from this place of knowledge, spoke with confidence in the L2, since they knew the meaning of the class topic. As a result of these kinds of activities, students began to build their knowledge of Colombia from a different perspective. They also showed that they wanted to know more about it, and when the teacher explained the topic in more detail they really showed confusion and surprise about some places that they had never heard of.

On the other hand, students showed their interest in Colombian art and destinations. They tried to talk and express ideas about these topics by constructing basic English sentences. They already knew the topic (i.e. important museums and recognized tourist destinations) and used the opportunity to expand their English vocabulary as they communicated with new words to the class.

S5: “Vargas Swamp Lancers Memorial, It was important because it is the battle for the independence.”

S1: “The Gold Museum in Bogotá, because it has many things that are important for the culture.”

S3: “La Catedral de sal de Zipaquirá, is a nice place, is a church that has the history of Jesus.”

S4: “Cartagena important place, because it is the liberation of the Indians they fight.”

(Didactic unit # 5, Colombian Art)

Students tried to do their best during each class. In the previous class “Colombian Myths and Legends,” the teacher explained the topic by using ICT (such as a Power Point Presentation), in which he explained some of the most important legends like “La Llorona” and “The Alligator Man” among others. Included in the explanation was information about the regions where these famous stories took place, complemented by the use of pictures. This part of the lesson plan helped students to understand and link the new vocabulary with ideas that they already had about the class theme. Furthermore, they continued learning in a more effective way and using appropriate vocabulary to explain basic ideas that they could already discuss fluently in their native language. When students learn in their own native language, they have the opportunity to contribute substantially to the class through cooperative learning. They are able to sustain aspects of conversation that can be shared and analyzed for academic purposes.

## Improvement of English skills

The aim of this section is to analyze the process of students' English learning from the beginning to the end of the project; how they were able to improve their English skills during the time in class and use them in a real environment. Topic based instruction was the methodology used to construct each lesson plan with the corresponding didactic unit, taking into account the four main skills (speaking, writing listening and reading comprehension) and the tools for each class (e.g. poster, presentations, games, and comprehension activities). The opportunity to have resources (e.g. computer and projector) gave us the capability to enhance some listening and speaking activities, because students had the opportunity to see beyond grammar structures.

When the tasks were carried out, when called upon to share ideas, some students demonstrated their knowledge related to the topic of the class by using the new vocabulary they learned in previous classes. Additionally, they took part in the class by using their English skills to present the poster of each group as asked:

DS1: “We know that the region of Orinoco have seven sub regions that have a lot of rivers that have a lot of fish.”

DS2; “There has a lot of hot and a lot of rain that is the weather of Orinoco.”

DS3: “They have a tradition with cows and bulls and the name of the tradition is festival International Folclorico y Turistico del Llano.”

(Didactic unit # 3, Colombian Natural Regions)

It was illustrated that through the improvement of the English skills that students had been acquiring since the beginning of the classes in the didactic units, they had already learned sufficient vocabulary to express themselves—though often imprecisely or incorrectly. However, in this case, it is clear that the classmates were able to understand what the S1, S2 and structures or words are able to communicate. During the development of this didactic unit, students linked previous English words and concepts with the class theme, creating short descriptions in the foreign language as they advanced in their learning process.

English played an important role in the activities prepared because all of them were developed using the target language to communicate the content of the slides and exercises. When the teacher asked students to read or if they had doubts, they were required to use their English knowledge to read or to ask questions regarding unknown vocabulary depending on the situation. However, Spanish was also used to clarify or explain some concepts, especially when working with basic level students.

S: “Profe, cuando un número tiene th después, ¿cómo se lee eso?”

T: “La terminación th es Interdental, estamos hablando de 16th, 13th son números ordinales los ordinales son los que tienen la terminación th a partir del cuarto.”

T: “¿Alguien tiene alguna pregunta? ¿Algún termino que no distingamos?”

S:” ¿Qué significa settlement?”

T: “Viene de la palabra settle o establecerse. Settlement es Asentamiento, hasta ahí, ¿todo claro?”

S: “Yes good.”

(Didactic unit # 7 Colombian History Appendix)

Students identified unknown English vocabulary from the lesson content in the slides and exercises. They participated during the whole class, the environment was very enjoyable, and it allowed the learners to solve some doubts related to prior knowledge that they had. The teacher provided students with some slides and exercises developed with English content. Therefore, students asked questions related to new words and unclear previous information that they found in the class material. When they participated in reading the activities, they had to do it using their English skills.

### **Conclusions and implications for further research**

The positive impact which has been observed in the EFL classes was an increase on the participation and output of learners. This arose as a result of a new and interesting methodology and implementation of didactic units, which encouraged students to learn and use English. Through the design, development and implementation of this material (Colombian didactic units), students and teachers have worked in a mutually supportive way to enrich the students’ knowledge and awareness of Colombian culture and at the same time, to develop the appropriation of the foreign language, English.

The implementation of innovative didactic units let us interplay cultural aspects, language and identity, focusing on the interaction of these three factors. With the help of this material, students approached the language using their previous knowledge of



significant and specific aspects of Colombian culture, and their familiarity led learners to introduce new words, phrases and expressions taken from the foreign language in order to build their own ideas and form statements. We sought to provide clear and sufficient information to learners, in order to simultaneously improve their cultural knowledge and their English skills. This was done by designing language lessons around Colombian information and cultural facts. The significant difficulty of a lack of connection between national culture and English teaching classes was observed, identified and overcome as indicated by the performance of English learners from ninth, tenth and eleventh grades. These issues were addressed throughout the implementation of different activities within the classroom, the integration of new knowledge with old concepts, and the creation of original relationships between the target language and personal experiences. This was accomplished through the application of topic-based instruction.

The impact of Colombian didactic units in the EFL classes used didactic and methodological practice as it guided the teacher's role and students' performance. All the activities were accompanied by different charts with information related to the specific cultural aspects corresponding to specific grammar that was the language learning objective for the activity. Although the participation and English level of learners was different, they clearly felt motivated and encouraged to participate within the activities proposed in the units because they identified with several implications and points of view that converged into one specific field of study: their own cultural identity. These groups were mixed into level groups and positive collaborative learning took place between the different skill levels.

The transition from traditional methods of English language teaching to Topic Based Instruction on Colombian cultural study is seen throughout each of the activities that required the participation of the learners in different English levels (basic, intermediate and advanced). It was due to the diverse environment and institutions where students came from and studied English. Then, the Improvement of English skills started with the understanding and knowledge of new vocabulary and the integration of grammar objectives into each lesson. While it is undeniable that English language development in many parts of Colombia has been increasing, these mostly cover the skills of reading and speaking, and improvements in these Language Skills are related to a well-planned and executed class in which each ability is practiced and worked on.

We hope this project can contribute to further research and studies that seek additional knowledge about national cultural education (specifically Colombian traditions and values), and may serve as an inspiration for others to integrate cultural artefacts and aspects into their teaching. Foreign language classes do not have to alienate students from their own culture, but can instead be used to help them explore it—while at the same time, the culture can serve as a support to the students while they explore the foreign language from a place of confidence and knowledge.



**About the Authors;**

\*Andrea Bedoya, an undergraduate student of Bilingual Education at Bosque University, Colombia. I decided to study teaching a foreign language because in my country this a field that requires further development and I would like to contribute to the teaching of English as a foreign language in Colombian schools. For students, they will have many opportunities in their professional and personal life. My research interest lies in the language field, with a focus on the culture and the design of new resources to teach English or Spanish to non-speakers of these languages.

Luis Enrique Romero is an undergraduate student at El Bosque University. His decision of being a teacher comes from the Colombian reality based on ineffective teaching methods, poor English skills and the high number of students who finish high school without sufficient preparation to decide on an appropriate career path. Taking this social and educational issue in mind, Luis and his thesis co-workers developed this project in which the main objective is making an improvement in Colombian education in the field of languages in order to overcome the aforementioned problems that have been affecting the Colombian educational level.

Luis Harvey Gordillo is an undergraduate student at El Bosque University, Colombia. His research is focused on the improvement of English skills through the use of Colombian content with the main purpose of addressing cultural, social and educational issues.

Ricardo Stiglich Campos in an undergraduate student at El Bosque University (Bogota – Colombia). He started learning about how students can learn a foreign language (especially





English) with unusual topics from the beginning of the degree program, as he wanted to produce real results. Today, this investigation project was just the start of a research process on which Ricardo and his thesis co-workers are still working.



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## Phonological Awareness: A Step In English Language Development

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### Abstract

Language development is a crucial part when learning a language since it affects the learners' communicative process and performance. Limited phonological instruction can negatively impact the learners' language development since it involves the growth of the required skills to communicate in the target language. The aim of this paper is to explain the effects of a specific phonological training on English to elementary-level learners; and to discuss the results of this training in the language development.

Keywords: Phonological awareness, phonological training, language development, learners' anxiety.

### Resumen

El desarrollo del lenguaje es un parte fundamental en el proceso de aprender una lengua, ya que este desarrollo afecta cualquier proceso comunicativo del aprendiz al igual que su desempeño. Una instrucción fonológica limitada puede afectar dicho desarrollo del lenguaje



debido a que este implica el crecimiento de las habilidades necesarias para comunicarse en la lengua extranjera. El objetivo de este documento de investigación es explicar los efectos logrados luego de aplicar un entrenamiento fonológico de la lengua extranjera, Inglés a estudiantes de básica primaria, y discutir los resultados de este entrenamiento en el desarrollo de la lengua.

*Palabras claves: consciencia fonológica, entrenamiento fonológico, desarrollo del lenguaje, ansiedad del aprendiz.*

## Introduction

Language development is a crucial part of learning a language as it affects the learner's communicative process as well as performance. Limited phonological instruction can affect learners' language development since it involves the growth of the required skills to communicate in the foreign language. The aim of this paper is to explain the effects of phonological training in the foreign language, English, to specific population at elementary level and discuss the results of this training in the development of the language. In terms of learning a foreign language, the advantages are also sociocultural: language acquisition brings opportunities for improving as individuals as well as members of a growing society, which participates as “[a] country in the processes of universal communication, the global economy and cultural openness” (M.E.N. 2006, p. 6).

Learners of English as a foreign language have always had difficulties to develop the production skills of the target language. This issue becomes more difficult when in the classrooms, phonology training has not been given as much attention as is required by the teachers. In the context of Colombia, it has been observed that there is an inclination towards the school of thought that reduces the importance of phonology training, looking for developing in the most accurate form of the English language. As phonology training has diminished, the enhancement of language production skills has been hindered as this area is under developed and so is becoming less comprehensible. The question is, therefore, what does phonological awareness tell us about the development of English as a foreign language at an elementary level in a private school?

These questions arose after researchers observed that even though teachers try to implement general pronunciation practices by group or individual assignments, oral repetition, comparing and contrasting sound, given examples of homophones words and practicing the most common mistakes like the past verb forms and plurals, there was a noticeable shortage of exclusive English phonological training sessions during the six levels of English classes (for 6 semesters) from 2010 to 2012 given in the Bilingual Program at the El Bosque University in Bogota. Based on this information, researchers decided to look for a school under the same training conditions in order to carry out the investigation.

This preliminary study was conducted by applying a questionnaire to five students in three of the six levels of English (Appendix A) and its corresponding teacher (Appendix

B), to determine to what extent pronunciation is taught and which resources are most often in the teaching of it. During the analysis of the data, researchers found that the participants do not have a clear definition of what pronunciation is. Nevertheless, they agree with the fact that it is of relevance and that there are consequences for the future of English teaching; consequently, a domino effect will be the result of this phenomenon. Some students stated that “When you teach wrong pronunciation of a word of a student and say repeatedly that word, it’s difficult “to” change that pronunciation to the student.” (Personal communication, February 24, 2013)

During the analysis, was possible solutions to the English pronunciation problem were suggested by some of the students who were interviewed. The necessity of creating a separate course relating to the topic of English phonological training was the students’ consensus in the questionnaires applied to them. One student claimed that a possible solution might be to “create a special subject or elective for pronunciation, especially because English sounds are very different from Spanish sounds”. (Personal communication, February 24, 2013). In addition, Morley (1998) affirms that English programs for ESL should start establishing long range oral communication goals and objectives that identify pronunciation needs as well as speech functions and the context in which they might occur. Besides, others insist on correct pronunciation as being extremely important to the credibility and quality of future teachers especially in EFL teacher training. That is the case of Gilakjani (2012 a) who affirms:

“Learners with good English pronunciation are likely to be understood even if they make errors in other areas, whereas learners with bad pronunciation will not be understood, even if their grammar is perfect. Such learners may avoid speaking in English, and experience social isolation, employment difficulties and limited opportunities for further study. We judge people by the way they speak, and so learners with poor pronunciation may be judged as incompetent, uneducated or lacking in knowledge”. (p. 583)

With this in mind, the researchers aim is to apply a phonological language training as a path for developing the English language in foreign learners. Thus, the question to be solved is “what does phonological awareness tell us about the development of English as a foreign language at an elementary level in a private school? In this order, the objectives to be achieved are:

- To explore the foreign language development of students through the implementation of phonological awareness activities.
- To start a process of phonological awareness with the children in fifth grade in LPT <sup>1</sup>school.

