

LANGUAGE INTERACTION THROUGH THE INSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL LEARNING
STRATEGIES IN AN EFL GROUP OF TENTH GRADERS AT THE I.E. LA DESPENSA,
SOACHA, COLOMBIA.

Thesis project

by

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DEDICATORY

I wish to dedicate this research project to the most important people in my life: my family. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, Mercedes Antonio and José Ballén whose words inspired me to keep going and whose attitude encouraged me to go further and beyond of what I was capable of. Also, to my brother John Ballén who never left my side throughout this process.

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1. Contextualization.

The school in which the current study took place is the I.E. La Despensa, a public institution located in Soacha, Cundinamarca. This project was carried out with seventy-six students between the ages of ~~offrom_ from~~ fourteen (15) and ~~to~~ nineteen (19) ~~years old~~. The majority of the population were embodied by 37 female students (54%), whereas there were 32 male learners (46%) who participated in the study. In regards to academic issues, the tenth graders at the I.E. la Despensa had two English classes per week, with an average of four academic hours a week (each hour corresponds to one hour and fifty minutes). ~~Because the school is a public institution, the syllabus is prescribed;~~ while it is true that teachers can make decisions in regards to the activities and procedures to be applied, the contents and topics should be followed as suggested in the syllabus.

Likewise, the syllabus conceives interaction as a way of mutual understanding and collaborative learning. On one hand, the school advocates the development of communicative strategies that allow students to express their own ideas and opinions, by means of listening carefully to their peers and using paralinguistic features (such as gestures, tone of voice, etc.). In this vein, the I.E. La Despensa school aims to foster the development of the communicative competence by creating interactive spaces so that students can be able to use the foreign language both in class and outside the school (Institución educativa la Despensa, 2017).

On the other hand, the syllabus of the I.E. La Despensa school firmly encourages self-assessment and co-assessment moments as an inherent part of their teaching practices. According to the syllabus, the self-assessment moment is an invitation for the students to reflect upon their own learning strategies, so that they could take a more active role over they own learning process by monitoring their own use of the learning strategies (Institución educativa la Despensa, 2017). Furthermore, the school highlights the importance of allowing students to co-evaluate their performance, because it fosters collaborative learning; that is, according to the syllabus, the exchange of meaning between students cannot be limited to sharing information, but it should go

beyond: the co-evaluation should be an opportunity for students to learn among themselves and thus, take agency over their own learning processes (Institución educativa la Despensa, 2017).

Evidently, the perspective that the school has towards interaction goes in line with the current study, since this latter also views interaction as way of mutual understanding and collaborative work. In fact, the social strategies implemented in this study were meant to provide students from the current context, spaces to reflect upon their learning processes (considering both their own performance and their peers' efficiency as well) and act on them according to the teachers' feedback.

Furthermore, one of the main reasons to select this population is because of the students' proficiency level. Firstly, according to the *Estándares básicos de competencias en lenguas extranjeras: inglés* (MEN, 2006), tenth graders in Colombia, have a B1 level, and are able to engage in spontaneous conversations in the foreign language. However, not in all cases, students achieve this proficiency level, and therefore, the instruction of social strategies can help learners use English as much as possible at school. Therefore, the instruction of social strategies seems to be appropriate because students can take advantage of this approach regardless of their English proficiency level.

Furthermore, the dynamics of social interaction that emerge at the I.E. La Despensa are determined by the number of students that embody each classroom; that is, on average, each classroom is comprised by 35 or 40 students. Because of this, teachers should ensure that groupwork takes place in class, since it is the most practical way in which learners can interact with one another.

Otherwise, pair work can take place as well, however, it can be troublesome for the teacher to monitor and give feedback to each couple; not to mention that the length of time of each class, can be an obstacle to carry out tasks that involve solving problems in pairs.

In regards to the facilities, the school has plenty of equipment, which allow the teachers to develop their lesson in the most appropriate manner ~~as~~ possible. For instance, each classroom is equipped

with a video-beam, speakers and a tower computer, which allows the English teacher to carry out listening lessons.

The sampling criteria that the current study followed is the *criterion sampling*, since all the participants met a predetermined criterion, which is the lack of interactivity and usage of social strategies for solving collaborative problems (Patton, 1990).

1.1. Research Statement

The idea to start researching about social strategies emerged from my personal interest of inquiring and describing the role that the instruction of social strategies (following a pedagogical implementation) plays on the teacher-student and student-student interaction that emerge depending on the pedagogical scenarios that are proposed as a part of certain type of instruction. Thus, this study is focused on just one set of learning strategies (social strategies) as opposed to most studies in the field that strive for the application of multiple learning strategies.

In order to know in detail to what extent students used the social strategies and thus, define my research problem in an accurate way, I implemented a needs analysis. Some of the items of the questionnaire were taken and modified from the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), specifically the items related to the social strategies (that is, asking questions, cooperating and empathizing with others (Oxford, 2006). Other questions such as groupwork and work outside class were included so as to know the extent to which students preferred to interact with one another, and the work they devoted outside class on their own.

Thus, the implementation of the needs analysis shed light on the way students were employing the social strategies, such as asking questions (such as verification and clarification), cooperating with others and understanding the target's language culture, prior the pedagogical implementation. That is, as a result of the implementation of the needs analysis, I was able to identify that:

- Students were not accustomed to be trained in the use of the social strategies and therefore, were not conscious about its use, leading them to avoid using English to communicate with their peers inside class in a regular basis. It entails that learners needed to adopt habits so that they could communicate effectively in class using the foreign language.
- Learners required more strategies in order to develop work outside class and therefore, were looking for ways to expand their knowledge in regards to the vocabulary, the grammar and the topics seen in class.
- Learners needed to develop strategies to cooperate and communicate effectively with their peers, since most of the students were accustomed to interact with their teacher (by clarifying the topic of the lesson or by asking questions related to unknown vocabulary) rather than looking for ways to efficiently interact and cooperate with their classmates.
- Students required a more learner-centered methodology from which they could be autonomous in regards to asking questions to their peers to know the meaning of unknown vocabulary. That is, learners expressed that they were more likely to use the expressions with the teacher or to look at the unknown words on the dictionary, rather than asking questions to their peers.
- ~~Students d~~Students demanded some guidance on the way they could ask questions, specifically they needed to ask for clarification and verification in a more appropriate way. While it is true that learners knew some of the expressions for clarification and verification, few of the population expressed that they were not able to use these expressions in class.
- ~~That is why, during the pedagogical implementation, s~~Students needed to be~~students were~~ provided with plenty of interactive spaces so that they could use ~~those the~~ expressions they previously knew.
- ~~Lacked~~Students lacked the appropriate strategies for asking questions when they did not understand an instruction or when they did not know the meaning of a word. Thus, students

needed to create habits in order to speak in English as much as possible, either with their teacher or with their classmates.

- They were willing to participate and interact in the classroom throughout ~~groupwork~~group ~~and pair work~~and work in pairs.

Moreover, because the current study aims to address the role that social strategy instruction plays on the way in which students at the I.E. La Despensa interact with their peers and teacher, throughout an Action Research (AR) design, the development of a pedagogical implementation was a must. Therefore, based on the results of the Needs Analysis and based on the topics that learners studied during the first period of the school year 2017 (according to the curriculum of the school as well), the didactic unit was developed, considering the results that were gathered from the questionnaire initially implemented (Institución educativa la Despensa, 2017).

Therefore, considering the context, conditions and the data ~~gathered~~gather from the Needs Analysis, this research project aims to address those elements throughout the instruction of social strategies, which will put into evidence the students' interaction that are liable to be identified in an EFL ~~groups~~ of learners. In order to effectively address this research problem, the following research questions and objectives were established:

1.2. Research Questions

- What is the role that the instruction of social strategies plays in the way in which an EFL group of tenth graders at I.E. La Despensa School interact with their teacher and classmates?
- What are the factors that influence the students' preference towards the use of social strategies in an EFL group of tenth graders at I.E. La Despensa School?

1.3. Research Objectives

- To describe how the student-student and teacher-student interaction emerge in an EFL group of tenth graders at I.E. La Despensa School under the implementation of social strategies.
- To identify the factors that influence the students' preference towards the use of social strategies by an EFL group of tenth graders at I.E. La Despensa School.

1.4. Justification.

Interaction is a social act as well as language learning; thus, the social dimension of language cannot be overlooked. Generally speaking, in an EFL setting such as Colombia, students are unaware of using social strategies in classroom, in contrast to the ESL environments (Clouston, 1997), because as Habte (2010) contends, EFL contexts are not as cultural and social enriching as the ESL contexts. Similarly, as the data gathered from the needs analysis showed, learners are less likely to be aware of the use of learning strategies in classroom, since they have not been trained to effectively use the learning strategies (specifically, the social strategies).

While it is true that learners are willing to work collaboratively in class, students need to develop strategies that allow them to effectively interact with their classmates and teachers, whilst using the target language as much as possible.

Therefore, some of the reasons that justify carrying out this research project, which on one hand, are concerned with providing students at the I.E. La Despensa with social strategies in order to facilitate the interaction that occurs with their peers and teachers, and hence, help learners to communicate effectively in the target language. On the other hand, it also follows the Zone of Proximal Development (ZDP) theory, which claims that individuals are able to be engaged in solving problem when they are guided by an adult or a more skilled peer (Vygostky, 1978), all of which contributes to the development of critical thinking and social negotiation.

Likewise, this study will bolster the EFL/ESL literature of language learning strategies, by adding a type of research that is concerned in studying a subset of strategies (which are the social strategies), rather than investigating about the whole spectrum, this, in contrast to the majority of studies found, which focuses on examine both the direct and indirect strategies proposed by Oxford (1990). In this vein, this study seeks to strengthen the theoretical framework in regards to the instruction of Language Learning Strategies, since most of the studies carried out with respect to this topic, has focused on the whole spectrum of LLS rather than on a specific set of strategies. Authors such as Parra (2010) and Habte (2000) focused on the impact that the set of “socio-affective strategies” had on the learning processes of students. Nevertheless, Parra (2010) has been one of the main authors who has correlated the impact of instructing the Social Learning Strategies and the students’ expectations.

There is also a well-grounded theoretical support that advocates the importance and benefits of instructing the social strategies as a way of easing interaction with their peers and teacher.

According to Gómez (2010), the more students are allowed to interact with one another, the more successful is their foreign language development and acquisition. In this regard, this author argues that teachers influence the way in which both, educators and learners interact, implying that in order to provide interactive spaces, teachers should develop and design communicative activities for fostering reciprocal exchanges of meaning (Gómez, 2010).

Certainly, the instruction of social strategies is a key element to ensure that interaction is taken place in classroom. As Parra (2010) contends, the use of social strategies (asking questions, cooperating and empathizing with others) is crucial in fostering language interaction, which at the same time, interaction among students and teacher, contributes to critical thinking and supportive interaction (Espitia, 2013).

Furthermore, it is expected that the pedagogical implementation could tackle with the research statement initially discussed. It is worth remembering and highlighting that learners at the I.E. La Despensa, fail to use English, because they are not used to do so, and therefore, need

strategies for interacting with one another throughout the implementation of exercises that allow them to be engaged in communicative activities (that is, interactive spaces). After all, throughout the needs analysis, students expressed that they were willing to interact and communicate with their peers and additionally, they were able to identify a couple of expressions for asking for clarification. Even if they do not use them, student can resort to their previous knowledge in order to use the strategy and therefore grasp meaningful input. In short, the importance and benefits of carrying out a study based on an Action Research (AR) in the current population is that it deepens and strengthens the way students interact using the target language.