Considering the ideas illustrated here, phonological training will not only contribute to the population studied, it will also benefit the researchers by providing new cognitive information and strategies for the future teaching of English as a foreign language. This

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<sup>1</sup> L P T corresponds to the initials of the name of the school where the research was carried out. This is done in order to protect the identity of the research subjects.

creates a chain of positive externalities in which society progresses on its path toward bilingualism (the stated goal of the Colombia Bilingual Education Program).

The researchers hope to contribute primarily to the students at LPT School by enriching their oral skills and knowledge of English as part of their language development making them highly competitive citizens of a potentially bilingual country.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Numerous researchers have studied the teaching and learning of proper pronunciation in foreign language contexts. Throughout this chapter, we explore these intersecting topics related to language development: phonological awareness, phonic training, EFL learners and teachers' attitudes and practices, and integration of English phonological training into the EFL curriculum. These topics are presented from a pedagogical and sociological perspective in order to establish a framework to discuss the focus of the investigation: the creation of strategies to be used by teachers in order to enhance the pronunciation of the students in the EFL class studied.

This literature review explores five dominant topics with the aim to demonstrate that more than having native-like pronunciation, EFL speakers should develop three main characteristics; Burns (2003) suggested these characteristics are Intelligibility, the ability of the speaker to produce sound patterns that are recognizable as English; Comprehensibility, demonstrated when a listener is able to understand the meaning of what is said by an English learner; and Interpretability, seen when the listener is able to understand the purpose of what is said.





## Language Development

Since Language development is a crucial factor in this research, it is important to acknowledge where the concept comes from and the different views and ideas of some researchers who have studied it. The modern study of language development began in the 1960's following the *Chomskyan* revolution in linguistics (Hoff, 2004). Chomsky argues that the study of language development is the study of the developing mind.

Since this time, researchers have viewed language development as a process that takes place in the brain and in fact helps the growth and development of the brain. This is evident not only in the uniqueness of each person, but the same is reflected in the growth and specialization of communication through human evolution. It is essential to understand the areas affecting or affected by language development which are: Biological, in relation with the Development of the brain-neuronal and muscular body systems associated with speech; Social, relating to the use of language as a tool of social communication essential for interaction with the species; Psychological, defined as the organization of new knowledge (including new languages) and adaptability to environment; and, from the Linguistic, understood as the domain of sounds and partnership concepts and meanings. (Kies, 1995) It is through these aspects we can gain an understanding of language development and the learning of a new language. Language is not just a matter of innate abilities, memorizing power, or motor skills. Being affirmed by Harris (2002) that language learning is a complex set of interrelated skills that depends on a diverse set of organs and

builds abstract, conceptual hierarchies, which result in the ability to communicate in a given language.

With so many moving parts, it is easy for the language learning processes to break down, held up by any one aspect of this complex interplay. For this project, we have focused on the solvable problems that arise in pronunciation, and how these can be addressed through phonological awareness and phonics training.

### **Phonological awareness and phonic training**

Receiving phonological awareness instruction at an early age has been recognized recently as an important issue when it comes to avoiding future problems of language comprehensibility. According to Venkatagiri and Levis (2007) “[phonological] awareness may be an important factor in predicting whether an L2 speaker is likely to be easier or more difficult to understand” (p. 276). Mattingly (1972; as cited in Gillon, 2004) defines phonological awareness as “individual’s awareness of the sound structure, or phonological structure, of a spoken word” (p 37); other authors talk about phonological awareness as a “multilevel skill of breaking down words into smaller units” (Hoiem, Lundberg, Stanourch & Bjaalid 1995).

In consideration of both definitions, we propose that phonological awareness is the skill developed by learners of any foreign language which focuses on the discrimination of sounds from complex to simple language units. As mentioned above, phonological awareness deals with three different levels of awareness that needs to be achieved during the development of a language. The first level is syllable awareness which requires awareness related to the division of words into syllables; the second level refers to onset-

rime awareness which is measured during rhyming tasks where words share common ending sounds; finally, phoneme awareness explains that a word can be broken down into individual sounds or phonemes “that are the smallest unit of sound that influence the meaning of a word.” (Gillon, 2004)

Regarding the above, it is important to emphasize that having training which includes phonological awareness activities will help a learner to recognize sounds in words and use these sounds correctly in order to manipulate language.

A topic that it is equally important to discuss is phonetics (including the instruction of proper phonetics, called “phonics”). First of all, phonetics is the linguistic field which studies the sounds made in human speech and involves physical and physiological aspects. According to Lodge (2008), phonetics takes into account three main areas of study; Articulatory phonetics which focuses on articulation and vocal tract; Acoustic Phonetics which studies the physical transmission of speech sounds from the speaker to the listener; and finally, Auditory phonetics that studies the reception and perception of speech sounds by a listener. All three aspects are crucial when it comes to phonological awareness, an aspect of language development whose integration into the EFL curriculum is essential.

### **Integration of English phonological training into the EFL curriculum**

Although pronunciation is a key element in the development of oral skills in a foreign language, the role it plays in English language curriculum, including time, tasks and effort dedicated to it seems to depend on the individual teacher. Making phonological awareness (i.e. pronunciation) a part of the curriculum and classroom activities in programs

that teach English as a foreign language seems necessary in theory, but difficult to achieve in practice. Studies by Brown (1992), Fraser (2000) and Yates (2001) suggest that teachers in ESL programs face some difficulties meeting the pronunciation learning needs of their students.

Curriculum gaps, poor methodology, lack of teacher preparation and the lack of suitable material all contribute to inadequacies of phonology awareness training in our schools. These deficiencies in English phonology training can be ameliorated by the inclusion of appropriate material into the curriculum or in daily classes. Exemplified by Macdonald (2002) who explored this by interviewing Australian English teachers and asking why they did not focus on teaching pronunciation. Some of the answers he received are as follows: “pronunciation is easy to overlook and there is no push to focus on pronunciation because it can be achieved through competences”; “pronunciation was not easy to ‘fit’ into the curriculum and because of this, I found myself not liking it”; “there are so many things to teach, so pronunciation needs to be taught ‘through’ those other areas” (p. 6-8). An appropriate conclusion to draw from these teachers’ comments would seem to be that while there is a big problem regarding the way English pronunciation is taught, few teachers and researchers are willing to find ways to promote or improve it.

Some teachers instead actively avoid teaching or correcting English pronunciation. This even progresses until the point when students’ errors completely prevent the teacher from understanding them. This indicates that such teachers do not view English pronunciation as an integrated and fundamental element of language learning and “it is just attended to when it causes problems that cannot be ignored.” (Yates, 2001) Murcia, (2010)

affirmed that teachers need to find effective ways to integrate phonological awareness into the regular English language curriculum as the first step in the English pronunciation correction process.

Integrating English phonological awareness into the curriculum will not just help the development of reading skills, it is also a pathway towards complete foreign language education. Fraser (2000) explains that being able to speak English includes a number of sub-skills such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and pragmatics, but that of these, “pronunciation is by far the most important.” It is also convenient that EFL teachers are provided with courses and materials that allow both teachers and students to increase effectiveness on the teaching and learning of English phonological processes. If teachers address learners’ specific needs when creating the lessons, English phonological awareness training will be more effective.

Pronunciation must be incorporated into the materials, classroom activities and assessment tools; teachers must also have a solid training in English pronunciation and phonology pedagogy. These conditions are necessary to change the way EFL is taught in this country, which makes it the responsibility of every stakeholder in the educational system.

### **English foreign learners' and teachers' attitudes and practices**

The learning of a second language depends upon several behaviors that students and teachers perform differently depending upon their perception of the target language. Baker

(1988) suggests that such behaviors and attitudes are complex constructs; there may be both positive and negative feelings attached to a language situation.

Take into consideration the *Affective Filter Hypothesis*, proposed by Dulay and Burt (1977; cited in Krashen, 1981, p. 21) which states that high levels of motivation, self-confidence and low anxiety are states which translate into more input being available for acquisition and learning. Conversely then, according to this hypothesis, low motivation and self-confidence coupled with high anxiety create a filter where less input is made available for acquisition. Consequently, it is argued that pronunciation in that language is likely to be affected positively or negatively by the aforementioned factors.

Bloom (1978; cited in Al-Mansour, 2007) remarks that learners of a second language should go through three stages to overcome any difficulty during their process for learning a language. The stages are: awareness and responding, which relates to realizing and adapting to the new cultural and linguistic changes presented. The second stage valuing, which refers to the student internalizing the importance of the language and its value in their own context. The final stage is understanding and appreciation of the new language. By recognizing and applying these three stages in the learning process, negative attitudes towards language learning can be overcome.

### **Research Design**

In order to develop this research, we as researchers selected the action research method, which is “any systematic inquiry conducted by any stakeholder in the teaching/learning environment to gather information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn” Mills (2011, p 5). A process

conducted following the next phases: 1. Questionnaires were applied to students that dealt with the topic of pronunciation and phonics instruction in class; 2. A selection of school personnel and students to work with was made based on the lack of phonetic and phonological instruction; 3. Lesson plans and activities were designed that encourage students to participate actively; 4. Activities were developed in order to obtain the data required for the research; 5. An exhaustive analysis of the obtained data was performed; 6. Descriptions of findings were written, and conclusions drawn. 7. A written report was composed.

As part of the instructional design, a series of ten lesson plans was proposed, each covering a session of two hours per week, as the main strategy to overcome the difficulty present in the population. The lesson plan for the first session explored the most common language errors through an error analysis. Researchers took into account the rules proposed by Glendale College English Lab (2014) to analyze these errors. The second plan contained activities focusing on the training of short vowels sounds. The “long vowels” sound training was part of the third and fourth lesson plans. In the fifth lesson plan, learners were trained in the pronunciation of diphthongs using the facial and mouth movements as the introductory tool for this session. For teaching the difference of voiced and voiceless consonants’ pronunciation, the sixth lesson plan focused on comparison activities involving vocal tract usage, followed by the teacher giving examples of consonants’ pronunciation. In the seventh and eighth lesson plans, learners also worked with voiced and voiceless consonants emphasizing phrases and word linking. The implementation of the tenth lesson

plan evaluated one final time the level of improvement achieved by the participants in their readings of *The Lion and the Mouse*.

### **Data analysis**

From the perspective of EFL development, phonological awareness and related topics are explored in depth. Moats & Tolman (2009) say that phonological awareness is critical for learning to read any alphabetic writing system; therefore, it is an important factor in the learning development of any language. Phonological and phonics training exercises comprised the core of the activity from which data was collected. These data and the impacts they suggest were explored for patterns of language development; they were classified into four different categories: language interference, teacher's role in language development, anxiety when learning a foreign language and finally visual and auditory acknowledgement.

### **Language Interference**

If improving foreign language development is the goal, then identifying errors in the learning process is the route for doing it. Interference is another name for the phenomenon of constantly occurring errors in the learning and usage of English as a foreign language. Language interference is defined by Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, (1982) cited on Bhela (1999) as “the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language.” (p. 22) Lott (1983) defines interference as “errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue.” (p. 256) The researchers aimed to demonstrate that erroneous language transfer can be overcome



when there is an explicit phonic and phonological training hand-in-hand with a high level of exposure to the phonological system of the target language.



Table 1: Error Count of English words with /h/ sound

	Occurrence in Text	Students Tested	Total Word Repetitions	Total Error Count	Error %
Him	9	9	81	72	89%
His	3	9	27	25	92%
Huge	1	9	9	8	89%
Help	1	9	9	7	78%

Based on the above theory and hypothesis, the first phenomenon of interference to be analyzed is the pronunciation of the phoneme /h/ in American English using the Spanish non-sound of /h/. This phenomenon occurred in every individual who participated in the research. The first example of the “h” interference phenomenon is in the words **him**, **his**, **huge** and **help** (appearing in the text *The Lion and the Little Mouse*). The chart above (Table 2) shows how the data was analyzed from the first audio recordings of participants reading this story, and takes into account the number of times they fell victims to language interference in each word with the phoneme /h/.

Throughout this phenomenon, the researchers evidenced that the errors in the pronunciation of each word were committed in a range among 70% to 95% of cases in which the word is mentioned in the reading. This indicates that students have generalized the sound of the /h/ phoneme mistakenly using the Spanish phonetic system rather than the American English system. This result confirms empirically that language interference is

happening with the participants who are pronouncing the letter using the only phonetic system they are comfortable in: their mother tongue, Spanish.

The second example of the interference phenomenon was in the pronunciation of the Spanish vowel sounds for their counterparts in American English in words such as **to, do, up, idea, alive** and **by**. The chart below (Table 3) shows how the data was analyzed from the first audio recordings of the participants.

Table 2: Error count of English words with vowel sounds

	Occurrence in Text	Students Tested	Total Word Repetitions	Total Error Count	Error %
To	9	9	81	53	65%
Do	1	9	9	7	78%
Up	3	9	27	22	81%
Idea	1	9	9	8	89%
Alive	1	9	9	7	78%
By	1	9	9	7	78%

As this information indicates, as with the phoneme /h/, participants used the Spanish phonetic system to pronounce these words with vowels in them. As the chart shows, the errors committed in the pronunciation of each word occur two thirds to almost nine tenths of the time.

Having implemented the first four lesson plans, the researchers aimed to identify problems with the pronunciation and practice of long vowels, short vowels and diphthongs. At this point, researchers confirmed that the proper identification of sounds was not happening in words learners did not know and use on a daily basis.

The researchers audio recorded for a second time the participants reading the same text as in the first audio recording, hoping to find positive changes (improvements in pronunciation). This new data set was analyzed centering the attention on the phoneme /h/ and the vowel sounds. In the Table 4, the progress experienced by participants after the application of four lesson plans is visible.

Table 4: Second analysis of English words with /h/ sound

	Occurrence in text	Students tested	Total Word repetitions	2 <sup>nd</sup> round Error count	Original error count	% Change
Him	9	9	81	12	72	-83%
His	3	9	27	12	25	-52%
Huge	1	9	9	8	8	0%
Help	1	9	9	3	7	-57%

The data collected and analyzed shows a reduction in mispronunciations of 68.75%, from 112 errors in the first round of audio recordings against 35 errors in the second round of the recordings. This clearly indicates the overwhelmingly positive effect of phonological and phonics training had on this population. In some cases, the improvement was as high as an 83% reduction in mispronunciations.

With regards to the vowel sounds appearing in the words To, Do, Up, etc., the participants also showed a great advance in their identification and pronunciation. In Table 5 this is demonstrated following the same criteria the researchers used previously.

Table 5: Second Analysis of English words with vowel sound

	Occurrence in Text	Students Tested	Total Word Repetitions	2 <sup>nd</sup> Round Error Count	1 <sup>st</sup> Round Error Count	% Change
To	9	9	81	1	53	-98.11%
Do	1	9	9	2	7	-71.43%
Up	3	9	27	8	22	-63.63%
Idea	1	9	9	4	8	-50%
Alive	1	9	9	5	7	-28.57%
By	1	9	9	2	7	-71.43%

The vowel sound phenomenon is the one which shows the most improvement, from 104 total errors in the first audio recording to just 22 in the second one; that is to say the interventions led to a 78.84% reduction in the number of Spanish interference mistakes in the participants' English language performance. This supports the researchers' argument that explicit phonics training yields improved results in pronunciation.

The last day of lesson plan interventions took place on May 5<sup>th</sup>. In order to establish how necessary or important phonology was, the researcher left a two-month gap period in which students did not receive any practice. On July 11, the last recording of the reading of the text the *Lion and the Little Mouse* took place and was analyzed in the same way as the previous recordings. This occasion showed an increase in the mispronunciation of both the vowel sounds and the /h/ sound. Observe the recorded results in the following table.

Table 6 Third analysis of English words with /h/ sound

	Occurrence in Text	Students Tested	Total Word Repetitions	3 <sup>rd</sup> Round Error Count	2 <sup>nd</sup> round Error Count	1 <sup>st</sup> Round Error Count	% Change
Him	9	9	81	28	12	72	-61.11%
His	3	9	27	17	12	25	-32%
Huge	1	9	9	4	8	8	-50%
Help	1	9	9	7	3	7	100%

Since the third round refers to the last audio-recording, the chart shows a general view of the changes obtained by the phonological training. This time, the percentage of change between the first round and the third one is of 50%, with the participants making 56 total errors in pronunciation, while in the first round there were 112 errors count. One noticeable change in the participants was in relation to the word him, with an increase of errors from the second to the third round, but an overall improvement from the first audio-recording to the last one with a 61.11% of change after the process. This not only happened with the /h/ sound, but with the vowel sound pronunciation as well.

Table 7: Third Analysis of English words with vowel sounds

	Occurrence in Text	Students Tested	Total Word Repetitions	3 <sup>rd</sup> Round Error Count	2 <sup>nd</sup> Round Error Count	1 <sup>st</sup> Round Error Count	% Change
To	9	9	81	41	1	53	-22.64%
Do	1	9	9	8	2	7	14.2%
Up	3	9	27	16	8	22	-27.27%
Idea	1	9	9	5	4	8	-37.5%
Alive	1	9	9	5	5	7	-28.57
By	1	9	9	8	2	7	14.2%

Similar to the previous situation, the vowel sound errors decreased in 20% after the training, exposing the effects of a two month gap without practice. This stark and serious result indicated to researchers a clue about the importance of constant training and practice required for participants to continue performing at their highest level of potential. With all of this information available, it was clear to the researchers that both exposure to, and continuous training in, phonetics is necessary to yield sustained improvement in the pronunciation of English as a foreign language by Spanish-speaking learners.

Based on an analysis of the data collected, it was possible to conclude that yes, there were gaps in the learners’ pronunciation of the target language, and that these could be successfully addressed with effective and continuous phonics lessons.

**Teachers’ role in learners’ language development**

The assumption that teachers of English need to be able to speak and understand the language they are teaching must be complemented with idea that they must also understand the way the language is actually used. Along this line of reasoning, English teachers must develop a language awareness that includes “a sensitivity to a conscious awareness of the



nature of language and its role in human life.” (Donmal, 1985; p. 6) That is to say, teachers must have knowledge of the underlying systems of the language that enables them to teach it effectively. In addition to this, the role of the language in everyday life as well as the cultural, attitudinal and pedagogical aspects of language need to be considered in the process of building language awareness. All these elements play an integral part in making a human being into someone who can rightly be called an English teacher.

Moscowitz (1976) observes that in a survey of the opinions of former foreign language learners, a majority considered that a teacher must be defined by his/her outstanding knowledge of subject matter. With respect to this, the interviewed students tended to agree. They also agreed with Wright and Bolitho (1993) who stated that awareness or knowledge of the subject matter was not sufficient, and must be accompanied by the didactics that allow the good development of a teaching-learning process to flow from that knowledge—especially in the case of elementary students. Under this perspective, students were asked to give their opinions about their English language experiences from the previous year (2013) and the teacher who taught them the subject to give their opinions about what was happening in the present year (2014), the answers showed a variation in their learning processes between both years.

In regards to the question that focuses on the consciousness that participants have of what is happening around them in regards to their learning process, they consider that it is not mandatory for a teacher to use a book in all classes every day to teach effectively. On the contrary, for language learners it is a richer experience when the teacher uses and gives them a lot of varied resources to learn. A factor that sometimes interferes with effective



instruction is a lack of pedagogical training (preparation). Menken & Antunez (2001) mention that EFL teachers are often “[un]prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse children due to their pre-service teacher preparation.” A conclusion taken from the words of the participants in relation to context, part of having an effective teaching-learning process is considering the needs and context of the learners. One such element worthy of consideration is the age of the learners.

Behaviors that can be seen to have positive effects on learners in their language development, as mentioned by Jerome (2009), include the relationships built with students and the effective management of available resources by the teacher. Effective behaviors also include the inclusion of the students in the selection and use of the materials and in the design of activities to enhance the language development of the target language.

The answers to some questions, let the researchers evidenced that even among nine or ten year-old students, there is an awareness that it is not enough that a teacher performs the language in a natural way; they must also use pedagogical resources well in order to be effective teachers and to help the learners to develop the language for themselves. An English teacher must find a balance between the knowledge of the subject matter and the way this can be transmitted to the learners to develop an effective teaching process.

### **Anxiety when learning a foreign language**

Experiencing anxiety when learning a foreign Language is another key aspect of the learning process that visibly affects the students at LPT School. The innate emotions felt toward objects or situations are common in childhood. They comprise part of human development since they work as “protective barriers for those stimuli that are not

understandable nor uncontrollable” (Brown & Yule, 1999). When learning a language, the most common of these emotions is anxiety, defined as “the feeling of uneasiness, worry, nervousness and apprehension experienced by non-native speakers when learning or using a second or foreign language” (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

Among the participants in this research, there were a series of factors which were disrupting the development of a foreign language was anxiety specifically, the fear of being laughed at when committing errors while using the foreign language.

One of the first sensations that comes to children’s minds is that of being attacked by their peers, of being bullied. In some cases, this fear is sufficient to cause the students to avoid using English in front of their partners. Participants in this research express this fear when mentioning that they do not like to speak in English because their classmates always laugh at them. It is common for most foreign language learners to feel fear when required to speak in the language. In the case of children, this fear is not felt only because students doubt their language abilities, it is also felt because classmates can show negative attitudes towards the performer; they can, in fact, bully the learner.

Another issue that makes learners feel anxiety is based on their previous beliefs that they cannot achieve goals when they are feeling scared. Indeed, it can be said that most people self-limit. Many learners do not achieve their goals because they are not confident in what they are able to do, and what they know.

A third factor that makes learners feel anxiety is their fear of expressing their knowledge in front of the teacher. The idea that (s)he is the one that knows everything may overwhelm many kids when performing any activity—not just language. Learners of any

age tend to think that when the teacher corrects an error, it is because (s)he is laughing at them. The role of the language teacher is to guide students and help make them comfortable when using the language.

The same students reflect their preoccupations when it is the time to use the foreign language. As Scovel (1978) mentions, this reaction to facing an unknown situation is a mix of feelings that includes “uneasiness, frustration, self.-doubt, apprehension, and worry” (p. 134). Some participants express that sometimes, even they do not know what they feel when performing in the foreign language. Others say that even though they have knowledge of the language, there is something that stops them from progressing in their language development. A few said that even though they did not know anything about the language, they did not care about what their partners or teacher said because they were in the class to learn new things. However, there are students that do not feel relaxed and care too much about everything that can negatively affect their learning process as the chart below shows.

Through interviews, the researchers were able to learn the psychological dispositions of the participants during the phonological training time. Concluding with the main factors affecting whether students progress or regress in their language development are the classroom environment, their own comfort level, and the teaching skill of the teacher. Teachers can and should create mechanisms for class management in order to overcome or stimulate the learning process by mitigating fear, discouraging bullying, increasing students’ comfort level, promoting goal-setting behavior, and by creating interesting and engaging opportunities for students to learn that are appropriate for their particular context.

### Visual and auditory acknowledgement

For the purpose of understanding where English pronunciation issues come from, it is necessary to know what pronunciation is about. On one hand, pronunciation is “the ability to use the correct stress, rhythm and intonation of a word in a spoken language” (Beech, J., Harding, L., & Hilton-Jones, D 1993, p. 55). On the other hand, according to Horobin (2011), English pronunciation is related to spelling due to the phonographic written system belonging to the language, where each symbol represents a phonetic or phonological element with no reference to a proper meaning. This association of sounds with symbols must be developed by a language learner in order to be able to write and or read the sounds in a writing system.

However, we have noticed that English pronunciation is an inconsistent example of a phonemic writing system since just one sound or sound sequence may often be written in a number of different ways, and one letter or letter combinations may often be pronounced in a number of different ways as well. A language learner may not acquire these sets of foreign sounds and their pronunciations the same as they did in their mother tongue. This process is based on samples and experiences that allow the development and the re-arrangement of the speaking organs to create specific, new sounds (Tomková, 2005). A foreign language speaker needs to rearrange some articulatory settings; adapt to new mouth movements and integrate new tongue movements.

Learners of a foreign language face all kinds of challenges while learning the target language. Perceiving new speech sounds is one of the new circumstances with which they must cope. Sekiyama, Burnham, Tam and Erdener (2003) stated that speech perception is

an auditory-visual phenomenon and that it is crucial in the learning of a second or foreign language. This category of our analysis aims to show how auditory and visual tools in the phonological training of the participants are key to overcoming pronunciation difficulties in foreign language learning processes.

Every word or written letter has its own equivalent sound inside its own language system, therefore. Based on this, the first situation analyzed by the researchers within this category is the lack of knowledge of sounds made by each letter in the alphabet, which leads to spelling errors and future mispronunciations.

The first exercise was a spelling quiz in which the researcher spelled a word and students have to write its associating sounds with their written symbols. Of 9 participants, 3 of them correctly did so, and the other 6 students did not know which letters to associate with which sounds and grew frustrated. In other words, 66% of the population did not have sufficient control or knowledge of the sounds belonging to letters.

Table 8: Analysis of spelling activity

	First Round		Second Round	
	Successes	Mistakes	Successes	Mistakes
Clapping	2	7	6	3
Level	6	3	2	7
Quinto	9	0	9	0
Next	3	6	6	3
Time	7	2	7	2

Based on this, the researchers started to give each session a spelling quiz. For the second control exercise, the students showed improvements in some words. In the word clapping there was an improvement from 2 correct answers to 6; in the word level, however, there was a regression from 2 mistakes to 7.



The researchers also observed that after all the sound and letter practices, the participants were able to associate letters in words that shared the same first consonant using images alone. The chart below shows the amount of guesses vs. correct matches of the same initial-sound words.

Table 9: information collected through visual and auditory activities.

	Guesses	Failures
Words beginning with B	74	26
Words beginning with T	86	14
Words beginning with D	88	12
Words beginning with P	84	16
Words beginning with G	100	0
Words beginning with C	50	50

It is evident from the record above that participants had more guesses and correct matches than failures. This demonstrates background knowledge in the association of letters and sounds.

Another exercise looked at the identification of diphthongs and digraphs with the correct vowel or vowels' sound and its/their corresponding written letter(s). (See Table 10)

Table 10. Digraph identification through visual exercises.

	Occurrence in Text	Students Tested	Total Word Repetitions	Total Error Count
ai	4	9	36	10
au	5	9	45	18
ei	6	9	54	36
ue	4	9	36	0
eu	4	9	36	9
ea	2	9	18	1
ci	1	9	9	1
ia	2	9	18	4

At this point, the data collected showed that the recognition and association of sounds with letters was a major difficulty for participants because they had no background

knowledge in the topic, and had not practiced it in their English classes. Instead, their performance in the association of digraphs and their corresponding vowels included a total of 79 errors and 252 correct associations: in other words 76.13% correct, and 23.87% incorrect after only two sessions on this topic.