Likewise, Gomez (2010) advocates the development of interactive activities throughout the explanation of a set of strategies that allow students to successfully broaden their communicative competence in the foreign language. According to this author, the more learners interact, the more successful their target language development will be. Jung & Jimenez (2011) also supports this claim by justifying that specific and well-developed classroom activities can create an enriching environment for learners to develop learning strategies. In this regard, Jung & Jimenez (2011) says that “language classrooms are a social arena in which the second language strategies emerge and develop”.

In regards to my professional development and growth, this study aims to be an opportunity for me as learner, since I will be able to obtain experience on teaching social strategies to a population that is quite different to the one I used to teach in a regular basis.

2. Theoretical framework.

This research study aims to describe the impact that the instruction of social strategies has on the way in which an EFL group of tenth graders at the I.E. La Despensa School interact with their classmates and their teacher. Therefore, the construct of *social strategies* is one of the main construct to be explored in this chapter. Language Learning Strategies (LLS) have been an issue of research for over the last four decades in the field of language teaching and learning. There is a great deal of studies about the role that LLS plays on the overall performance of students and how they are able to get strategies for becoming more autonomous learners, however, there are fewer studies whose concern have been on a single strategy.

For instance, Parra (2010) conducted an action research in a Colombian private institution in order to find out if whether explicit instruction of socio affective language learning strategies (SLLS) had an impact over students' expectations. He concluded that SLLS provided students with tools for "learning to learn", leading learners to be aware of the nature of language learning. It is worth highlighting that this author put emphasis on consciously instructing the SLLS by implementing a strategy-based instruction on those socio-affective strategies based on activities that cope with the same nature as the strategies to be studied. Similar to the current study, the main concern is to specifically focus on a specific LLS, throughout an action research design.

Likewise, Abad & Alzate (2016), in a study conducted in a Colombian private university, aimed to measure the impact that strategy instruction had on the preparation of English oral exams. They concluded, throughout the use of questionnaires, oral rubrics (for measuring the learners' oral competence) and explicit strategy instruction, that LLS fostered autonomy and agency on students, and enhanced the learners' oral performance. This study, even though is not focused on the Social Strategies exclusively, shed light into some instruments worth considering. As with the current study, a pre-and post-questionnaire (diagnostic and formative assessment) was implemented, so as

to determine the use of Language Learning Strategies. This of course, gave validity and reliability to the questionnaires created, and the way in which they should have been implemented.

In regards to the components of interaction, a study conducted by Foster & Snyder (2005) concluded that while it is true that negotiation of meaning is essential for language acquisition, the number of incidences of the negotiation strategies (asking for clarification, comprehension or confirmation) for this analysis, was very low. And from a qualitative analysis, Foster & Snyder (2005) were not able to find any signs of meaning negotiation. On one hand, this paper shed light, from a theoretical perspective, on the actual negotiation strategies that students employ for repairing the interactional exchange, so as to distinguish what types of negotiations emerged during the data coding stage as a way of using the strategy *asking questions*. And second, it gave the ongoing study some ideas on how to code the data found on each class video-recorded.

2.1. Language Learning Strategies:

According to Oxford (2006), Language Learning Strategies (LLS) are defined as means or actions for making learning easier, faster, more self-directed, more enjoyable, and more transferrable to new situations. Furthermore, this author also defines LLS as specific actions, behaviors, steps and techniques that help students tackle with the different language tasks at hand (Oxford, 2003).

Richards & Platt (1992) define learning strategies as behaviors and thoughts used by the learners during their learning processes. The most remarkable and suitable definition that is in line with the ongoing study, is the one that presented Oxford (2006). On one hand, the beliefs and assumptions towards the use of strategies should not be limited to steps or behaviors that help learners achieve a learning goal, but these strategies should make learning easier, more enjoyable and transferrable to the new situations that eventually, students will have to deal with. On the other hand, the instruction of learning strategies should be meant to help students to cope with a certain task at hand as effectively as possible, instead of providing learners with a list of steps for them to follow, without even knowing what strategy they can resort in more difficult situations.

2.2. Social strategies.

Language learning is only achieved when interacting with others. It involves other people and as Oxford (2006) claims, appropriate social strategies play a key role on allowing learners to communicate effectively with others. There are several studies that support this tenet and the idea of introducing social strategies in everyday classroom. For instance, Clouston (1997) advocates the instruction of social strategies, because they facilitate interaction. Habte (2000) also argues that when teachers put emphasis on social strategies, learners are more likely to be more effective in terms of learning. In a study conducted by Orrego & Díaz (2010), it was concluded that the use of social strategies played a key role on fostering interaction, by allowing students to be more autonomous over their own interactive “practices”. Considering that the use of social strategies would ensure and facilitate interaction among students, including the whole spectrum of social strategies would allow the ongoing study to be more valid and solid in terms of research and pedagogical design, since the results to be gathered will explore in detail, the extent in which the strategy choice influenced the way in which students interacted with one another.

And as any other set of strategies, *social strategies* are comprised by other sub-strategies, which can be presented as follows:

2.2.1. Asking for clarification.

Lie (2008) argues that the most common action that a speaker can perform in order to negotiate and exchange meaning (that is, when interacting) is asking for clarification. As stated in previous lines, when Joan Rubin published his research work “What the Good Language Learner Can Teach Us” it was demonstrated that asking for clarification and verification is one of the most important strategies that learners should use in order to learn a language (Cohen & Macaro, 2007). Oxford (2006) claims that asking for clarification is a useful strategy since it helps learners negotiate meaning whilst they are provided with plenty of “input” in the target language throughout the conversations they are constantly asked to engage in, either with their teachers or peers. Generally

speaking, activities that require from students to practice a receptive skill (such as reading or listening) combined with speaking and interactive exercises, can lead students to use the expressions for asking questions such as jigsaw readings or jigsaw listening (Oxford, 2006). These activities were implemented in some lessons and students were elicited the expressions throughout the pedagogical implementation. Some of these conversational questions instructed in the implementation are:

- Can you repeat that, please?
- Please, speak more slowly.
- I don't understand.
- Did you say _____?
- What does _____ mean?

These expressions are also known as *negotiation strategies*. Foster (2005) contends that in order for students to engage in problem solving, they should do so collaboratively through the employment of certain negotiation strategies (**negotiation of meaning**) such as asking for clarification (*Do you mean?*), verification (*Did you say that?*) or comprehension (*I don't understand*), that are embedded in the nature of the dynamics of social interaction (Baleghlzadeh, 2010). A very simple taxonomy of such strategies established by Foster (2005) can be depicted as follows:

- **Comprehension checks:** refers to any utterance that lets the speaker know that the information has already been understood.
- **Confirmation check:** alludes to any expression employed to verify that the utterance has been understood or correctly heard by the listener.
- **Clarification request:** these are expressions that are meant to obtain a clarification from the speakers' preceding utterance.

Krashen (quoted by Foster, 2005) claims that language is only learned throughout a comprehensible input, which is achieved when the learners solve a language problem that is higher than their own

level (+1); and since learning is socially constructed through face to face interaction, both output and input are the key elements that comprise peer interaction: a key notion that is concerned by the role that interaction plays in language development (Gómez, 2010).

2.2.2. Cooperating with others.

As stated by Oxford (2006) cooperating with others refers to the effort that students do, in order to work collaboratively on the development of an activity or the achievement of a common goal. According to this author, games or simulations can help students develop their ability to cooperate with others, by using a wide variety of linguistic skills. As suggested by Oxford (2006) some of the most enriching activities to be applied in the study, are the jigsaw readings and jigsaw listening so as to encourage students to use the strategy and therefore, cooperate with their peers.

2.2.3. Empathizing with others.

Following the ideas provided by Oxford (2006), the strategy “*empathizing with others*” has to do with the way in which students show empathy towards the individuals and towards the target language culture. For the sake of the current study, the construct was divided taking into account two dimensions: the extent in which learners listen to their peers and the extent in which students pay attention to their classmates’ gestures and tone of voice. This main strategy is divided into two secondary strategies: *becoming aware of others’ thoughts and feelings* and *developing cultural understanding*.

2.2.3.1. Becoming aware of others’ thoughts and feelings.

By asking students to become aware of the thoughts and feelings of the people they encounter, they will be more likely to understand in a better way what is conveyed in terms of meaning (Oxford, 2006). Even silence can communicate emotions and feelings. Hence, in order to help learners, become aware and therefore, empathize with others, students should be encouraged of becoming

aware of the what is left unsaid, the gestures and tone of voice people use to communicate, etc. (Oxford, 2006). In order to measure this aspect, is important to train students on how to pay attention to their peers, by taking heart of their gestures, tone of voice and even the silence that may exist in the conversation. On the other hand, learners should be taught to listen carefully to what their classmates are trying to convey.

2.2.3.2. Developing cultural understanding.

According to Oxford (2006), by allowing students to understand the background knowledge of the L2 culture, learners will be more likely to grasp the gist or specific ideas of what is heard or read. In order to teach this strategy, on one hand, Oxford (2006) suggests debates and discussions in regards to certain cultural aspects of the foreign language by doing exercises of contrasting and comparing the learners' native culture and the target culture. Furthermore, Oxford (2006) advocates the importance of asking students to work outside classroom by encouraging them to look for different resources about the target language, such as listening to the target language songs, watching films in the target language, etc. (Oxford, 2006).

2.3. Language Interaction.

Language interaction is a collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people, resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other (Brown, 2007). In other words, interaction is the heart of communication (Brown, 2007). For Yule (1998), every conversation or collaborative exchange implies a social interaction, which is constructed beforehand by the language users.

Language Interaction, as a pedagogical construct, has its roots on the assumptions of Vygotsky, who argued that language acquisition should be grounded on the dynamics of interaction that occur among the language users inside the classroom (Medina, 2009; Espitia; 2013, Pineda, 2010; Thapa & Lin, n.d.). Acknowledging that interaction plays an essential role on the students' learning

process, is to recognize that learners should be allowed to develop autonomous skills in regards to interaction and exchanges of meaning (Gómez, 2010).

According to Pica (1994), negotiation is a synonym of communication that goes beyond the mere exchange of utterances and chunks of words. Negotiation entails the use of those negotiation strategies (or *interactional modifications*) in order to identify the eventual communication breakdowns, and to repair them through those checks or request (Pica, 1994). These negotiation strategies (or interactional modifications) are suitable for the cognitive processes of the L2 learner; after all, negotiation as a social process is related to the cognitive and social processes of a foreign language learning (Pica, 1994). By virtue of the employment of such strategies, teachers should ensure that there are suitable interactive spaces for students to use these negotiation techniques.

2.3.1. Zone of Proximal Development.

According to Vygotsky (1978), the actual cognitive development to solve problems is determined by the help of an adult or in collaboration with a more skilled peer. Herazo (2010), following the Vygotskian theory, argues that language learning does not take place in isolation, but rather, when it is immersed in an interactional context. Likewise, when mental functioning is framed within an interactional context, it contributes to critical thinking and effective language learning (Espitia, 2013). This construct underpins the study's beliefs about the way in which students learn a language, from the researcher perspective. It also reflects the teacher's assumptions towards the language and the way in which students acquire it.

2.3.2. Input hypothesis.

This construct is what is commonly known in language teaching as the *Input Hypothesis*. According to Krashen (1985) argues that in order to acquire a second language, the learner should be exposed to a comprehensible input; this input can be achieved when the learners' affective filter is down. In other words, language is acquired when the student feels comfortable with the people to whom he

or she is interacting with. That affective filter goes down, because the student does not feel any negative emotion and therefore, can interact and communicate effectively with the person he or she is speaking with. According to Foster (2005) given the appropriate circumstances (that is, when the learner is able to interact with other people because he does not feel that negative emotions), the student can achieve that input, leading to effectively acquire the foreign language he is striving to learn.

3. Design

3.1. Type of study.

The ongoing study does not aim to neither deny, nor confirm a hypothesis. It intends to understand the role that the instruction of social strategies plays in the way in which the participants of study, framed within an educative context, interact with one another. One of the reasons for conducting this research towards an *Action Research Design*, is because this research framework provides the teacher researcher with control over their own teaching processes (in fact, the educator is a key element for curriculum renewal and evaluation) by solving a specific problem within certain community (Griffe, 2012). In regards to the study of social strategies, some authors such as Abad & Alzate (2015) and Parra (2010) advocate the importance of using Action Research Design for instructing language learning strategies, because it allows the researchers not only to understand issues that affect their teaching practices, but also to reflect on the relevance of improving the students' learning processes on their own school, throughout the implementation of appropriate learning strategies that would help students to tackle the best way possible the language problems in which learners are asked to deal with (-Parra, 2010).

Cohen & Macaro (2007) also support the benefits of carrying out Action Research for the sake of researching about social strategies. According to these authors, when it comes to the development of a strategy-based lesson, the way in which the AR is carried out should be considered, since it will allow the teacher researcher to reflect on the most effective strategies to effectively address a language problem. According to Griffie (2012), there is no consensus in action research in regards to the number and the order of steps that should be followed. While it is true that AR should be a reflexive and suggestive research, rather than a fixed and prescriptive one (Griffie, 2012), authors such as Burns (2010) and Ferrance (2000) claim that there should be baseline structure to the cycle, or at least, some steps that should be followed in

order to obtain more systematic results. Therefore, the ongoing study followed the Action Research steps suggested by Burns (2010) to develop the research design:

3.1.1. Stage 1: Planning.

As a first step of the research process, the problem was identified throughout the implementation of a needs analysis at the I.E. La Despensa. This questionnaire gave the current study insightful data about the use they gave to the social strategies prior the implementation, and also, it was possible understand the participants' expectations and preferences towards groupwork. Griffiee (2012) calls this first general consideration the *initial awareness*, in which the researcher becomes aware of the puzzle and includes it in his or her classroom teaching.

3.1.2. Stage 2: Action.

The second stage according to Burns (2010) is taking a deliberate intervention within the teaching situation, once the plan has carefully been considered. On this token, the plan was devised according to the results gathered from the needs analysis. Based on the data collected, a plan was created which was materialized through a didactic unit (see appendix 4), whose purpose was to include as a core element, the social strategies, and as secondary means, interactive activities so that students could have the possibility to be engaged in the key element of the research design. In this vein, the activities thoughtfully and carefully planned are related to the plan that took action by means of the needs analysis and the diagnostic lesson.

3.1.3. Stage 3: Observation.

To this point, the plan was carried out and it was possible to get a baseline data (Griffiee; 2012) in regards to the students' preferences and use of the strategy prior the implementation. According to Burns (2010) the observation stage, is a data collection

phase, whose main purpose is recording and collecting information about what is happening within the context. Ferrance (2000) calls this stage the “gathering data” stage, in which the researcher gathers from multiple sources of data, the circumstances that are occurring in the classroom. After devising and implementing the plan, the researcher constantly recorded what was happening in class during the last activity (that is, the task), by describing every single event that were related to the activities implemented, the way students employed the social strategies, the role of the teacher and the students’ role, etc. In order to do so the participants’ opinions and feelings towards the tasks implemented and their assessments towards their own use of the strategies were registered, throughout some self-assessment formats in which learners were supposed to rate the extent in which they used the strategy that was implemented during the lesson. After all, Chamot et al. (1999) and Herrel (2004) argue that learning strategies are most of the time self-related, this means that in order to measure the use of the strategies, the teacher must provide learners with co-evaluation and self-assessment formats, in order to gather the data in regards to their opinions, in the most appropriate way.

3.1.4. Stage 4: Reflection.

Authors such as Ferrance (2000), Griffiee (2012) and Burns (2010) agree that at this point, the information gathered from the implementation, should be analyzed, evaluated and reflected on. In this stage, the researcher is expected to give a description of what happened, based on the data collected in previous stages, and based on the interpretation of the results, the researcher should “make sense” of what happened (Burns; 2010), by reporting the results (Griffiee; 2012) or by devising another action plan in order to make changes to the AR cycle, if the researcher wishes to do so. Therefore, based on the self-assessment formats, the questionnaires implemented at the beginning and at the end of the

implementation and the proficiency test which students were asked to complete on the final lesson, the results of the findings were presented on the final chapter of the current study.

3.2. Data collection instruments and techniques

- **Video Recordings:** In order to justify and support the findings on the questionnaires, it was essential to use the video-recordings during the task and the strategy instruction. Moreover, they attempted to collect evidence on the interaction that emerged when students were engaged in the final activity, as well as to gather evidence on the way students were using the social strategies. The video-recording was taken during the learning strategy explanation and during the task. Additionally, since my role of teacher-researcher is to gather information whilst the class is being conducted, I considered suitable the use of video recordings for reflecting upon my own classes and additionally, registering the way in which students interacted with their classmates and their teachers (see appendix 6). But most importantly, this instrument allowed me to notice whether students were using the strategies in class whilst they interacted with their classmates and teacher. In this regard, Griffe (2012) argues that the use of video recording in class is appropriate for gathering data, since it reflects the answers initially established in the problem statement.
- **Learning strategies self-assessment and co-evaluation formats:** another useful instrument employed during the implementation, were the self-assessment and co-evaluation formats for the learning strategies. Chamot et al. (1999) and Herrel (2004) claim that, since learning strategies are self-related, students are the ones who consciously evaluate their own use of the strategy. Besides, measuring the use of the learning strategies may be even a daunting work for the researcher (Chamot et al., 1999). Thus, in order to properly evaluate the learners' use of the strategies, the educator should give the students the opportunity to self-assess themselves, and occasionally, evaluate their partners; this can be done throughout techniques such as checklists, class discussions, interviews,

questionnaires and self-evaluation formats (Chamot et al., 1999). For the current implementation, a self-assessment format was used so as to allow students to evaluate themselves (see appendix 3), following the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), and the participants were given at the end of the implementation, a questionnaire in which they expressed whether the strategies have been difficult or easy for them (see appendix 4).

- **Proficiency language test:** also referred to as “language survey” (Burns, 2010), the main purpose of the test was to know the students’ English proficiency level, in order to collect evidence on the students’ strategy selection, since this factor (learners’ knowledge about the language) played a key role on the strategy use. This instrument was applied at the end of the pedagogical implementation (see appendix 5). In contrast to other types of tests found on the literature, the test implemented focused on previous topics seen in class as a reading comprehension exercise. Therefore, the test was embodied by ten comprehension-questions, from which students were supposed to answer four (4) true-false questions, three (3) multiple choice questions and three (3) open-ended questions. Evidently, the test was meant to be scaffolded according to the students’ level. Indeed, the main purpose of this instrument is to gather information about the learners’ level in the foreign language and thus, match the use of the social strategies they have been working so far and the knowledge they could grasp about the language during the implementation.

3.3. Approach.

As Brown (2007) argues, interaction is the heart of communication. Considering this perspective, it is noticeable that language is seen as a vehicle for creating social transactions and boundaries (Richards & Rodgers, 1982), in which the main assumption that underpins this mindset, lies on the Vygotskian theory that contends that cognitive processes and mental functioning are inherent of interactional contexts (Espitia, 2013), throughout the Zone of

Proximal Development (ZDP) where learners are more capable of doing exercises that require from them cognitive load, when they are guided by an adult or when they are able to solve a problem in collaboration with a more skilled peer (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). That is, according to Vygotsky, learning does not take place in isolation, but rather, learning takes place when it is immersed in an interactional context. By the same token, Krashen (1985) argues that in order to acquire a second language, the learner should be exposed to a comprehensible input; this input can be achieved when the learners' affective filter is down. As mentioned before, Foster (2005) contends, given the appropriate circumstances, language acquisition can take place because learners are interacting their more skilled peers. To sum up, the interactionist view of language and learning, is the most suitable for both, the current study and the pedagogical implementation that was carried out during the study.

Period	Planned activities
Prior to study	-Looking for the context in order to apply the implementation. -Writing and developing the Needs Analysis. -Adjusting the theoretical framework. -Designing the first lesson plan.
Stage 1 (March 21 st , 2017).	-Implementing the Needs Analysis. -Writing the research statement and justification based on the data gathered in the Needs Analysis. -Developing the following lesson plans. -Collecting data using the self-assessment and co-evaluation formats (from the self-assessment strategies).
Stage 2 (March 23 rd – March 30 th , 2017). • Lesson 2: March 23rd, 2017 • Lesson 3: March 28th. 2017 • Lesson 4: March 30th, 2017 • Lesson 5: April 4th, 2017	-Gathering data throughout the self-assessment and co-evaluation formats (self-assessment strategy). -Designing material for the lessons. -Collecting data from the tasks implemented at the end of each sessions using video-recordings. -Writing and preparing the English proficiency test. -Writing and developing the post-questionnaire. -Writing the reflective journals from each lesson planned.
Stage 3 (April 6 th , 2017).	-Implementing the post-questionnaires in order to gather data regarding the students' perceptions towards the strategies in a general way.

	-Applying the English proficiency test in order to obtain evidence about the learners' English level.
Stage 4 (April 9 th – April 16 th , 2017).	-Adjusting the context, research statement and justification based on the findings encountered in the preliminary data analysis. -Writing the design chapter. -Modifying the theoretical framework chapter.
Stage 5 (May 8 th – May 22 nd , 2017).	-Tabulating the data from the self-assessment formats and the post-questionnaire applied at the end of the pedagogical implementation.
Stage 6 (May 23 rd – May 31 st , 2017)	-Finding preliminary codes from the analysis of the video-recordings and the self-assessment formats implemented.
Stage 7 (June 1 st – June 10 th , 2017).	-Writing the data analysis chapter. -Finding preliminary results and writing initial conclusions based on the analysis of the raw data tabulated in previous stages.
Stage 8 (June 11 th – June 15 th , 2017)	-Writing the conclusions and implications chapter.
Stage 9 (June 15 th , 2017).	Delivering the first draft of the thesis to the thesis Director.
Stage 10 (June 16 th – July 28 th)	Proofreading the thesis by the thesis Director. Doing the final alterations of the thesis to be handed in by July 28th

3.4. Pedagogical Design.

3.4.1. Created Syllabus.

Name of the school: I.E. La Despensa.	Teacher: Andrés David Ballén Antonio
Grades: 10°	

Pedagogical Objectives:

General objective

- To provide the students with plenty of social strategies in order to facilitate the communication in English between their classmates and their teacher.