To conclude, these types of exercises associating the English writing system with its phonetic system demonstrated the importance of constant practice in order to construct a solid foundation upon which the learners may have the opportunity build more native-like English language use.

### **Conclusions**

Phonological training as a topic of pedagogical intervention has shown a great deal of potential to improve the development of the target language by language learners. Seen from four different perspectives, this research revealed how native language patterns interfere with the performance of the L2. Participants also expressed that feelings of anxiety when performing the target language also affected their performance, as did the teachers' effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) in playing their role, and the type and quality of feedback they provided.

Emphasizing the linguistic factors, it is evident that there is a domination of mother tongue over target language structures in EFL students. The first approach of English learners is to take the competences they have in their native language (including the decoding of phonological symbols—letters) and make a transference into the target language. The development of this research project into phonological training led the researchers to demonstrate how the transferences were made by participants in the use of

different phonemes, among them, the pronunciation of the letter “H” and the pronunciation of English language vowels. In these cases, the participants took the phonological system of their native language, Spanish, and used it when performing in the target language, English. Through the application of this research, learners became conscious of their misuse of the phonemes mentioned and improved in their performance with respect to these mistakes; however, much of these gains were lost after simply going a few weeks without phonological training. Without regular, ongoing phonetics training, learners seemed to forget the consciousness they had already developed with respect to phonemic awareness.

The interference of students’ development of the target language was not just intellectual; there was also an emotional aspect capable of disrupting it. This component is anxiety. Any learner that starts a learning process faces, by and large, an emotional experience. Students participating in this research project were no exception, and demonstrated fears of negative experiences during the learning process. Their most common fears were: ridicule by peers, fear of facing new things, and fear of performing in the target language in front of the teacher.

Here, analysis of the data shows another obstacle facing learners: teachers. While instructors play the role of guide, learners can nevertheless be negatively affected by teachers’ attitudes, comments or pedagogical approaches, sometimes to such a degree that the students forget altogether the idea of learning the subject they are taught. It is not enough for teachers to have a grasp of the subject matter; this subject-area knowledge needs to be accompanied by sound pedagogical practices that facilitate learning—in both teacher and student—by creating a comfortable environment that permits good behavior and



learning in harmony. We also demonstrated that students' attitudes and performance improve when there is ongoing training in a topic, and when they are given a variety of activities appropriate for their age and context.

Considering all these aspects, this research supported the idea that including phonological awareness training in the development of a target foreign language may be a crucial factor for determining the communicative success of language learners. It affects all aspects of language, notably, pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary, etc. Moreover, this phonological training and awareness intervention benefitted not only the target population, but also helped us to advance our own understanding of the topic, to contribute to the body of pedagogical and academic knowledge available to Colombia to help us all reach the goal of being a truly bilingual country.

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# Fostering Students' English Fluency Through Direct And Indirect Language Learning Strategies In Efl Contexts

## Fostering Students' English Fluency Through Direct And Indirect Language Learning Strategies In Efl Contexts.

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### Abstract

This paper addresses the importance of fostering students' English fluency in a private school with a learning range of instructional hours between 10 to 15 per week by using direct and indirect Language Learning Strategies (Oxford, 1990) since the lack of L2 students communicative competences is a general concern in our society. This research draws upon two focus groups composed of young EFL learners to obtain data that supports the scarce and limited learning processes in terms of communicative and pragmatic competences, and how the strategies mentioned above may have an impact on their spoken performance. This action research does not advise grammar-related language configurations, rather examines fluency and its development in our EFL context, given that English is the most widely spread language in the current globalized society and having a good command of the language may ensure a promising academic and professional future.

**Key words:** Communicative competence, direct and indirect language learning strategies, fluency in pragmatics, pragmatic competence, speaking fluency, three I's methodology.

# Fostering Students' English Fluency Through Direct And Indirect Language Learning Strategies In Efl Contexts

## Introduction

Over time, EFL learners have developed their own Language Learning Strategies which encompass the way young learners understand, store and retrieve information (Brown, 1994; Chamot & Kupper, 1989). Undergraduate students from “S.A” -a school with intensified instruction in English- are neither learning nor applying Language Learning Strategies to enhance fluency in speaking. Thus, this research aims at finding the impact of the appropriate direct or indirect LLSs that EFL learners need when speaking within real-life contexts. Being competent in English is a current social need in order to perform the language readily inside and outside the country since the lack of L2 students' communicative competence is a general concern in our society (MEN, 2006).

## Literature Review

At the core of pragmatics is the assumption and understanding of the context and the factors that create it, which encompasses theoretical constructs that have informed this research. Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of users' view, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication"





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(Crystal, 1985, p. 63). The term communicative competence comprises what means “competence to communicate”. Competence has been debated and developed by various linguists; it was first introduced by Chomsky who laid out the difference between competence and performance, understanding competence as the grammatical knowledge that learners possess, and performance, as the factors involved in the perception and production of speech (Chomsky, 1965). Thereby, it is defined as the actual use of the language, referring to how learners put into action grammatical knowledge in real situations. Bearing in mind the above, communicative and pragmatic competences lead this research towards the development of fluency. It is crucial to state speaking as the skill an individual must have to produce words in a given language, yet over the years both teachers and students have attached more importance to the development of speaking fluency due to the fact this is an observable pattern at the time of performing a language. In this manner, pragmatic fluency is described as the combination of appropriateness of utterances and smooth continuity of ongoing talk (House, 1996). Nowadays, many students inside the classroom are not able to communicate correctly; this is evidenced when the language is produced within communication; as stated before, this study does not advise grammar-related language configurations, rather examines fluency and its development in our EFL context by identifying the impact of six LLSs aimed at improvement of it when speaking. They in turn are divided into direct LLSs -memory, cognitive and compensation- and indirect LLSs -metacognitive, affective and social- (Oxford, 1990). LLSs are "operations employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information which allows the learner to learn easier, faster more enjoyable, more self-directed, more



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effective, and more transferrable to new situations" (Oxford, 1990, p. 8); thereby, it is accurate to comprise what each LLSs aims at. Belonging to Direct LLSs, memory strategies allow learners to associate, review and store vocabulary for communication; it can be developed by making use of visual images, sounds, motion or touch. Cognitive strategies encompass the effort learners make to analyze, argue, practice, receive and send messages when communicating; these are used to understand the meaning and expression of the target language. Compensation strategies are implemented when learners have an incomplete knowledge of vocabulary, expressions or words so they allude to the meaning through alternative means; these strategies assist students to look for a different way that may be used to convey the message.

On the other hand, within Indirect LLSs students regulate their learning processes; when developing metacognitive strategies, by centering, arranging, planning and evaluating, learners coordinate and monitor their learning. The involvement of emotions, attitudes, motivation, values and influences as compensation strategies encourages students to obtain an optimum level of performance and increases the amount of natural communication. Finally, social strategies develop cultural understanding and allow learners to become aware of thoughts and feelings of others by cooperating; asking questions, collaborating with others, and empathizing with others in order to generate a confident environment to achieve a natural and rapid level of speaking within communication, minimizing confrontation and competition. Considering the aforementioned LLSs, "Three I's methodology" proposed by McCarthy and Carter (1994) was used during the process to attain students' fluency for communicative competences in English as a foreign language in

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different contexts. These Three I's are developed throughout "Illustration", when students look at real data and collect it in a diverse corpus of the spoken language. By "Interaction", when teachers and students analyze and discuss the material by sharing their opinions; students' awareness of discourse increases since teaching and learning strategies are developed, and during "Induction" when students are able to recognise and reflect by forming conclusions about the interpersonal functions of language learning.

### **Methodology**

This research is conducted by an action research methodology based on Burn's framework (1999) which yields twelve stages. These are: exploring, identifying, planning, collecting data, analyzing and reflecting, hypothesizing and speculating, intervening, observation, reporting, writing, population and presentation, which specifically focuses on the lack of oral fluency in EFL learners from a school with intensified instruction in English. With this array of ideas and taking into account the definitions above, guiding students towards fluency and practicing through ceaseless strategies are the aims of this project. Sixteen EFL tenth graders were involved throughout the process; eight students were key in the experimental group and the other eight students were taking part in the control group. They were monitored through on-line surveys, observation formats, reflection formats, tests, videos, audio-recordings and interviews in order to assess students' fluency throughout the activities performed by them in accordance with the measurement patterns and tools proposed by House, further description of which is found deeper in the analysis-.



## **Data Analysis and Findings**

Throughout the process carried out, students were going through different stages while improving their spoken fluency. Those performances from the beginning until the end are a matter of analysis from each EFL learner process. Audio recordings were used throughout classes with the purpose of gathering information from the initial, interim and final students' performances in terms of pragmatic fluency when speaking. For the purpose of analyzing data gathered from the implementation stage, patterns have been chosen as a framework to measure pragmatic fluency in EFL learners' speaking performance. House (1999). Just three categories from the seven proposed have been taken as they are considered the most salient in the participants production. These are response time, the use of gambits and turn-taking. For the purpose of data categorization, students were assigned the letter S, teachers the letter T - and a number next to it to identify each participant. At the bottom of each excerpt, it is unveiled a recording code which specifies the number of the recording with the letter R, the length of minutes, number of class with the letter C, the date, and the strategies which it was taken from; Memory strategy being MmS, Cognitive strategy CgS, Compensation strategy CoS, Metacognitive strategy MtS and Affective strategy AfS. Likewise, when reading the excerpts, speech traits generated during transcription can be observed. In this manner, to recognize when a word has been cut off, both self-interruption and other speaker interruption, it was employed <.></.> code. To express a pause over one second and up to two seconds, it was used <.,> code. To show a

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pause of over two seconds and up to three seconds or more, it was assigned <,,><&>3</&> code. To demonstrate paralinguistic anthropophonics such as: laughter, coughing, sniffing, snorting, sneezing among other noises the code <O></O> was written. And, to emphasize words or phrases that are not considered part of English, <foreign></foreign> code was given.

Response time refers to the length of pauses and silences in which speaking is performed. This category shows in the one hand the length it takes the learner to speak after a request and on the other, the impact that the strategies had on shortening those response times, when external factors may intervene somehow. Bearing in mind the above, within the issue of response time, we will discuss short and long pauses and halting silences. Response time being one of the main factors in student's fluency, it was evidenced that some indirect LLSs had an advantage over direct LLSs and vice versa.

Previous knowledge allowed metacognitive strategy to have a remarkable impact on fluency development opposed to memorizing vocabulary strategy where pauses increased. Students' previous learning experiences allowed them to be acquainted and engaged on metacognitive strategy development, which was illustrated when responding and giving reasons, as observed in the following example:

**T2:** What do you want to be in the future?

**S8:** Could be <,,><&>3</&> psychology or lawyer.

**T2:** Lawyer? Both? Good! Why would you like to be a psychologist?

**S8:** Because uhh<,,> I like it. Uhhh I like it cómo te explico? <foreign=language>

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A friend bipolar commit suicide last year.

**T2:** Oh my God. I'm sorry to hear that, how old was she? Or he?

**S8:** Girl, and 22 <,,> I think uh, so I can help people to be health with psychology”.

**(R6C6MtS13/03/2015 36'55 – 41'04)**

As metacognitive strategy, questions used within this activity were guided to focus students on their self-regulated learning for them to think about their future, for instance talking about responsibilities, making decisions and commitments, as an individual's metacognitive processes need to operate in a person's conscious awareness (Kentrige & Heywood, 2000). Seeing that, students were asked to talk about their desires related to jobs' for future life during the interaction stage of the lesson. S8 in line four made attempts to explain the main reason why she wanted to become a psychologist. It is observed how S8's past experiences and knowledge influenced in her response, allowing the student not to think too much about it. Pauses were presented as short hesitations when relating preconceptions to students' future dreams, hence it had a positive impact on her speaking performance. Although, it was not as fluent as expected, it was more natural than working with memory strategy. Conversely, during the illustration and induction stages when teaching memory strategies, students were resorted to make long pauses, as observed in the following samples:

### **Sample 1:**

“**T1:**What kind of food do you remember?”