Specific objectives:

- Apprentices will be able to cooperate with their classmates in order to solve reading comprehension problems in the foreign language.
- Students will be able to understand the foreign language's culture by expressing their opinions towards the music genres in the native speaker countries.
- Students will be able to strengthen their communicative skills by using gestures, tone of voice and empathizing with their classmates' feelings.

Role of student:

Students take a more active role; more specifically of negotiators rather than passive subjects that cannot decide upon their learning process. Because the main language approach that embraces the current instructional design is the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), the philosophical assumption that should be adopted is a learner-centered approach. According to Nunan (2004), the CLT approach and the Task-Based Learning (TBL) methodology allow the teacher to endorse a learner-centered path that allows the learners to be the center of their learning processes. In addition, students developed a sense of awareness about their own socio-cultural history, which is embedded in every communicative process. This idea goes along with the one presented in the mission and vision established in the organizational structure by the

I.E. La Despensa, which argues that their mission is to instruct learners throughout a holistic training, which allow them to take agency over their own learning through their participation in all the pedagogical experiences provided by the school, the teacher and the community. The students' role is also grounded upon the constructivist theory of Ausubel who argues that learning is built based on connections that occur between the new knowledge, and the previous one. In order to achieve this enterprise, the students' preferences were approached throughout their immediate reality (for instance, some of the vocabulary taught were based on objects they had in a regular basis in their classrooms), and to allow the apprentices to influence the learning of others (Richards & Rodgers, 1982).

Role of the teacher:

Considering the nature of the research proposal along with the approach selected for the pedagogical implementation, the role that the teacher should assume is that of prompter; according to Harmer (2013), this type of teacher should ensure of fostering a sense of agency on the learners and encourage them to achieve more, to reach the +1 level that Krashen explicitly exposes on his theory (Foster; 2005). Likewise, Nunan (2004) advocates the connection between “learner-centredness” and the learning tasks that frame the TBL methodology respectively (see appendix 4 for further information).

Role of the materials:

- The Worksheets (specially the graded readings, crosswords and jigsaw readings) are meant to facilitate interaction among learners and teachers, whilst learners work on the grammar structures that students are supposed to study during the first and second period in which the pedagogical implementation took place.

- Linguistic surveys are meant to help students interact with one another. There were two tasks during the implementation, which asked students to interview their partners, using the vocabulary seen in class. Those prompts were very useful, since they allowed students to exchange information in a meaningful way, whilst they were encouraged to use the social strategies introduced during the lesson.
- On one hand, the reading comprehension exercises, allowed the students to practice their reading skills whilst focusing either on the gist or the specific details of the texts proposed. On the other hand, some of the readings were tasks themselves, which means that learners used a their communicative skills and learning strategies as well, to cope with the linguistic problems that the teacher researcher asked them to be engaged in. For instance, the jigsaw reading that was implemented in class, allowed students to clarify and verify information, whilst they cooperated with their classmates during the task. In this vein, Oxford (2006) claims that the strategy “asking questions” is commonly used when the students are challenged with activities that involve reading skills and the use of the strategy asking for clarification. On the same token, this author claims that jigsaw readings encourage cooperation with peers (Oxford, 2006).
- Flashcards and the pictures allowed students to internalize previous language forms studied and helped students to connect new vocabulary with their own reality.
- The songs and videos allowed students to practice their listening skills whilst they grasped the foreign language culture by means of using the social strategy “*understanding others’ languages cultures*”.

3.5. Procedure.

Teacher: Andrés Emilio Ballén Co-Teacher: Andrés David Ballén	Class: 10-02	Date: 30/03/2017	No of Ss: 40
Lesson Topic: Scientific Facts			
Lesson objectives: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to: ➤ Talk about scientific facts. ➤ Use zero conditional. ➤ Use expressions for asking for clarification. Vocabulary: scientific vocabulary (sun, rain, shine, etc.) – Verbs in present.			
Learning Strategy:	Developing cultural understanding		
Learning Strategy objective:	During the tasks, students will be able to compare some cultural aspects (related to weather) of Bogotá and those found in England.		
Textbook pages / Worksheets / etc.	➤ Vocabulary Presentation: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B5YToczSiFuOTdPQmhaci1yclk		
Materials / Resources / Supplies / Flashcards / etc.	➤ Markers. ➤ White board ➤ Pens ➤ Pencils ➤ Tape ➤ Video-Beam ➤ Speakers ➤ Tower computer (provided by the school)		
Songs / Listenings / etc.	➤ Lyrics: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5YToczSiFuTHgzZnlpZmhFcms/view?usp=sharing ➤ Songs: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jTxlDC93mXs		

	know about England?”, “do you think the English culture is similar to the Colombian culture?”.		
TASK	After the preparation and introduction of the learning strategy, the teacher will recycle the strategy “cooperating with others” and will ask students to cooperate with their peers in order to perform the task. While: jigsaw listening. after the pre-listening stage, students will be asked to listen to the song “rain” by the Beatles. As a first step, the teacher will play the song once so that students get familiarized with the song. Afterwards, the teacher will ask students to get in pairs and to sit back to back so as to avoid any form of cheating from students. Afterwards, the teacher will provide to student A with a different cloze lyric of the song from the learner B. The idea is that, whilst they listen to the song, they fill in the missing gaps. The teacher may play the song only twice, because the students’ mission is to complete the lyrics by doing a dictation activity after having listened to the song two times. During this activity, students are expected to recycle previous learning strategies on their own, without an explicit guidance of the teacher and likewise, they are expected to give one another information about the lyrics of the song.	Cloze lyrics A and B Pencils Pens Video-Beam Speakers Tower computer.	20 min 15 MIN
POST TASK	Post: finally, the teacher will ask students to report to the class their thoughts about the song, and whether they think culture is connected to weather. Because of the learners’ English level, it would be better to carry out the activity in Spanish. At the end of the class, the teacher will ask students that as a homework, they practice at home, their listening skills in the website “<i>lyrics training</i>” so as to expand their use of the strategies. Additionally, the teacher will provide a self-assessment and peer assessment format in order to evaluate their use of the current strategy.	Learning strategy assessment format	10 min

4.—

5.—

6.4. Data Analysis.

6.1.4.1. Implementation and data collection.

By following the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach steps that were carried out during the final task at the end of the lesson, it was possible to gather enough data in order to measure the extent in which learners used the social strategies implemented in each lesson.

Therefore, the final task of the Task-Based Learning methodology was embodied by the following five steps (underpinned by the CALLA framework):

1. Preparation: the learning strategy was introduced by asking questions related to the strategy in order to elicit previous knowledge about how the students approached to that specific strategy. According to Chamot et al. (1999), asking questions helps students to enhance their thought processes and helps the teacher to elicit information about the strategy. During this stage, I asked the teacher in charge of the class to record the students' interventions.
2. Presentation: during this stage, the strategy was explicitly presented; then it was modelled by using certain means (such as doing mimicry, doing examples with the teacher in charge of the class, etc.) which helped learners to facilitate the understanding of the learning strategy. Afterwards, the strategy was named and was wrote on the board so that students could recognize that strategy in further classes and finally, the steps were explained in order to use the learning strategy, before the students got into practice it, by means of the task stage of the TBL framework. During this stage, I asked the teacher in charge of the class, to record my explanation in order to self-evaluate myself after the lesson, and then, write it on the reflection journal.
3. Practice: students were asked to engage in the final task of the TBL framework, which required from them to interact and exchange information among themselves. From jigsaw

puzzles to interviews, students were asked to develop some activities, whilst they practiced the learning strategy, always taking into account the steps explained in the previous stage. During this stage, the interaction that emerged between students and teacher was video-recorded, in order to justify what was found on the self-assessment strategy formats implemented after each lesson and the post-questionnaire applied at the end of the whole implementation.

4. Evaluation: here, students assessed themselves in regards to the use and practice of the learning strategy introduced during the lesson. In order to do this, students were given some questionnaires and surveys to fill in, where they self-evaluated and co-evaluated their learning strategy usage and performance. This stage gave useful insights on the way students took control over their own learning, and gave a glimpse on the preferences and attitudes they had towards each learning strategy; and most importantly, they were tools that helped to answer the research questions initially established, because, based on the data gathered it was possible answer the research questions initially established.
5. Expansion: This stage was only used for the *cultural awareness* learning strategy lesson, and the main purpose of this stage was to give students more tools to use the strategy outside class; that is, listening to music at home and understanding the culture throughout this means. After the lesson, students were given a survey about whether they listen to music in English as a way of practicing this language, in order to gather information about the extent in which they take agency over their own learning.

Considering that the final task and the CALLA framework, were core elements on each lesson, they allowed the researcher to identify weak spots in regards to the nature of the task, allowing him to select the most enriching, challenging, authentic and meaningful task for the following lesson.

Data about the categories		
Research questions	Final categories	Sub-categories
What is the role that the instruction of social strategies plays in the way in which an EFL group of tenth graders at I.E. La Despensa School interact with their classmates and teacher?	1. Students use the social strategies to interact with their teacher and classmates.	1.1. Students ask questions to their partners
		1.2. Students ask questions to clarify the content and topic of the lesson to their teacher.
		1.3. Students cooperate with their classmates to complete the final tasks.
		1.4. Students become aware of others' thoughts and feelings.
		1.5. Learners use strategies to practice English outside class.
What are the factors that influence the students' preference towards the use of social strategies in an EFL group of tenth graders at I.E. La Despensa School?	2. The use of the social strategies is influenced by the learners' physical and cognitive factors.	2.1. The social strategies choice is influenced by the students' English proficiency level.
		2.2. The students' age and genre <u>gender</u> determined the use of the social strategies.
		2.3. The task requirements and level of difficulty determined the way in which learners used the social

		strategies with their teacher and peers.
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1. Category 1: Students use the social strategies to interact with their teacher and classmates.

1.1.Sub-Category: Students ask questions to their partners.

The data gathered revealed that the frequency in which students asked questions to their peers, increased slightly over time. On one hand, the students’ self-perception towards their willingness to use the expressions for clarification, incremented throughout the pedagogical implementation.

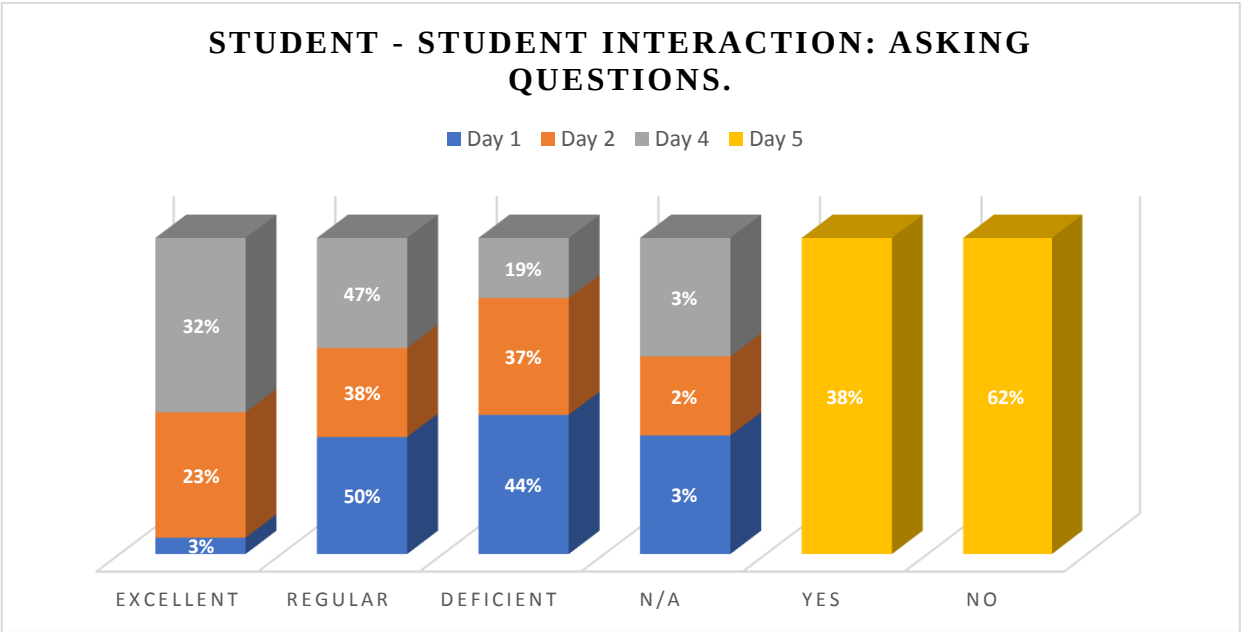


Figure 1

According to *figure 1*, during the first day of the implementation, 3% of the population considered that they used the strategy “*asking questions*” effectively, whereas half (50%) of the students expressed that their performance towards the use of the learning strategy had been acceptable, whilst the other 44% of learners claimed that they did very poorly on the strategy (that is, deficiently). On the second day however, the students who claimed to have used the strategy actively, increased 20%, and those who expressed their concern about

their acceptable performance, dropped to 38%. Those who argued that their performance had been deficient, dropped to 37% on the second day of the implementation. On the third day of the implementation, the population that considered themselves to have asked questions to their peers effectively. As noted before, students were slightly more likely to use the expressions for asking questions with their peers as the implementation continued. On the other hand, students' co-evaluation formats showed that learners regarded their peers' use of the expressions, as acceptable; interestingly, the percentage of students (14%) who claimed that their peers did not use the expressions to ask for clarification, remained the same during the implementation. According to the data gathered, in the second day of the implementation (that is, after having recycled the strategy), students considered that 42% of their classmates used the expressions for clarification effectively, whereas 22% were considered to be acceptable on the use of the expressions for clarification. On the other hand, 14% of the participants regarded their partners as deficient with respect to the use of the strategy (see *figure 2*). During the fourth day of the implementation, learners that were regarded as effective at the use of the expressions, dropped to 38%, whereas those who were considered acceptable at the use of the strategy, increased 16%.

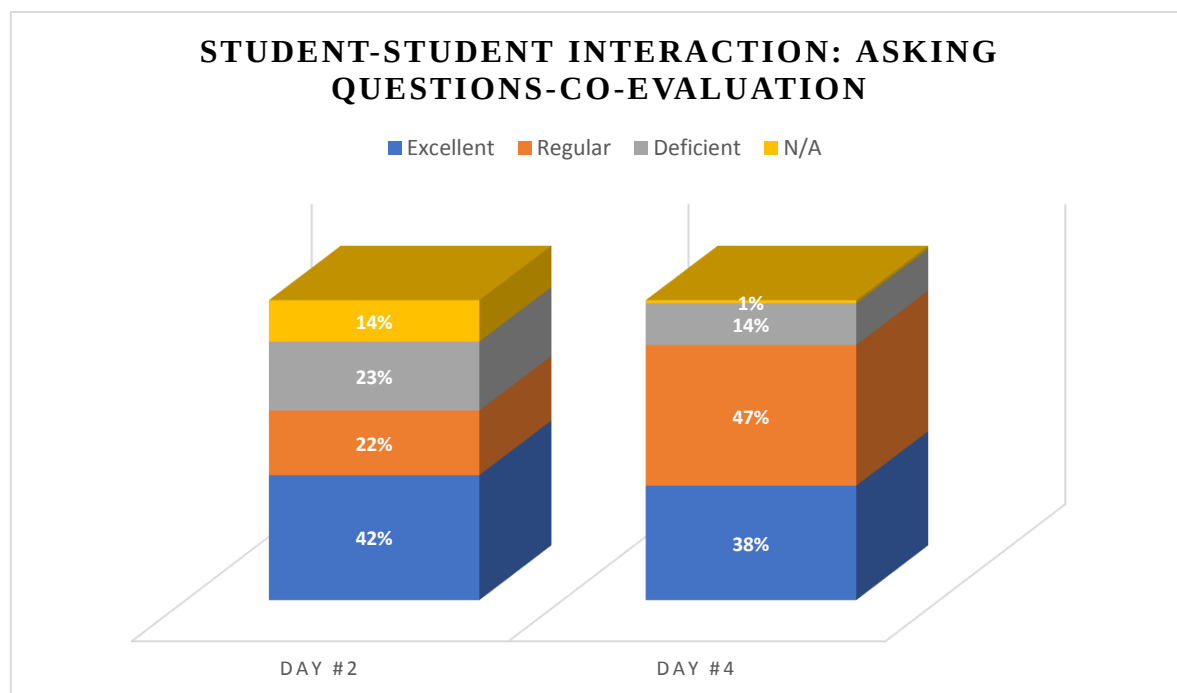


Figure 2

This entails that students' self-perceptions were slightly higher than the viewpoints that their classmates had about their classmates' performance during the development of the tasks. Taking into account that learners were not accustomed to be engaged in activities that would involve meta-cognitive reflection, these results might imply that apprentices were less likely to self-assess themselves in a more accurate way. Still, as reported by the data gathered, it is possible to assume that students slightly increased the use of the expressions for asking for clarification. Following are some excerpts taken from the video-recording, which support the fact that students asked questions to their classmates in order to clarify the objectives of the activities and therefore, carry out the task.

Video-recording excerpt 1: student asked questions to his classmate in order to understand the activity.

S17 (M): ¿Qué es lo que toca hacer?

S18 (M): Tiene que preguntarle a alguien qué hizo el domingo a esta hora, después de esta hora, después de esta hora, después de esta hora...

S17 (M): ¿Todo a la misma persona?

S18 (M): Si... (student nods his head)

Video-recording excerpt 2: a learner asked questions to her partner in English so as to complete the activity “find someone who”:

S22 (F): What did you do on Sunday afternoon?

S23 (M): Ehhh (laugh). Pere, pere. Si, si ya sé. Después de la seis, ¿qué le había dicho? (...) Ah, ir a la casa. ¿Tocaba decirlo en inglés?

T: Yeah. So, you went

S22 (F): Si, claro.

S23 (M): Entonces, I (...) I went a house.

T: So, you went to the house.

Evidently, students were eager and more likely to use the expressions for asking for clarification and verification. Interestingly, the impact that this strategy had on the way learners interacted with their classmates can be determined by the frequency in which students collaboratively worked in order to solve doubts in regards to the topic of the lesson or the tasks that learners were asked to carry out.

1.2. Sub-category: Students ask questions to clarify the content and topic of the lesson to their teacher.

In contrast to the interaction that emerged among students, the interaction that occurs between students and the teacher is widely different, because the knowledge and role of the teacher do not allow students to cooperate with the teacher, for example. In this vein, the use of the expressions for asking for clarification slightly increased over time in regards to the interaction that occurred between students; however, when students interacted with the teacher, the extent in which the learners asked questions for clarification to this latter varied depending on how well students practiced the strategy.

For instance, in the first day of the implementation, 59% of the participants regarded themselves as regular at using the strategy, whereas 9% claimed that they did use the expressions for clarification and verification with their teacher. The population left, that is, 28% considered that they did very poorly at using the strategy. On the second day, the extent in which learners considered themselves as excellent increased to 37%, whereas those who claimed to have been regular, dropped to 37%. That is, both items remained the same. In the fourth day of the implementation, those students who had regarded themselves as excellent decreased 11%, whilst the learners who considered that their performance had been regular, increased to 49% (see *figure 3*).

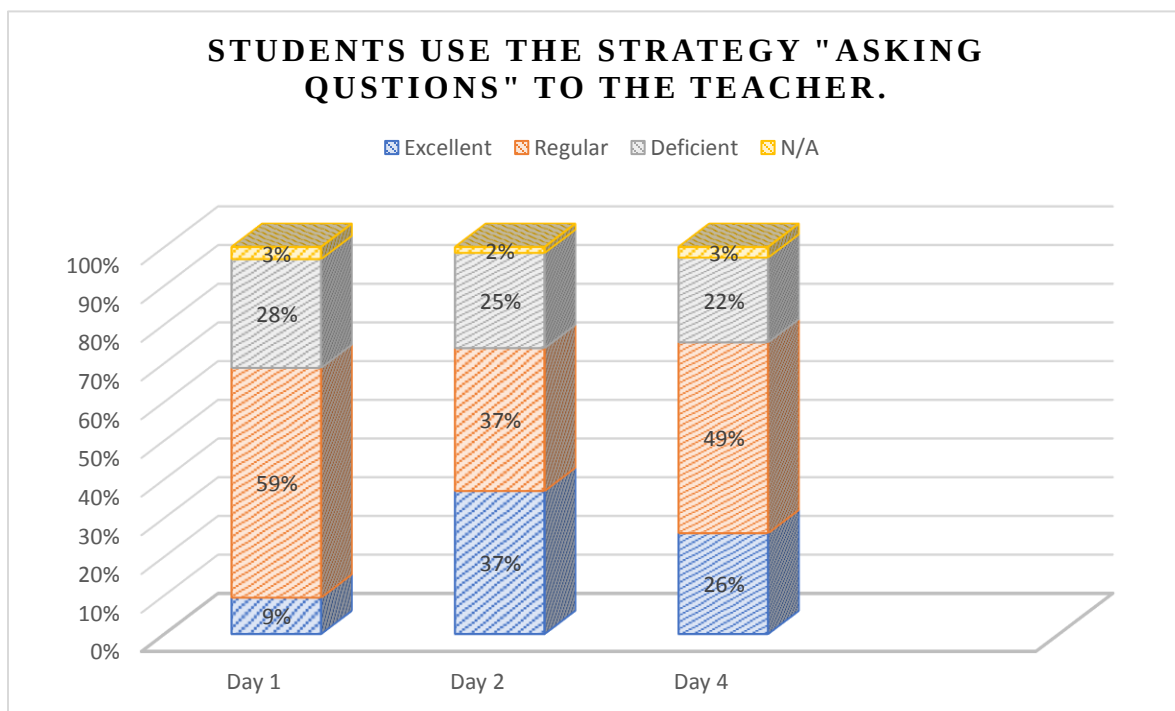


Figure 3

What is interesting to note, is that the scope in which learners considered themselves deficient, slightly decreased over time. Therefore, even if students used the expressions regularly during the lesson, the data suggests that learners tried to use the expressions with their teachers to a certain degree, and the percentage of students who regarded themselves

deficient at asking questions to their teacher, somewhat decreased by at least 3% on each day of the implementation. Even if learners claimed to have used the expressions all the time, or regularly, the data suggests that students were more likely to ask questions to their teacher.