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**Ss:** Ehhhh, ahhhh<,,>&>3</&>

**T1:** Do you remember what did the girl ordered in the video?

**S3:** Salad and uhh <,,>&>3</&> girl <,,> girled chicken?

**T1:** Very good! She ordered salad and grilled chicken. Do you remember anything else?

**S3:** Pollo asado. <native=language>

**T1:** Exactly. Do you like it or do you prefer the fried chicken?

**Ss:** Fried chicken.

**S3:** Teacher how do you <,,> say Pollo Frito? <native=language>

**T1:** Fried Chicken, it is what I am saying”.

**(R3C3MmS03/03/2015 -50'55”- 55'24”)**

During illustration stage teacher showed a video in which it was possible to watch a conversation among a waitress and two customers; students were asked to memorize as much words, sentences and food-related vocabulary as possible to get acquainted with the strategy purpose. Among the eight EFL learners, S3 was willing to participate as shown in lines three, five and eight. Even though she knew what she saw in the video, she was recurrent to ask for translation of the word since she did not know how to say it in English. The other students produced long pauses when thinking about what to say and how to answer since they did not take the chance to respond, prohibiting fluency in the dialogue. This demonstrated the mental effort they made when trying to retrieve vocabulary in the target language. Additionally, in the induction stage students from the same class were divided into couples to perform a role-play activity in order to ask for any kind of food in a

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restaurant, as observed:

### Sample 2:

**T1:** Just three minutes, and try to create a conversation. Try it!

**S3:** Teacher how do you <,,> say Pollo Frito? <foreign=language>

**T1:** Fried Chicken, okay. Come on you, you and your friend.

**S3 (Customer):** Do you have a grilled chicken?

**S1 (Waitress):** <,,><&>5</&> Oh of course <.umm> I have <,,><&>3</&> a pot of chicken, delicious <,,> very good chicken

**S4 (Customer):** Hi, ehmmm <,,><&>5</&> can you get me a <,,> glass of orange <,,>juice?

**S2 (Waitress):** Of course!”

**(R3C3MmS03/03/2015 -70'45''- 75'04'')**

S1 in line five above made efforts when trying to produce vocabulary and complete structured utterances, she wanted to describe how the chicken was, as the waiter did in the video they watched at the beginning of the lesson. But it took nine seconds of pauses to this student to say something about the chicken, even though vocabulary clarifications were done by teacher 1. In S4 and S2's interventions in the last lines, there is merely a question and a single answer according to the instructions given to achieve simulation of a real-life conversation. Likewise, for S3 in line two, memory strategies did not work in that S3 asked for translation twice, one at the beginning of the lesson in illustration stage, and then, within induction stage when performing the role-play activity, all of this merely for remembering how to say pollo frito in English. Thus, students limited their speaking



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fluency due to the fact that memory strategy required a mental effort when putting into action as closely as possible what they have been told only twenty minutes ago, whereas relating preconceptions and past experiences to students' future professions evoked a more natural speaking performance than working with memory strategy.

Few productions of pauses allowed indirect social strategy to have an evident advantage over direct compensation strategy in which longer pauses were produced when speaking. When social strategy was applied, asking questions, cooperating and empathizing with peers was of paramount importance. Below an example of this is illustrated:

**T1:** I want you to think about an advantage or disadvantage for Facebook or twitter, what do you think?

**S2:** For Facebook is a tool, that, eh, entertain.

**T1:** Entertain

**S3:** But distract, distracts.

**S6:** But <,> but entertain when you are boring <O>laughs</O>.

**S2:** But, but entertain <O>laughs</O>.

**S3:** Facebook is very interesting

**S1:** Ummm<,> Facebook has viruses

**S7:** Stalkers.

**S2:** Speak, talk for persons from other countries

**T1:** Now, something positive.

**S3:** Um <,> it relax people

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**T1:** It is only to communicate and that's it?

**S4:**Is a distractor but, in the very good sense, eh <,,> osea I mean when you are tired or <,,>

something you talk to your best friend <,,> ...you look happy but you can't do homeworks.

**(R7C7S0s17/03/2015 32'45 – 37'30)**

In terms of social strategy, students were involved in the process of accepting people's point of view to develop a cultural understanding and in that sense becoming aware of other's thoughts and feelings (Oxford, 1990). During this class, students were describing advantages and disadvantages of social networks that they use every day, as a topic related to daily life. They could give opinions in short sentences without too many pauses or hesitations. S2 in lines two, six, and ten stated that Facebook is a tool that entertains and connects people around the globe, S4 participated after her partners had talked and she said something different about Facebook, and S3 said it distracts, relaxes people and is interesting at the same time. S1 affirmed that Facebook has viruses, a short but fluent intervention. They altogether stated the pros and cons that social networks have upon humans while relating their own experiences. Indeed, this is precisely what this strategy aims to achieve. Despite the short length of the sentences that the students produced, there was an absence of silences or gaps in communication, letting all the students participate and agree with body language and gestures. On the other hand, regardless of the large amount of long pauses produced by students when spoken interaction was presented during compensation strategies implementation, it is possible to

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say that students were comfortable when making attempts to speak due to the fact that the strategies helped them compensate unknown vocabulary through gestures, synonyms, descriptions, body language and mimics. They helped them somehow to find a way to express and communicate complete ideas. Reasons to claim that spoken fluency cannot be noticed in the following excerpt:

**T1:** Hey guys, listen. I'm going to show you a series of flashcards which contains general vocabulary about airports. And you will be relating the pictures to the words. Ok? So you will need to divide the class into two groups. Let's start.

**S5:** Boarding pass? (23:22 - 23:24)

**T1:** Very good student! Boarding pass, look! Points for you.

**T1:** Now you, Sara.

**S3:** Nosotras tambien podemos adivinar? <foreign=language> (23:56 - 23:59)

**T2:** Of course, you can do it.

**T1:** Next image. Yes, yes you are close!

**S3:** The flight attendant? (24:25 - 24:26)

**T1:** Flight attendant, excellent! Two and cero! One, two, and three!

**S6:** Check, checking? (24:52)

**T2:** Uyyy, oh my God, good job! Now, here comes the easiest one.

**T1:** Look!

**S1:** Window<,,>&3</&>window<,,>&3</&>seat!

Window<,,>&3</&> (25:19 - 25:24)



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**T2:** Very good girl. Say it again, please

**S1:** Window seat. (25:25 - 25:26)

**T2:** Good ! next.

**(R4C4Cos06/03/2015 23'05 – 25'26)**

In the excerpt above, S3, S6 and S1 –lines 7, 9 and 12- students used indirect strategies to compensate unknown vocabulary to be used in an airport. Some of the vocabulary was related by using a charades game to look for their meaning; having this in mind, many attempts, breaks and pauses to speak were presented; even though it was a fun way to make students communicate, long pauses did not allow a natural development of the speech. Hence, indirect social strategies implementation had a major impact on tenth graders to achieve fluency, for they presented fewer and shorter pauses than direct compensation strategies accomplishment; even though, the last one triggered a positive help when producing the language.

Implementing affective strategy had a noteworthy effect on EFL learners as it decreased the amount of silences, enabling natural communication instead. When affective strategy was applied, it was important to emphasize the human emotional side. As its name suggests, students were involved in the process of expressing their feelings. As it can be noticed in the following excerpt:

“**T1:** Have you ever seen a movie, an old movie about a man who killed the family of a girl whose Nathalie Portman.

**ASs:** Yes!. (34:39)



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**T1:** Maybe you remember Gary Oldman. Paula describe the man, please.

**S1:** He <O,uhhh> he have green eyes O,uhhh><&>3</&>(34:45 – 34:54)

**S3:** He have a nice<,,> face (35:06 – 35:09)

**T2:** He has!

**S3:** He has moustache and white skin <,,> (35:15 – 35:18)

**T2:** Good!

**T1:** What about this handsome man?

**S4:** esto se pone bueno <foreign=language> He is sexy, he have a beautiful beard, is tall <,,> and is thin

**T1:** Now you are going to tell me, who is your favorite actor, singer or musician and why telling reasons.

**S2:** Zac Efron because <,,> the blue eyes <O>laughs</O>.

**S3:** Sterling Knight <O>laughs</O>. el que tiene arrugitas because of the cachetes<foreign=language>

**T1:** Oh yes! He has wrinkles on his cheeks <O>laughs</O>.

**S1:** James Rodriguez papasito because <,,> of the athletic body<foreign=language> <O>laughs</O>.

**S6:** Chris Hemsworth el de thor <foreign=language> <O>laughs</O>. Everything is good for him

**S7:** I love Robert <O>laughs</O> Downey <,,> from Iron Man, because he look <,,> at me sexy

**S8:** Adam Sandler <,,> he <,,> is <,,> funny and sometimes <,,> is silly.

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**S5:** I love nirvana <O>laughs</O> i mean all of the band because of the songs, lastima que murió joven<foreign=language> “

**(R5C5Afs10/03/2015 32'05 – 36'00)**

Students were able to express whom their favorite actors or musicians were in short utterances giving simple reasons. Nevertheless, it was evident since the beginning that the class environment had an air of motivation which is a key to learn in general, and in this case to speak fluently, as studies and experiments in human learning have affirmed (Weiner, 1986; Deci, 1976; Maslow, Frager & Cox,1970). They were able to agree with each other about singers they all had in common and there was an atmosphere of confidence in the classroom. During this class, students were describing the physical appearances of famous people, as S4, S2, S5, S6 and S7 did. Communication was more efficient due to the fact it was a topic they were familiarized with, a topic that motivated them emotionally, so they could give opinions in short sentences without too many silences, stating likes and dislikes related to famous people in terms of physical appearance, as seen in the example above. Within this concept, understanding how human beings feel, respond, believe and value is an exceedingly important aspect of what makes affective strategies stand out and gives this project a minor insight into causes of silences within speech.

Learning how to use cognitive strategies was not as profitable as once conceived, for it did not help students to avoid silences, as it is shown:

**“T2:** Let's say we are in the train station, and you want to go to the drugstore, so you



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are the lost and you are the expert. You are going to ask her.

**S2:** Le contestamos? <foreign=language>

**S5:** How do you get to the <,,>&3</&> drugstore <,,>&3</&> to the drugstore?

Ehhh <,,>&3</&> straight ahead<,,>&3</&> street? **(29:38)**

**S2:** Uhhh right <,,>&3</&> turn right **(29:43)**

**S5:** Main street **(29:45)**

**S2:** Straight ahead <,,>&3</&>straight ahead **(30:00)**

**S5:** It is in front, the police station<,,>&3</&> is next to a <,,>&3</&> post office **(30:06)**

**T2:** Yeah you are right, let's continue with the other pair."

**(R2C2Cgs27/02/2015 29'28''- 31'30'')**

These are probably the most popular strategies employed with language learners. For this reason, during this class they were receiving and sending messages when they were asked to perform a role-play between a lost and an expert person who are trying to locate a place in a city map. Analyzing and reasoning were the tools they used to receive and send messages; however, they were making attempts to understand the meaning and expression of the target language in their native language, as observed in line three –S2-. So, these facts did not contribute to a major development of fluency when speaking English in location contexts, for it engendered a great deal of confusion and hesitation.

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As was previously addressed, within the issue of response time, short and long pauses and halting silences made reference to the length it takes the learner to speak. Response time being one of the ways in which to measure students' fluency, it was evidenced that some LLSs had a noteworthy advantage over others. Previous knowledge within metacognitive strategy, few productions of pauses in social strategy and silences reduction in affective strategy had a remarkable effect on natural communication and fluency. However, memorizing and compensating gaps in vocabulary strategies, and cognitive strategies were not as effective as thought, for they made students produce longer pauses and silences when speaking. Hence, some indirect LLSs had an advantage over direct LLSs and vice versa.

The use of gambits becomes a determinant factor to enhance fluency when speaking. This linguistic feature is also known as discourse markers, which commonly appear in spoken interactions; they are referred to as “elements that are used to establish, maintain, and end contact (...) helping to cement segments of talk into a discourse (House 1996, p. 232). Keller (1981) also stated that gambits make the conversation sound more natural, more confident, and also make it possible to talk easier. Gambits were classified by Edmonson and House (1981) and by House (1996) into four different types which will be further described and analyzed along with the language learning strategies implementation. Keeping this in mind, within the phenomenon of gambits, two types have been chosen from the already established, which will be discussed and analyzed since they were the most prominent ones used by students: Uptakers and Starters; understanding Uptakers as words such as:





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“Hmmm”, “Uhummm,” ok”, “I see”, “Right”, “Yeah”, “oh”, “great” and Starters words like: Well, ok, Now and so, prepending that students are going to start saying something. The use of gambits being another primary factor to develop pragmatic fluency, it was observed that those previously mentioned were used frequently by students within Direct and Indirect LLSs applications.

Memorizing concepts and summarizing meaning as Direct LLSs implementation produced responses to show that information or messages were received and understood within students' spoken interaction. The following two examples taken from the data in the present study, as illustrated in sample 1, how students used numerous uptakers when they were requested to memorize vocabulary for them to ask food in a restaurant. On the other hand, in sample 2, students developed cognitive strategy when they were demanded to review related-vocabulary to be used in an airport:

### Sample1:

**T1:** (...) let's continue (...) click on the dice please.

**S5:** beer

**T1:** You have to complete the sentences

**S5:** Ahh {Gambit} okay {Gambit}, I would like some <,><&>3</&>and the bread <,> bread.

**T1:** so it would be, I would like ...

**S5:** yeah, {Gambit} I would like the bread”.

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**(R3C3MmS03/03/2015-09'35'' -09'55)**

**Sample2:**

**T2:** Let's say we are in the train station; she wants to go to the drugstore so you are the one who is lost and you are the expert. You have to ask her.

**S5:** Hmm, {Gambit} How do I get to the <,,><&>3</&> drugstore <,,><&>3</&> to the drugstore? (...)

**S2:** Uhhh right {Gambit} <,,><&>3</&> ok {Gambit} turn right

**S5:** Main street?

**S2:** Right {Gambit} Straight ahead <,,> straight ahead"

**(R2C2CgS27/02/2015-29'28''-31'08'')**

By making use of uptakes, students showed understanding when a task was assigned or when there was an explanation of unfamiliar vocabulary. Students produced several uptakers during spoken interactions as noticed in S5 in line four of sample 1; when saying: "Ahh {Gambit} okay {Gambit}, I would like some ...". It was noticeable that student received and understood the information, allowing the student to continue with the flow of communication. Likewise, for S2 in line three of sample 2, the uptaker "Uhhh right" in the second sample –when developing cognitive strategy- operated as an acknowledgement of the previous expression made by the student; it illustrates clearly an interest for and understanding of what student the said. During these sessions, the researchers could figure out some positive features of student's speech when direct LLSs were implemented. Thus, presences of uptakers

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produced by Students from "S.A" School within spoken interaction when applying Memory and Cognitive Direct LLSs reflected somehow the way in which interests and understanding impacted on students' speaking fluency.