Doubtless, students were more likely to use the expressions for clarification and verification with their teacher, so as to clarify the topic of the lesson. Of course, the use of expressions for clarification in the current population, allowed students to use these expressions and therefore, employ English as much as they could. Furthermore, these facts entail that learners were able to understand in a better way some of the expressions for clarification and verification in English and use them appropriately whenever they did not understand the meaning of a word or the topic of the class.

1.3. Sub-category: Students cooperate with their classmates to complete the final tasks.

By the second day of the implementation, students were introduced with the learning strategy “cooperating with others”. The activity selected for this task was a jigsaw reading, whose grammar and vocabulary were related to previous topics learnt in previous courses. According to Oxford (2006) jigsaw readings encourage cooperation among students, regardless of how they are implemented in class.

With respect to this item, it was possible to find that the majority of the students claimed that they had been employing the strategy effectively in order to carry out the tasks in every single day of the implementation. For instance, according to *figure 4*, in the second day of the implementation (that is, when I introduced the strategy “*cooperating with others*” to the students), 77% of the population claimed that they used the strategy actively, whereas 14% of the students regarded their performance as acceptable when using the strategy and the other 8% claimed that they did very poorly at the strategy. On the fourth day however, the students who self-evaluated themselves as excellent at the use of strategy, dropped to 74%;

and instead, those who did in an acceptable way, increased to 18%, whilst those students who did very poorly in the strategy, dropped to 1%. Of course, the gap in the results is fairly big, however, these scores can be correlated to the task selected, for that specific learning strategy. In other words, the task at hand may influence the strategy selection as well.

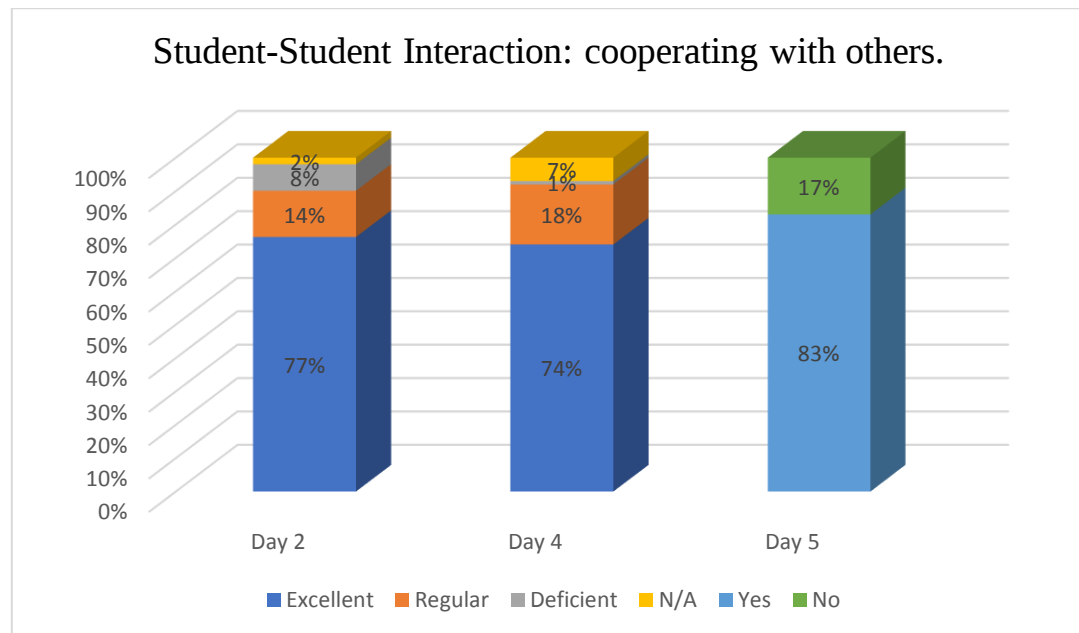


Figure 4

In the last day of the implementation, students were asked to self-evaluate their own use of the learning strategy, when they completed the song (for this lesson, learners were asked to complete the lyrics of a song in pairs). The results showed that 83% of the population cooperated with their classmates in order to complete the lyrics, whereas 17% did not use the strategy to complete the song (see *figure 4*). The majority of the learners who wrote a comment on the self-assessment format, claimed that it was easy for them to complete the task, because they got along with their classmates. These are some short excerpts that students wrote about the extent in which they thought it was easy to use the strategy during the task of this lesson:

- S53: Lo más fácil fue cooperar con mis compañeros.

- S42: Entenderme con mi compañero.
- S71: Clarificación, porque nos preguntamos entre sí.

Similarly, in order to collect more data in regards to the extent in which learners cooperated with one another, students were asked to co-evaluate among themselves. As *figure 5* shows, in the second day of the implementation (that is, when the strategy was introduced for the first time), 72% of the participants regarded their partners' use of the strategy as excellent, whereas 14% and 1% respectively, expressed that their partners cooperated in a regular or deficient way respectively. On the fourth day of the implementation, the extent to which learners cooperated with their classmates increased to 85%, in contrast to the previous lesson. That is, learners considered that their partners cooperated with them more than the session before. Interestingly, the percentage of students who expressed that their classmates cooperated with them in regular way, remained the same (14%). Indeed, it seems that the percentage dropped, because some students did not answer the item in the questionnaire and therefore, they were marked as N/A (11%). Thus, the results from the data gathered suggest that there is a slight difference on the way students perceived their own performance when they cooperated with their peers and the view their classmates had in regards to their peers use of the strategy. In other words, the perceptions that students had about themselves in both the self-assessment and co-evaluation, reveal that learners used the strategy in a realistic way.

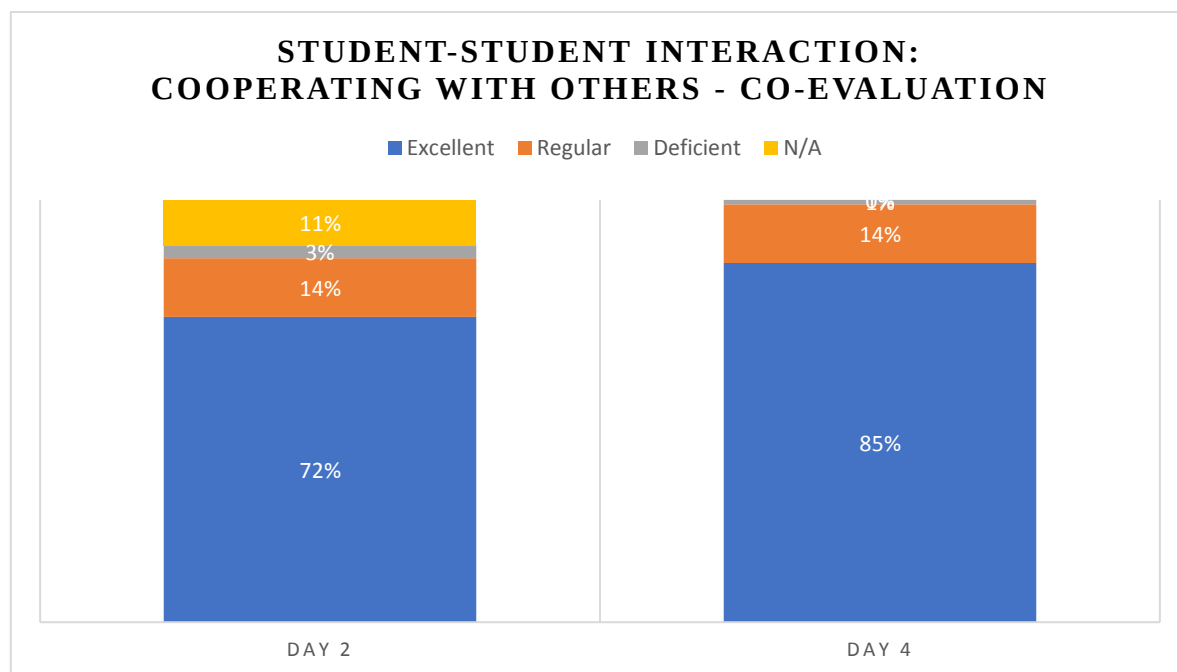


Figure 5

Here are some excerpts from the video-recordings, that demonstrate that learners cooperated with one another in order to complete the tasks or clarify the meaning of the unknown words.

Video-recording excerpt 4: a group of students cooperated among themselves in order to retell the story to their teacher.

T: ¿Cómo comienza la historia?

S13 (M): La historia comienza con que estaban, estaban...

S14 (F): ...estaban caminando en la playa. Y estaban charlando y jugando. Y conocieron amigos.

S13 (M): No sea mentirosa que se cansaron y se fueron a dormir y se aburrieron.

S15 (F): Profe, no sé porque creo que no jugaron. Entonces se nos pareció mucho.

S14 (F): Porque entendimos toda la historia, para que vea que si podía escuchar.

T: A mí se me hace que se comieron un pedazo.

T15 (F): ¡No!

S13 (M): Ahh! Y después viajaron a Londres...

S14 (F): ... Viajaron a Londres.

S15 (F): Lo que te había dicho...

S14 (F): Y vieron el ojo de Londres. Fueron al palacio de Londres.

S13 (M): El palacio de Buckingham

S14 (F): Querían ver a la Reina...pero no podían

S13 (M):Pero no podían.

S15 (F): Porque estaban los guardas (laugh)

S14 (F): Pero no estaba guardada (laugh).

Evidently, students took an active role over their learning process and were able to cooperate with one another in order to summarize the story, even if the synopsis was carried out in Spanish. By the same token, students cooperated with their classmates in order to exchange and understand the meaning of some words. Here is an excerpt:

Video-recording excerpt 5: a group of students cooperated and helped among each other in order to write an unknown word correctly.

S5 (F): Profe, ¿cómo se dice calle?

T: How do you say what?

S5 (F): What...callecita.

T: How do you say...(?)

S5: How do you say in (...) -student thinks about the word- English, calle?

T: Tacho?

S19 (M): No, tiene que hacerlo con una pregunta: I have a question.

T: Ok, you have a question. How do you say...

S5 (F): How do you say calle in English?

S20 (F): ¡Onces cómo se dice! ¡onces cómo se dice!

T: Calle, ¿street?

S19 (M): Si.

T: Street.

S20: Cómo, ¿cómo, ¿cómo se escribe?

S5: ¿Cómo se escribe?

T: How do you spell it? S, T, R, E, E, T. Here, S5 helps S19 writing the word by translating to him the alphabet in Spanish.

As noted previously, the impact of instructing the social strategy *cooperating with others* on the EFL process of the current population, lies on the fact that learners were able to take an active role in their learning process and were more likely to take agency over their own learning, by means of collaborative work, even if that cooperation is limited to understand the meaning of a word or the activities' objectives.