Managing emotions and cooperating with others as indirect affective and social LLSs minimized the use of uptakers in student's repertoire in contrast to the direct LLSs enforcement aforementioned. When students managed feelings and emotions while talking about famous celebrities who were shown through pictures as an affective strategy, as well as when they were asked to share opinions about advantages and disadvantages of using social networks while implementing social LLS's, the decline of uptakers within production at the time of speaking was remarkable:

### **Sample 1:**

**S5:** Who is she?

**S7:** An actress?

**S5:** no

**S6:** ah an artist

**S5:** <Uhum {Gambit} <,,> an artist <,,> a singer <&>3</&>

**S3:** Beyonce?

**T2:** sing us a song.

**S5:** shine like a diamond <,,>

**S1:** Rihanna?



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S5: yeah! {Gambit}"

(R5C5AfS10/03/2015-40'29"-42'31")

**Sample 2:**

**T1:** Which one do you prefer facebook or twitter?

**S6:** Twitter.

**T1:** Why?

**S6:** Because it's more interest <,,> interesting.

**T1:** Great! What about Instagram?

**S6:** Yeah, {Gambit} I use it.

**T1:** Why do you use Instagram?

**S6:** for Download pictures Hmmm, {Gambit} talking with people".

(R7C7SoS17/03/2015-38'03"-41'21")

S5, S6 and S1 did not use uptakers during spoken interaction as noticed in both samples when they were requested to give a response; by managing emotions - as presented in lines three, four five and six of sample 1- students were able to establish short conversation without breaks in their communication even though responses were not structured as expected. It is likely that the encouragement of feelings at the time of asking them for their favorite music bands, songs and artists led them to feel comfortable and it increased the amount of natural communication and the level of performance. Information was sent, received and understood easily allowing continuous dialogue. Likewise, in the

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second sample, S6's speech in lines four, six and eight –when developing social language learning strategies- illustrates clearly that by cooperating and discussing social interests, in this case, the use of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and many other networks, the presence of uptakers were not needed within communication. Hence, this disappearance allowed students to be able to talk naturally, permitting somehow the accomplishment of fluency within speaking.

Memorizing concepts as a direct language learning strategy provided a repertoire for students to configure the use of starters, letting them to improve their fluency when speaking. Referring to this classification of gambit, some extracts from interaction stages were selected to analyze and also describe how students employed different Starters in their spoken contacts. In the following fragment, Memory language learning strategy is developed through a situation in which the teacher and a student interact by having a conversation, simulating they are in a pub and they are meeting for the first time. Teacher is in charge of guiding the conversation as naturally as possible in order to create the context:

**T1:**Hi! How are you?

**S4:** Fine thanks, and you?

**T1:** well, I'm kind of bored! But it's ok.<,,>What's your name?

**S4:** My name is Sara.

**T1:** Nice to meet you Sara!

**S4:** Nice to meet you too! Now {Gambit} <,,> how old are you?

**T1:** I'm twenty two years old, and you?



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S4: I'm umm 15 years old.

T1: 15? Great! So, what are you doing here?

S4: Um, I am <,,> well, {Gambit} waiting my boyfriend but you know {Gambit} (...)"

### (R9C9MmS24/03/2015-32'55"-35'59)

When making an effort to remember vocabulary, previously shown in a video, S4 In «Now, {Gambit} <,,> how old are you?" – line six of the excerpt- illustrated how she clearly employed the gambit « Now » to show she wants to continue with the conversation as well as an introduction to support and add a new utterance. On the other hand, in (...) » boyfriend but you know {Gambit} in line 5 of sample 2 “ the expression “you know” may indicate that the speaker wants to maintain the rhythm of the conversation and warn the listener that a message is going on. The development of memory strategies made students make a mental effort when memorizing concepts and vocabulary to put them into action. This facilitated the presence of uptakers and thus, the improvement of speaking when communicating and being able to keep a continued dialogue since students already had a prior knowledge of “what come next” when speaking.

As discussed previously, it is conceivable to say that by memorizing concepts and summarizing meanings as a direct language learning strategy produced responses and a repertoire by students to show through the use of gambits that information and messages were received and understood during spoken interactions, leading to an improvement in students' performance during communication. On the other hand, managing emotions and

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cooperating with others through indirect affective and social LLSs minimized the use of uptakers allowing an increase in the amount of natural communication and the level of fluency within student's repertoire.

As mentioned in House's study, turn taking alludes to the number of times each participant speaks during a conversation task. Bearing in mind turns as units of analysis we will talk over how this measurement pattern was evidenced within affective, social, compensation and metacognitive LLSs coming from learners' participation throughout classes. The analysis of turn taking measures pragmatic fluency and shows the development of some indirect and direct Language Learning Strategies which encouraged fluency to be achieved inside the classroom.

Involving attitudes, feelings and empathizing with others as affective and social language learning strategies produced an optimum level of turns and generated an increase of natural communication when interacting to improve speaking. As observed in Sample 1, when students were asked to integrate and share opinions about what advantages and disadvantages they could think of when making use of different social networking web sites and in sample 2, by integrating feelings when learning how to complain in different contexts, in this case, the order did not come out as expected:

### **Sample 1:**

**T1:** I want you to think about an advantage or disadvantage for facebook or twitter, What do you think?

**S2:** For facebook is a tool, that, eh, <, >entertain.

**T1:** Entertain?



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**S3:** But distract, distracts.

**S6:** But <,,> but entertain when you are boring <O>laughs</O>.

**S2:** But, but entertain <O>laughs</O>.

**S3:** Facebook is very interesting

(...)

**T1:** Yes, but privacy. You cannot have privacy.

**S4:** Is a distraction.

**S3:** Uy, yes! <foreign=language>

**S4:** Is a distractor but, in the very good sense, eh <,,> osea I mean when you are tired or <,,> something you talk to your best friend <,,> ...you look happy but you can't do homeworks"

**(R7C7Sos17/03/2015 32'45 – 37'30)**

**Sample 2:**

**S6:** Can I help you ?

**S4:** Hello, good morning !

**S6:**<O>laughs</O>.Hello, Can I help you ?

**S8:** I just want a Coca cola please

**S4:** Me too, and please give me a piece of pie

**S6:** Here is your order girls

**S2:** Excuse me but there is a problem with my salad. Is too salty.

**S4:** My pie is too sweet, I can't eat this you know.





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(R13C13AfS-14/04-2015- 24'12"- 25'20")

As presented in sample 1 in lines four, seven and ten, there is an intention from S3 to convey an inclination to the conversation going even if the sentences are not successfully complete. Then, as an attempt to succeed, S4 in line 11 of the same sample, supplements the conversation by empathizing with and integrating her peer's ideas with her own final opinion, allowing then, an increase of natural communication when interacting. The interaction of attitudes and cooperation impacted the way students take turns to perform their speaking, in relation to the aforementioned patterns. Likewise, during the flow of conversation within Affective LLS's development and by involving attitudes and feelings in order to complain as observed in S6 in line three, sample 2; she forgot to greet before starting speaking, so that S4 in line 4, reminded her to do it subjectively, this subtle correction and realisation of the error being proven through the presence of laughter: "O>laughs</O>.Hello, Can I help you ?". In this case, the taking of turns by students was not reflective of a natural conversation. However, in some cases, students allowed interruptions to happen so that they could communicate correctly. Thus, employing indirect Affective and Social LLS's produced a positive presence of realistic turn taking and generated an improvement of speaking and communicating for students when interacting.

Within the indirect metacognitive strategy, it is evidenced that the student's learning was centered in their speaking performance. When the students were asked to answer a question by the teacher, the first thing they did, was to plan what they were going to say. This is reflected by the amount of times it took for the student to answer these questions.

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Furthermore, as observed in the excerpt below, students were asked to name some common diseases and as they were doing so, it was evidenced that before they spoke, other students waited to participate because planning was taking place.

**T1:** Yes, it's related to the parts of the body **(21:49)**

**S1:** Symptoms? **(21:52)**

**T1:** Yes! Symptoms, when you are sick **(21:55)**

**S2:** Leyo! Eso no es justo! **(21:59)**

**T1:** What kind of symptoms have you ever felt?

**S1:** Umm, ay que? **(22:09)**"

**(R12C12MtS10/04/2015 21'45 – 22'10)**

As shown above, we noticed that the students have understood the question being asked by the teacher. Nevertheless, we also see that they take some time to answer, as they are planning on what they are going to say. Furthermore, as the metacognitive strategy states, that the act of planning is a process of thinking how to organize their ideas before speaking. Likewise, the students had to ask themselves first how they were going to respond to what was being asked. For example the student **S1** asks for comprehension when she says 'Symptoms?', later in the conversation the student waits and participates again, after having thought of what to answer. Then, she goes on to answer in their foreign language 'Umm, ay que?', through which we can discern that they are still in the process of planning how to respond. As a second category, monitoring is another category which was evidenced in the following excerpt:



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**“S3:** Sore throat? (12:13)

**T1:** Uyy, great! (12:17)

**T1:** But you can speak? What is that? (12:21)

**S1:** I hurt ... (12:23)

**S2:** Pain? (12:24)

**T1:** It's pain, yes but what? what is this? (12:29) --

**(R12C12MtS10/04/2015 12'00 – 12'30)**

Speaking production in a direct compensation strategy appraises response time when EFL learners take turns when communicating. At the time of executing the interaction methodology stage, a student was instructed to talk about a specific word without mentioning it; during this process the student was allowed to use spoken language as a verbal way to communicate or mimes and drawings as a non-verbal form of communication. The other group of students were asked to guess or say the unknown word by asking for information that could help them to deduce the word. So, the interaction among the instructed students to the other group of students was observed in the following excerpt:

**“T1:** Take out a piece of paper from this bag. Then, read it and give it to me. You have to talk about whatever it was that you read without using the word and you can also use drawings and mimics to express yourself. The other students will have to guess what the word is. Is it clear? (43:12 – 43:45)

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**S5:** <O>laughs</O> yes. Mmm, Es como el juego de micas

<foreign=language>(43:46 – 43:52)

**T1:** Remember that you must not use spanish. (43:53 – 43:57)

**S5:** Ok, teacher. <O>laughs</O> (43:58 – 44:01)

**T1:** you guys can ask as many questions you want. Just remember to raise  
your hand. Is it clear? (44:04 – 44:11)

**S1:** <.,> yes (44:12 – 44:15)

**S2:** <.,><&>3</&> (44:16 – 44:21)

**S3:** yes (44:22 – 44:23)

**S4:** <.,> (44:24 – 44:26)

**S6:** yes (44: 27 – 44:28)”

**(R11C11CoS07/04/2015 -43'12”- 44'28”)**

It was evident that when the teacher presented the activity and asked the instructed student (S5) about clarification of it she answered immediately. This showed that the time taken between question and answer was minimal. Nevertheless, when the teacher asked the group of students about clarification of the activity, S1 answered by taking 2 seconds; S2 took 5 seconds and did not respond to the question; S3 and S6 answered at once; there was no response from S4 in a length of 2 seconds. Thus, students limited the turn taking from question to answer based on the understanding of it.

**“S5:** Bueno <O></O><foreign=language> It's a model ja ja<O>laughs</O> a  
woman <.,> Colombia. (56:10 – 56:21)

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**S6:** Sofia Vergara <O>laughs</O> <O>laughs</O> (56:22 – 56:25)

**S1, S2, S3, S4, S6:** Laughs <O>laughs</O> (56:24 – 56:29)

**S5:** No <O>laughs</O> <O>laughs</O> (56:30 – 56:34)

**S5:** mmm n<O></O><.,><&>5</&> Student wrote on the board “tu cara me suena”

and

pointed to the name. (56:35 – 56:48)

**S5:** no short, the other (56:49 – 56:53)

**S1:** Paola <.,> ahhh <O></O>,como es el apellido <foreign=language> (56:54 – 56:59)

**S2:** Turbay (57:00 – 57:02)

**S5:** yes, yes <O>laughs</O> <O>laughs</O> (57:03 – 57:07)”

**(R11C11CoS07/04/2015 -56'10”- 57'07”)**

Encompassing the turn taking category into the direct compensation learning strategy, it was perceived that when S5 started to describe her character, she began the task by using known vocabulary that related it. The uptake from S6 student was produced after she used the word “Colombia”, which showed an immediate first- hand return. Likewise, in a further point of the conversation student S5 used the board as a means of non-verbal communication and also integrated verbal words, and so compensation strategy led the instructed student to express herself in a fluent manner. Consequently, S1 proposed a name and right after S5 completed the character’s name.

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In the interim of affective, social, compensation and metacognitive LLSs coming from students' participation the impact in students speaking performance was noticeable since turn taking time responses were given almost immediately. Students were able to participate and express their feelings to interact with their peers, think before performing the spoken language, apply verbal and non-verbal forms of communication to compensate their limited vocabulary or expressions to emphasize an interaction between them. Thus within response time, use of gambits and turn taking can be used to measure the development of some indirect and direct Language Learning Strategies that can boost fluency inside the classroom.