1.4. Sub-category: Students become aware of others' thoughts and feelings.

According to Oxford (2006), becoming aware of what is said or what is left unsaid by listening carefully to the speaker, will help learners become aware of the mind-set of other people. Therefore, the strategy was divided into two dimensions: the gestures that students employed in order to interact with one another (that is, what is left unsaid by means of gestures, tone of voice, etc.), and the extent to which they listened to their partners carefully (what is said). In order to measure this strategy, I asked students to self-assess their performance, by expressing whether or not they listened carefully to their partners, or whether or not they used gestures to convey meaning. Generally speaking, the results obtained suggested that the majority of learners considered that they had been using actively the strategy during both days of introducing the strategy, whereas the peer-assessment showed that learners considered their classmates' performance acceptable towards the use of the strategy.

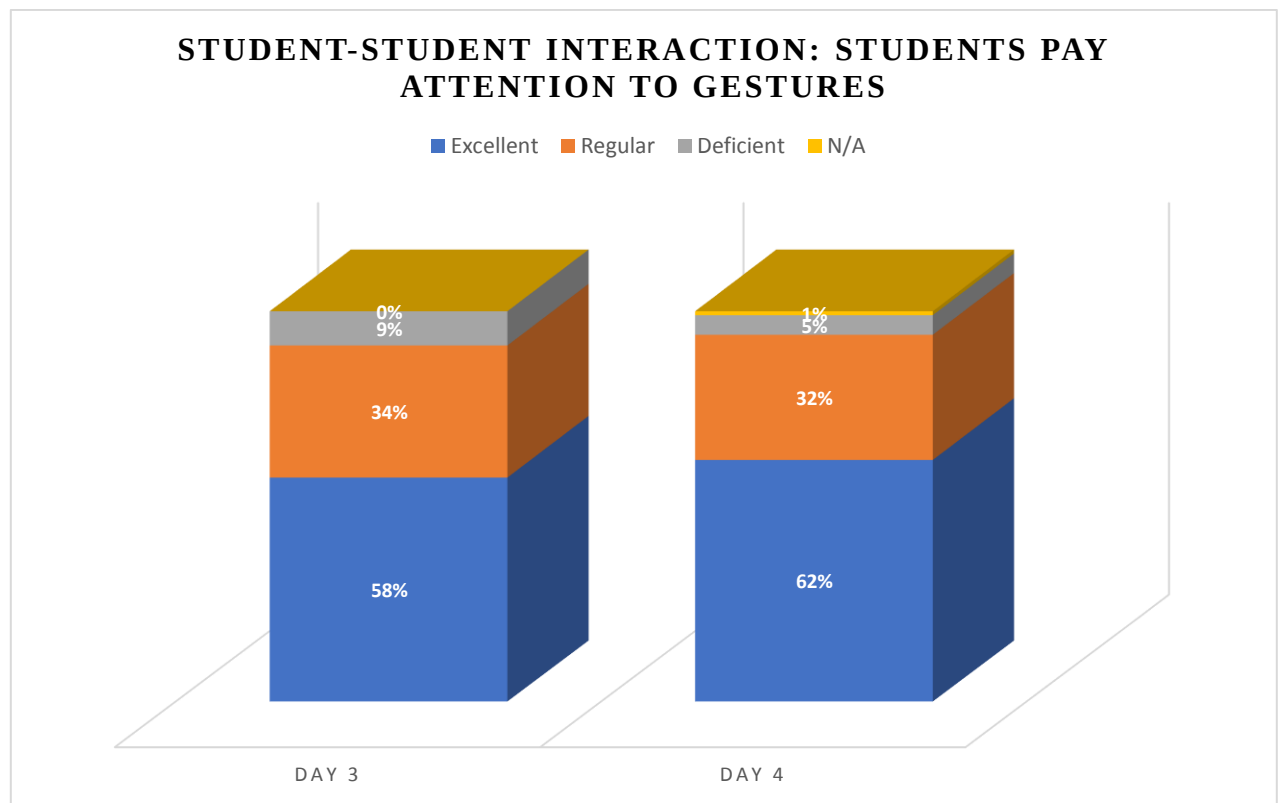


Figure 6

Regarding the extent in which learners paid attention to their peers' gestures, *figure 6* demonstrates that 58% of the participants claimed that students paid careful attention to their partners' gestures, whereas 34% expressed that their attention paid to their partners' gestures were acceptable, and a 9% left, argued that they did very poorly on attending their partners' gestures. During the fourth (4th) day of the implementation, the percentage in which learners considered themselves excellent at regarding their classmates' gestures, increased to 4%; that is, 62% of the participants claimed that they were excellent in this aspect. The regular and deficient level in which some students considered to be, dropped to 32% and 5% respectively, in contrast to the first lesson in which the strategy was introduced to students.

On the other hand, students were asked to co-evaluate their classmates on the use of the strategy "*becoming aware of others' feelings and thoughts*". In contrast to the data

gathered in the previous item, the results obtained in regards to their classmates' use of gestures, show that most of the students' classmates used gestures in a regular way; that is, 48% of the participants considered that their peers were acceptable at using gestures, whereas 43% of the students claimed that their partners were excellent at using gestures. This somehow contradicts the students' own perception about their use of gestures, since again, seen from another perspective, learners are not as excellent as they think they are (see *figure 7*). Nevertheless, only 10% of the participants claimed that their partners were deficient at using gestures, which implies that in neither of the perceptions (that is, learners' own perceptions and peer to peer judgments) do not point out to an unsatisfactory performance from their classmates, towards the use of gestures.

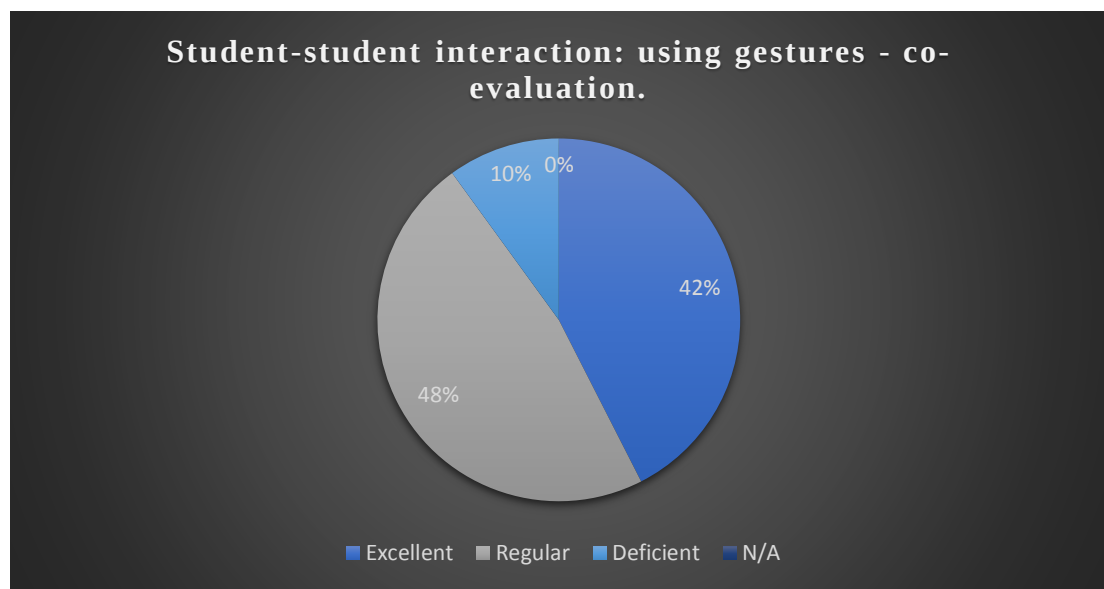


Figure 7

In regards to the extent in which the participants listened to their partners, it was evident that the majority of them believed to have used effectively the strategy in both days. As *figure 8* suggests, during the first day of introducing the strategy, 64% of the students expressed that they were excellent at using the strategy, whereas, in the second day of using the strategy, the percentage in which students claimed to have listened to their peers

increased to 75%. It implies that students were eager and autonomous to listen to their partners carefully, as they developed the tasks suggested on each lesson.

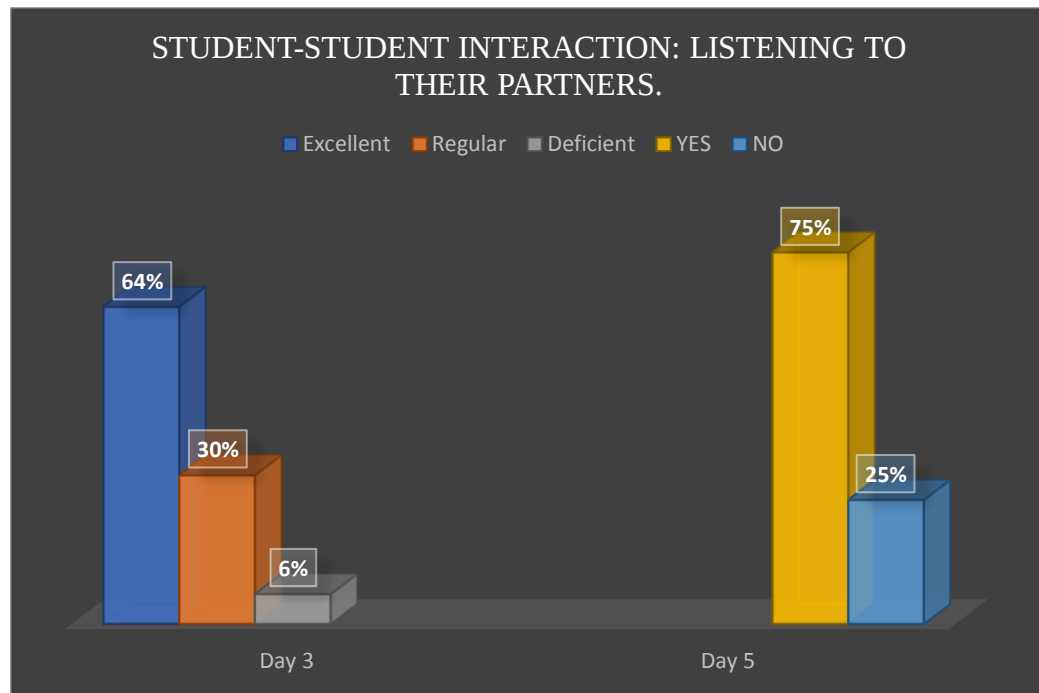


Figure 8

During the third day of implementation however, students were asked the extent in which they waited for their partners response, as a sub-dimension of the sub-category. Although only measured in that specific lesson, the *figure 9* reveals that 76% of the participants expected their partners answer when they asked a question, before they started talking. Likewise, it suggests that 16% and 6% respectively, were able to practice this exercise in a moderate and poor way respectively. Thus, the data suggests that learners were not used to be involved in the meta-cognitive exercise of analyzing their own performance, in regards to whether they listened to their partners or not. That could be an explanation to the fact, that still, 36% of the participants claimed that they did very acceptable or poorly at listening to their peers during the third day of class, whereas the percentage decreased very slightly to 25%.