Throughout this action research it was illustrated that metacognitive, social and affective strategies are useful to get students involved in the process of accepting other's points of view to develop a cultural understanding, in order to focus students on their self-regulated learning empowered natural communication and readiness within speaking fluency and natural communication. On the other hand, memory, compensation and cognitive strategies, probably the most popular strategies employed with language learners, did not have a positive impact upon EFL learners. Indeed, memorizing and compensating gaps in vocabulary, receiving and sending messages triggered the students to make attempts to understand the meaning and expression of the target language in their native language, limiting students' pragmatic fluency.

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**Be More Radio: Improving Fluency In Students Through The Implementation Of An  
Online Radio Station.**

**Be More Radio: Improving Fluency in Students Through The Implementation Of An  
Online Radio Station.**

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**Abstract:**

This project can be an educational tool for teachers and students to improve spoken fluency via the use of ICT technologies, applying different strategies to improve the verbal communication skills of those learning English as a foreign language. Through the implementation of an online radio station, students can develop their command of spoken English and teachers can use this tool as an evaluative method in their classes. This research objective is to identify the impact of an online radio station on EFL students' fluency development. In addition, this project is based on the action research methodology following processes of planning, observation and reflection.

*Key words:* Fluency, EFL students, ICT technologies, online radio.

**Resumen:**



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Este proyecto puede ser una herramienta educativa para profesores y estudiantes con el objetivo de mejorar la fluidez y el uso de las tecnologías TIC, aplicando diferentes estrategias para desarrollar la habilidad del habla de los estudiantes que están aprendiendo inglés como lengua extranjera. A través de la implementación de una emisora en línea los estudiantes pueden desarrollar habilidades de su discurso y los profesores pueden utilizar esta herramienta como un método de evaluación en sus clases. Esta investigación tiene como objetivo identificar el impacto de una radio en línea para el desarrollo de la fluidez de los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera. Además, este proyecto se basa en la metodología de investigación acción siguiendo un proceso de planificación, observación y reflexión.

**Palabras claves:** Fluidez, estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera, tecnologías TIC, emisora en línea.

### **Introduction**

Currently, EFL students are constantly involved in environments in which the development of oral fluency has been badly affected by factors such as fear, inadequate knowledge of vocabulary, absence of confidence and syntactical shortcomings, among others. Therefore, in order to overcome the aforementioned obstacles, an online radio station has been designed and created as a key learning resource. This project provides an opportunity for teachers to create class projects in which the EFL students participate in a more active manner, thus encouraging spoken interaction and facilitating the improvement of their fluency through a series of online radio broadcasts. This research study attempts to answer



the following question: What is the impact of implementing an online radio program on EFL students' fluency development?

### **Statement of the Problem**

Education in Colombia is geared towards the creation of a bilingual nation, which demands appropriate proficiency in the four key skills: listening, writing, reading and speaking. In most cases, students can master the first three aspects of the language; however, speaking usually proves to be the skill that students have more difficulty with, particularly in terms of fluency when speaking spontaneously.

Periods of silence, hesitation and lack of fluidity are some of the most common difficulties EFL students have in terms of spoken English. Fillmore (1979) stated that the lack of vocabulary affects fluency in a great measure; for instance, periods of silence, use of pet words and hesitation are factors influencing the students' verbal communication of the language. As a consequence, those features become a considerable hindrance to EFL students' oral production, preventing them from expressing ideas coherently and consistently.

Therefore, the implementation of an online radio program can provide a means of overcoming oral fluency difficulties in EFL students.

### **Objectives**



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- To identify the impact of an online radio program on EFL students' fluency development.
- To implement an innovative strategy using a technological resource, in the form of an online radio program, in order to foster students' spoken communication and, perhaps, self-confidence.

The use of an online radio program as a learning resource provides a new academic platform to circulate information, facilitating interaction between teachers and students. Knowledge and the effective use of language are easily transmitted through the online radio program, allowing students to take an active role in communication. In addition, this device serves as a tool to explore and examine fluency acquisition in EFL students.

### **Theoretical framework**

This study addresses the fluency in students through the implementation of an online radio, and it has been developed around four fundamental concepts. First of all, communicative competence, which covers three specific concepts:

- 1) pragmatics, in which the relationship between language and the context in which it is spoken is emphasised;
- 2) fluency, which is of paramount importance in the development of an adequate level of verbal communication, and finally;

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3) virtual literacy, which involves the integration of technological resources to enable immediate access to information

During the oral production of English, students face various obstacles that limit a natural sounding and spontaneous verbal communication.

Absence of confidence, according to Lemos Tello (2012), is when EFL students experience nervousness when required to use the target language orally and feel that they lack the skill to perform as confident speakers. Subsequently, students feel uncomfortable and their oral production is affected by periods of silence and hesitations. Catalán (2002) claims that the learner needs to master lexical competence both in the sense of the knowledge of appropriate word usage and in the sense of the ability to recognize, learn, and understand the different words written and spoken. Thus, the higher the level of vocabulary, the greater the possibility of producing fluid and contextually appropriate speech.

Additionally, students use syntactic analysis to produce speech. This is important because, depending on the level of analysis applied by the student, their spoken English may or may not go beyond a certain proficiency level. Consequently, depending on an adequate analysis, students may be able to attain a high level of verbal competence.

### **Communicative competence**

Communicative competence is the set of grammatical, lexical, semantic and phonetic rules which, when adhered to, permit the speaker to sustain efficient communication. The



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acquisition of communicative competence is generally related to social experience, needs, motivation and action. According to Hymes (1971, 1972), the general terms for a person's communication skills is the ability to understand language and the ability to use it. Indeed, he argues that communicative competence is a set of skills and knowledge that determine speakers' understanding and proficiency. In other words, communicative competence is the ability to interpret and use linguistic variation relating to the functions of the language.

The discipline of communicative competence is based on two important concepts; one of them is the linguistic field. According to Canale and Swain (1983), linguistic competence refers to knowledge of the language code - grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc. The second is related to the sociolinguistic competence, which refers to the comprehension of the socio-cultural context of language use (appropriate application of vocabulary and style). Hence, communicative competence is the set of rules that the speaker learns and applies appropriately according to the specific context.

### **Pragmatics**

In the process of communication, pragmatics deals with the way in which language is interpreted according to context. Pragmatics is the part of semiotics that deals with the relevance of the conditions in which language is used in order to discern meaning, rather than the importance of structural and linguistic knowledge.

Within this linguistic discipline, there must exist an understanding between the speaker and the interpreter, in terms of context of time, socio-culture and the speaker's intent.



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Indeed, words as tokens of meaning are undoubtedly associated with the various contextual dimensions in which they are used. Pragmatics deals with the circumstances in which the process of expression, communication and interpretation of language occurs in a space, a culture, and in terms of the psychological and sociological aspects of the use of language. In the communicative process, language is understood in terms of the context in which it is used.

In terms of oral fluency, pragmatics is used to manage and understand a language in its proper context in order to facilitate efficient verbal communication. Speech fluency and coherence is an important issue for the development of foreign language students; some studies, namely Brinton, (1996) and Schrifflin, (1987, 2001) have shown that an understanding of discourse is a significant feature of oral speech as well as an integral part of pragmatics. Consequently, for EFL learners, appropriate use of discourse is an important and integral aspect of pragmatics and communicative competence.

### **Fluency**

Fluency has been defined by various authors who have studied the development of oral proficiency. Authors such as Faerch, Haastrup, and Phillipson (1984) include fluency as a component of communicative competence, defining it as the speaker's ability to make use of the linguistic and pragmatic competence they possess. Hence, fluency is the ability of the speaker to express themselves verbally in an efficient manner. Richards (2006) defines fluency as "natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful



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interaction and maintains comprehensive and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence". Therefore, fluency is not a detached complement of oral proficiency skills, but a supplement of it.

Furthermore, fluency in speech is part of the learning process and also relies on previous knowledge. According to Schmidt (1992), fluency is an automatic skill of the learner in the oral communication. Schmidt (1992) also refers to fluency as a phenomenon which depends on knowledge or knowing how to do something. According to Richards (1985), fluency is the ability to make grammatically correct sentences. As a result, fluency is an important field in the process of language learning for EFL students.

### **Virtual literacy**

Virtual literacy is an emergent process that refers to a new way of accessing and acquiring knowledge and information. It is implemented by means of users' access to online pages, online radio stations, virtual books, etc. In an overview of the new literacy studies (NLS), Barton (2001) suggests that “nearly all everyday activities in the contemporary world are mediated by literacy and that people act within a textually mediated social world (p. 83)”. Thus, it is evident that an increasing number of everyday activities are now conducted through screen-based media and therefore virtual literacy is an increasingly important skill.

Virtual literacy involves the utilisation of technological methodologies that can be successfully used in learning processes. Montoya and Villa (2006) suggested school radio as a resource in which it is not only the studio and the microphone; radio broadcasting



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involves dynamics between words, imagination, creation, music, and sound effects. These elements permit users to narrate stories, which lead to discussions about real life and experiences (Montoya & Villa, 2006, p. 33). Thus, virtual literacy is an innovative component that facilitates the building of students' knowledge to increase their literacy competence relying on technological support.

### **Methodology**

Lewin (1946) defined action research “as comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action and research leading to social action” (p. 202-203). As such, this is a qualitative collaborative action research informed by Gay & Airasian (2000) with the purpose of designing an online radio as a strategy to foster student involvement in an unconventional learning environment where the use of English is promoted for communication. Throughout the process, we observed, identified and helped participants to overcome some of the difficulties they had in terms of fluency. In addition, Gay & Airasian (2000) argued that, the first goal of traditional educational research is “to explain or help educational issues, questions, and processes” (p. 24). Hence, designing an English speaking radio station with interviews, forums, and other forms of interaction, would potentially promote student’s speaking abilities, thus enhancing EFL students’ fluency.

This action research study was implemented in order to determine the impact of an online radio program on EFL learners’ fluency. The participants were four teenagers, and two

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adults between 16 to 25 years of age; the sessions were divided in three groups of six students from beginner and intermediate levels. The students attended the Canadian College Institute which is a private school located in Bogotá, Colombia.

The project was implemented in ten one-hour sessions. Lessons started with a warm up; followed by the presentation of a topic where videos were used as main resource; then a brief explanation about the topic; and finally a discussion was guided by different questions addressed to the audience. In this way, the students had the chance to practice their spoken English by communicating their thoughts and ideas. This section became the most significant component of the broadcasts. The participants were actually socializing among themselves during most of the sessions. Finally, correction techniques such as self correction, peer correction and teacher correction were used to evaluate students' progress.

The materials used in the class were videos, images from the internet and books, among others, all of them related to interesting and attractive topics such as sports, food, places around the world, social networks, etc. Videos, and images were taken as a warm up and presentation for each session. For instance, in one session, the topic was places around the world, in which images of famous places such as the Eiffel tower were used to introduce a topic, so that the students could be familiarized with the subject. Different questions such as, “Have you ever been in Paris?” “Would you like to go?” “What do you think about the culture?” would be the principal means of getting the students engaged in conversation.

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Data collection was conducted using three instruments, the first being a multiple-choice survey about students' difficulties and problems when speaking. It also included questions about the radio program, in which students could choose their preference of topics, music, entertainment, etc, through their participation in the online radio program. The online radio program offers the students a space to practice their communicative skills in order to improve fluency. The program was designed with an educational purpose where students were able to come in and out and participate in each broadcast to interact with others and post their opinions through the use of Twitter and Facebook. The second instrument, audio-recorded interviews, aimed at inquiring about the potential students' fears of and difficulties in performing spoken activities (e.g. when speaking English in front of people). The third instrument, a video recording, was designed to monitor the behavior and reaction of students when answering questions and describing events spontaneously.

The audio interviews and video recordings were descriptively analyzed in order to identify different aspects of students' behavior and their fluency.

The results collected were organized, assembled and coded with paralinguistic elements such as (u) = utterance interruption by one of the speakers. ( ) = interrupt or be interrupted by laughter or an element out of context. (...) = Interruption of phonation by a gesture or a word. [ ] = Interruption by a grammatical error or perceived pauses between words. (?) = Interruption for words whose meaning is not understood. Besides, each sample of the broadcasts was organized as follows: (AR) = Audio recording, it represents the resource

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used; SP = Speaker 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7, it corresponds to each one of the participants, then the sample taken from the transcription, in some of the cases; IV = Interviewer 1, 2, 3 or 4, and finally the ID number of the broadcast, its duration and its recording date as included in the transcriptions, which are part of the communication that accompanies the verbal message, in order to better identify the facts that affect their oral fluency. Students' interventions and corrections are carried out by the broadcasters.

In addition, the qualitative data gathered from the survey is characterized by using procedures of observation, participation and careful recording of raw data in order to identify whether the students improved their fluency after the broadcasting sessions. Data reduction elements involve categorization and coding processes, with the purpose of identifying and differentiating units of meaning: SP = Speaker 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7, which corresponds to each student, then the date is included in the transcription organization.

### **Data Analysis and Findings**

The mastering of a foreign language starts in the learning and acquisition of abilities such as listening, reading, writing and speaking. Therefore, such speaking skill is tightly related to oral fluency, which is the ability to express thoughts and ideas, not only coherently but also spontaneously as the speaker is capable of producing and supporting a complete argument. Platt and Weber (1985) affirmed fluency “follows the features which give a speech the qualities of being natural and normal, including native-like use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, and use of interjections and interruptions” (p.



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108). In other words, fluency is the process of proficiency in speech production. In this research project, after the implementation of ten broadcasts the students' performance was analyzed based on the transcriptions of the data collected, the reader will be able to observe how the online radio program helped to identify that periods of silence, pausing, confidence, grammatical and linguistic structure affect the students' fluency at the moment of speaking but also, learners had the space to improve the difficulties where they interacted with others in each broadcast.

In order to analyze said information, we collected data through transcriptions, surveys, recordings, etc. By using such tools, we analyzed three main factors associated to fluency: unveiling break downs in communication, building confidence, and supporting linguistic development. These categories are accordingly described and analyzed, and examples for each one are included.

### **Unveiling Breakdowns in Communication**

Over the last years, fluency in a language has taken an important role in the acquisition of a foreign language and that is why fluency is the main target of this research paper. In this regard, the term 'pausing' appears as an issue that needs to be managed, in order to consciously produce proper spoken sentences, in which the purpose of the student acquiring the L2 is to be proficient during the speaking process. For this reason researchers analyzed



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the data regarding the use of pauses in each one of the broadcasting sessions and every utterance of students.

This section attempts to analyze the periods of silence and pausing during the interventions students had in each broadcasting session. In this category, three types of factors are presented: pause duration, frequency of pauses and syntactic location.

The pause phenomenon was measured throughout the dynamic participation each student had during the broadcasting activities, and also by studying students' performances. The first subfield to be analyzed is the longest duration, defined as the number of silent periods students had during the speaking process. The set of pauses generated in the audio transcriptions reveals the following:

(AR) SP1: I don't know [...] I think that [...] (Broadcast two/ 53:47minutes/ 07-10-2014)

In the examples above, the silent periods that appeared in each intervention affect the oral performance of students. This fact showed that, when an open question was asked, students spent some time processing their ideas and answering. However, the speaking process is a slow one and the silent period can appear when students cannot answer immediately because nothing comes to their mind or because they need to process their answer (in Spanish first, perhaps, and then translating it in their minds). In this case, students' performance is affected by silent periods. Therefore, if there is the possibility to

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avoid this awkward silence during oral interaction, communication will be more effective and successful.

Another factor to be considered during oral production is the frequency of pauses. This was measured by analyzing the active participation each student had during each of the broadcasting sessions. Follow up and analysis activities were conducted on each one of the broadcast sessions collected in order to identify how pausing affects fluency.

(AR) SP1: I think that (...) if you don't know use how you (...) use it you can (...) be problem with you (?) (Broadcast three/ 53:12 minutes/ 09-10-2014)

The repetitive breaks of each one of the broadcast pieces were analyzed and it was found that those slight breaks at the time of uttering a response affects oral fluency since such pauses generated misunderstandings in the listeners. That is certainly a problem since the speaker could not express his idea fully and listeners could not understand the message either. Another example of how pausing affects communication occurs when students do not know words or use them out of context when expressing ideas. Many explanations can be given to understand such a phenomenon, but one of the most common reasons is nervousness.

A third subfield to be analyzed is syntactic location. Below there is example of incorrect syntactic location:



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(AR) SP4: (u) When I'm talking on Facebook (...) Facebook ask me about (...) my University and I said no thank you and (?) Later (...) say your friends are playing in that university are you there? (...) (Broadcast three/ 53:12 minutes/ 09-10-2014)

In the example above, the students omitted punctuation pauses when they were talking. It is evident that they produced periods of silence and hesitation; that is one of the many reasons why oral interaction can be confusing. To avoid that, it is necessary that speakers allow short pauses to continue with another idea. A proficient development in oral fluency helps to understand syntactic location and communicate effectively.

### **Building Confidence**

Confidence is very important for students when learning a foreign language. A meaningful relationship is meant to be constructed and established among broadcasters (tutors) and students (active participants/learners). Besides, the online radio program offers to the students a comfortable environment in which they will be engaged as they are not interacting in a conventional class, or working with text books, as they usually do, they are actually experimenting new teaching/learning techniques; therefore, they will be in a comfortable environment where they can actually practice and improve fluency and acquire new vocabulary.

Confidence was measured through the active participation and answers given by students to the survey. EFL students' progress is observable because of several factors. In





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this category, three types of correction were used: self-correction, peer correction, and teacher correction. A survey was also implemented here in order to get students' impressions on how they felt during the broadcasting sessions. Hence, through students' active participation in the implementation of the online radio program, these categories address the building of confidence in EFL students when speaking.

In each one of the broadcasting sessions conducted by the Be More Radio team, the learners had the opportunity to be aware of the usefulness of the above mentioned correction techniques, which were also highlighted in the data analysis. Self-correction is the part of the process in which students are aware of their own grammar and pronunciation mistakes during oral production and, therefore, they were able to correct themselves without any help. This correction technique is evident in the following example:

(AR) SP2: I like fruits, frutts (?), I like vegetarian food, and I am a vegetarian (Broadcast five/ 44:33 minutes/ 15-10-2014)

By conducting each one of the broadcasting sessions, the improvements of each student were evident. For instance, in broadcasting session number five, a correction process had already been developed. Students are now practicing, so they are capable to go through self-correction, just as illustrated in the transcription above. The speaker was able to modify the word pronounced correcting fruits /fruits/ with the right pronunciation fruits /frut/.

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Peer correction occurs when classmates are aware of their peers' mistakes during oral production. Those students noticing the mistakes correct their partner(s) and, thus, generate collaborative learning. However, this correction technique was not used during the implementation of the online radio program; learners did not feel comfortable enough to correct other people, but themselves, so peer correction was not a useful strategy here.

Finally, teacher correction occurred when either the speaker or the audience did not notice the mistakes so the teacher had to intervene and provide corrections. For instance, let's take a look at the following:

(AR) SP5: Yes, Emmm [...] IV2: Tell me M: Casi todo IV3: Ok. Almost everything M:  
Almost everything (Broadcast five/ 44:33 minutes/ 15-10-2014)

In the examples, teacher correction took place. The teacher had to correct and guide students to the correct pronunciation, and even help them with translation. In examples two and three grammar correction was provided by the teacher. As a conclusion, students may draw upon different kinds of corrections they can take advantage of when performing orally.

Speaking is an important indicator when measuring students' proficiency. Therefore, a relevant element that needs to be addressed for students to communicate effectively is confidence. Confidence is a mind state in which a person feels sure of him/herself and is

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able at the time to speak and interact with others participating in a conversation. The following are some examples in which confidence played a very important role:

S1: Yes, I know I am not so good in English, but now I felt that I speak more now and I have confianza to express my opinions.

S3: In the beginning I felt so bad because I creia that I was so bad in my speaking, but then I was getting confidence and when I talked it was better, obviously I continue doing mistakes but I feel that I am better than before.

In the examples above taken from the surveys, it can be inferred that the implementation of the broadcasting sessions did actually help students to be more confident. Now, students speak much better, they feel more confident when speaking and sharing their ideas with others.

Confidence is the main factor an individual must count on to be fluent. Lack of confidence generates lack of fluency in students' oral performance. Implementing an online radio program is definitely a great tool to foster confidence in EFL students. As a consequence, Be More Radio can develop and build students' confidence every single broadcasting session. Students notice and confirm their own progress.

### **Supporting Linguistic Development**



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In terms of fluency, students have difficulties in their performance when acquiring structures and functions in the target language. Selinker, (1975) who defined interlanguage as “a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner’s attempted production of a TL [= Target Language] norm” (p. 214), highlights that students making mistakes during the learning process is normal but something has to be done to overcome them. In that regard, oral production is affected by the students’ tendency to mix both languages.

The adequate use of linguistic structures is relevant at the moment of speaking. This category allows students to recognize their knowledge of the language, its grammatical structure, and also to identify vocabulary categories they lack of. According to Chomsky (1964) “A mature speaker can produce a new sentence of his language on the appropriate occasion, and other speakers can understand it immediately, though it is equally new to them” (p. 7). In linguistic terms, the speaker utilised well-structured speech in order to express correct grammar and coherent ideas when speaking.

This category is divided in three relevant aspects: syntax, phonology, and morphology. These three aspects were analyzed in relation to the oral fluency at the time of speaking in which the linguistic development is addressed to analyze students’ performance, in order to recognize their lack of vocabulary and improper grammar usage while speaking, as well as identifying the important role of the online radio program as a tool to improve students’ fluency.

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As mentioned before, implementing an online radio program as a pedagogical resource to improve students' fluency also serves the purpose of exposing difficulties faced by students when speaking. For instance, when students speak in the target language, they tend to mix both their mother tongue and the foreign language they are acquiring. In the acquisition of a foreign language, the predominance of the first language creates a complex syntactic unit, in which the speaking process occurs not only attempting to produce words in certain order, but also giving them coherence. When speakers go through a silent period, it means they are processing the information they want to express. The process is commonly the same: first, information goes through the mother tongue and then it is translated into the target language, mixing both languages as it happened in following examples:

(AR) SP1: When I used to eat met I like chicken, Emm Fish never like Emm and met so so, emm chicken it's [...] (Broadcast five/ 44:33 minutes/ 15-10-2014)

We analyzed the previous example and we identify that students can actually produce sentences other people can understand. However, their oral production is affected by short periods of time since learners need to analyze the grammatical structure of their own sentences prior to the actual utterance. As a result, their syntactic fluency is altered with pauses or words that are grammatically or pragmatically wrong. In fact, the appropriate use of adjectives, verbs and complements within sentences, allow students to create complex statements without alterations. Also, each broadcasting session on Be More Radio was an

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opportunity for participants to improve phonetics, listening and speaking by participating and interacting. The online radio initiative allowed students to monitor and correct themselves since they could listen to each broadcast in and identify their mistakes, as well as those of others, thus helping to improve fluency in speech. According to Guitart (2004) "Naturally, there are mistakes as to which mental phonology of a second language have not been fully acquired; therefore, elements and principles of this cannot be used and instead make use elements and principles of the mother tongue" (p. 254). The following examples are provided to analyze pronunciation:

(AR) SP1: yeah, yeahfreshforexample a (?) jacket, (...) no cómo es que se dice (?)(. . . )  
werr (Broadcast two/ 53:47 minutes/ 07-10-2014)

The example above show that students' performance was affected by their lack of vocabulary, hesitation, pronunciation mistakes or even translation processes when the learner did not know the correct word. As a consequence, students did not have an appropriate oral production and they used the mother language, which causes confusion at the moment of expressing their ideas orally.

Morphology refers to the system dealing with the formation of words and their internal structure in terms of morphemes, parts of speech and, even, intonation. There are many examples of lingua lapses that reveal that speakers of a language have internalized the rules of morphology knowledge, as these come to light in speech errors through the creation and production of sentences with compound words that are not morphologically organized. The

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use and understanding of these rules is present in expressions where grammar rules have been incorrectly used. Thus, the words in a sentence need to be said in the right position so that meaning is clear. Let's focus on the following examples of incorrect sentences:

(AR) SP2: The love it's different with the person or animals or things it's different with a person Emm we love the family and love a [girrl or wumen] IV1: (Girl) (Broadcast four/ 53:12 minutes/ 15-10-2014)

In the sample above, students did not use the right words during their performance as, we believe, they were not aware of the vocabulary and the correct use of morphemes which can definitely alter the pronunciation and meaning of a word. In this sense, inappropriate pronunciation can change the meaning of a word and the incorrect use of morphemes can affect students' fluency. However, in some cases, it is possible that listeners understand speakers' ideas, even if the chosen words, morphemes or pronunciation are incorrect, because they also speak the mother tongue of the speakers.

To conclude, it is key to know what factor is affecting one's oral fluency. As mentioned, there are several strategies and environments the students can be exposed to so that they develop their fluency and, as a result, improve their speaking skills. This chapter presented the most important factors to be considered and analyzed to become fluent. Speed rate was the first factor introduced, with pauses being a central issue. Then, linguistic competence, which plays an important role in data analysis processes. Both features were illustrated through a real case transcription obtained from the broadcasting



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sessions recorded during the Be More Radio activities. There is a long way to achieve fluency but it is really important to know how to measure mistakes, identify errors and do something about it. This paper offers readers information on the most common factors affecting fluency and how to tackle them: speed rate, syntax, morphology and phonology.

### **Implications for Further Research**

The project is seen through a large area of research mainly in the three categories in which the thesis project was focused, Unveiling Breakdowns in Communication, Building Confidence and Supporting Linguistic Development. Furthermore, the project uses active and meaningful learning and cooperative learning, as well as examining the role of metacognition in the speaker, in order to better understand, and thus develop, the process of verbal communication, oral production and fluency in EFL learners.





## **Conclusions**

Through the categories considered in the research project, it is clear that the pauses and silent periods that occurred in the students' speech are a factor which needs to be addressed in order to improve their oral production and fluency.

In terms of the categories related to the building of confidence and the aiding of linguistic development, the use of an online radio proved helpful in enhancing the development of the students' fluency, as it offered a positive and comfortable environment for them to practice their speaking skills, and they had the opportunity to reflect upon their own fluency development by means of the feedback provided.

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