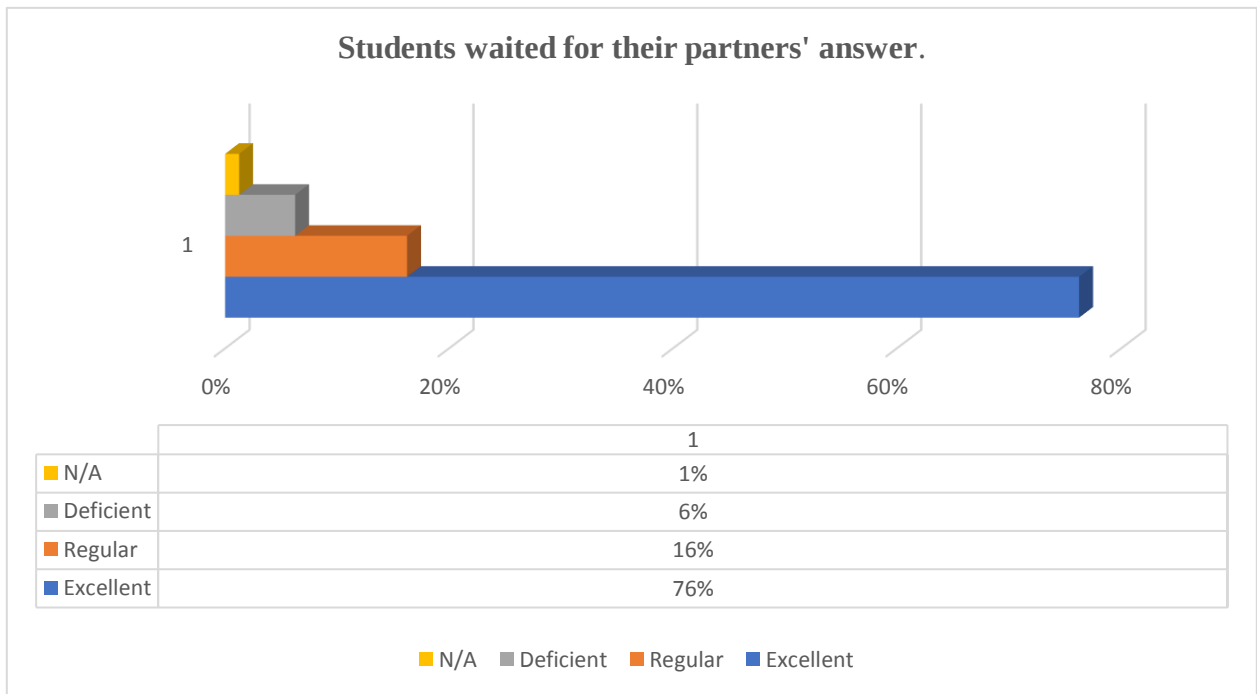


Figure 9

Similarly, learners were asked to assess their partners in regards to the way in which their classmates listened to them. In general, the *figure 10* shows that the perceptions that students had towards the way in which their classmates listened to them during the task, decreased over time. On one hand, during the third day of class (that is, when the strategy was introduced for the first time), 74% of the participants expressed that their classmates had listened to them in an effective way, however, in the fourth day of implementation, this percentage dropped to 59%. Moreover, in the third of class, only 21% of the students considered their partners to be acceptable at using the strategy, whereas in the fourth day of the implementation, learners expressed that 40% of their classmates listened to them in a regular way. On the other hand, it is worth noting that only 1% of the participants considered their classmates to be deficient at listening to them, after the second day of the

implementation. This entails that students' perceptions towards their classmates' willingness to listen is not as unsatisfactory either.

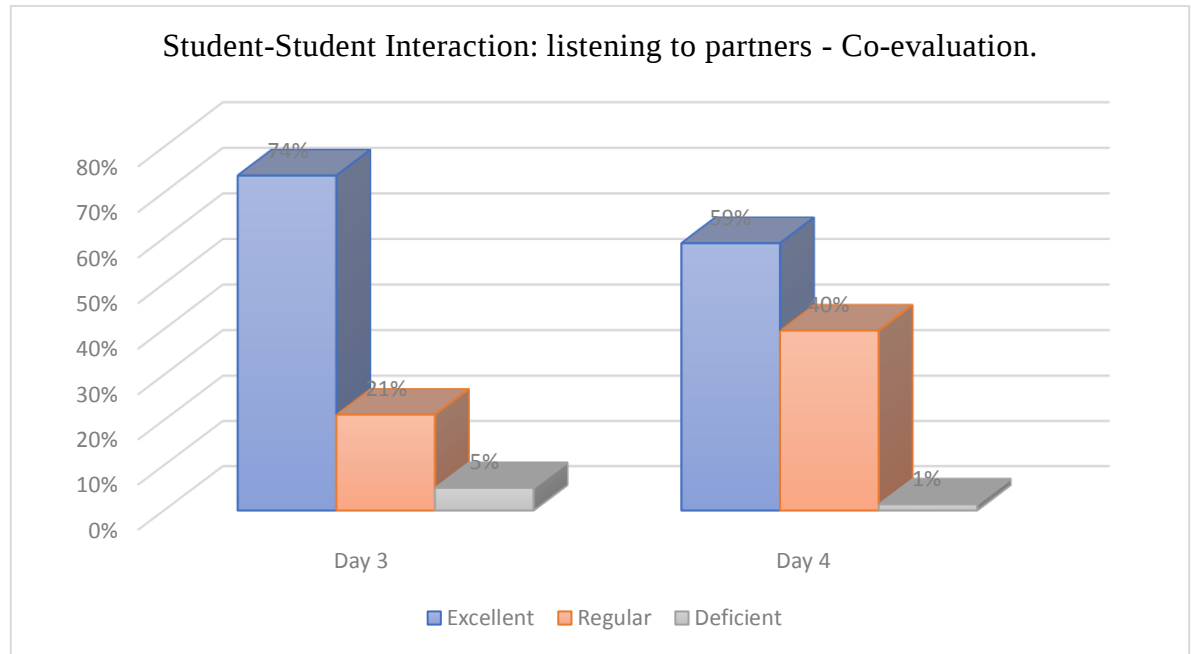
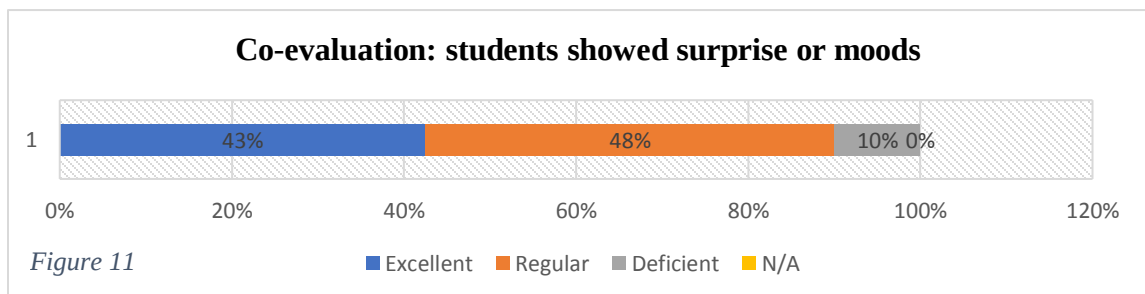


Figure 10

Likewise, students were asked to evaluate their classmates' use of different tones of voice in order to exhibit certain moods when they interacted with their peers. After all, Oxford (2006) claims that students should be encouraged to become aware of others' moods and thoughts. Thus, this sub-dimension was also measured, but it only took place in the third day of the implementation. Even though it was measured during that specific lesson (3th day of class), *figure 11* reveals that 48% of the participants considered their classmates to be regular at using different tones of voices, whereas a 42% expressed that their partners were excellent at showing surprise or moods when interacting. Only 10% of the population,



however, claimed that their partners were deficient at showing surprise or exhibiting moods.

In short, even if students were not conscious about the importance of becoming aware of others' feelings and thoughts, this strategy helped learners to listen in a more effective way to their peers and convey their ideas and thoughts in a useful way. Accordingly, the majority of the participants claimed that their classmates had been using the strategy effectively, which means that learners were able to understand their peers' ideas by means of tone of voice and gestures; something from which students benefited, since it helped them to be involved in more natural and meaningful conversations in the target language.

1.5. Sub-category: Learners use strategies to practice English outside class.

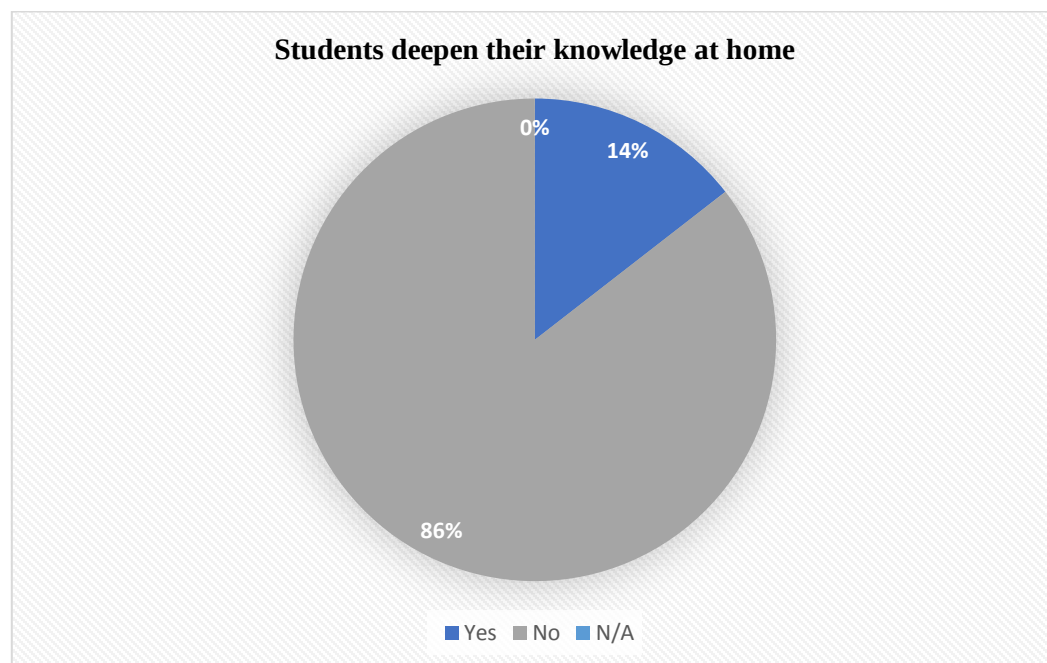


Figure 12

The extent to which students work outside class, determine the acquisition and learning of the strategy *understanding others' cultures* (Oxford, 2006). The first element to consider here, is whether students deepened their knowledge at home or not. According to the results obtained from the post-questionnaires, *figure 12* demonstrates that after the pedagogical

implementation, 14% of the participants expressed to have studied the topics of the class at home, whereas 86% respectively, claimed that they did not deepen their knowledge outside class. Interestingly, this item was also included in the needs analysis applied at the beginning of the implementation, and at first, 24% of the students (by that time) claimed to have deepened the topics of the lesson outside class; nevertheless, as contradicting as it seems, at the end, the percentage dropped 10%. It is not clear why students changed their mind during the process, however, there is evidence that some learners were not used to practice their English at home.

In regards to the strategies that students used to work outside class, the results gathered from the “cultural awareness survey” shows that, after the item *all of the above*, 18% of the participants argued not to do anything for deepening their knowledge at home. Thus, *figure 13* suggests that whereas 46% of the students listen to music and watch movies in English, 18% expressed that they do nothing to practice the foreign language outside class. Likewise, 11% and 14% respectively, contended that they would rather listen to music in English or watch movies in English.

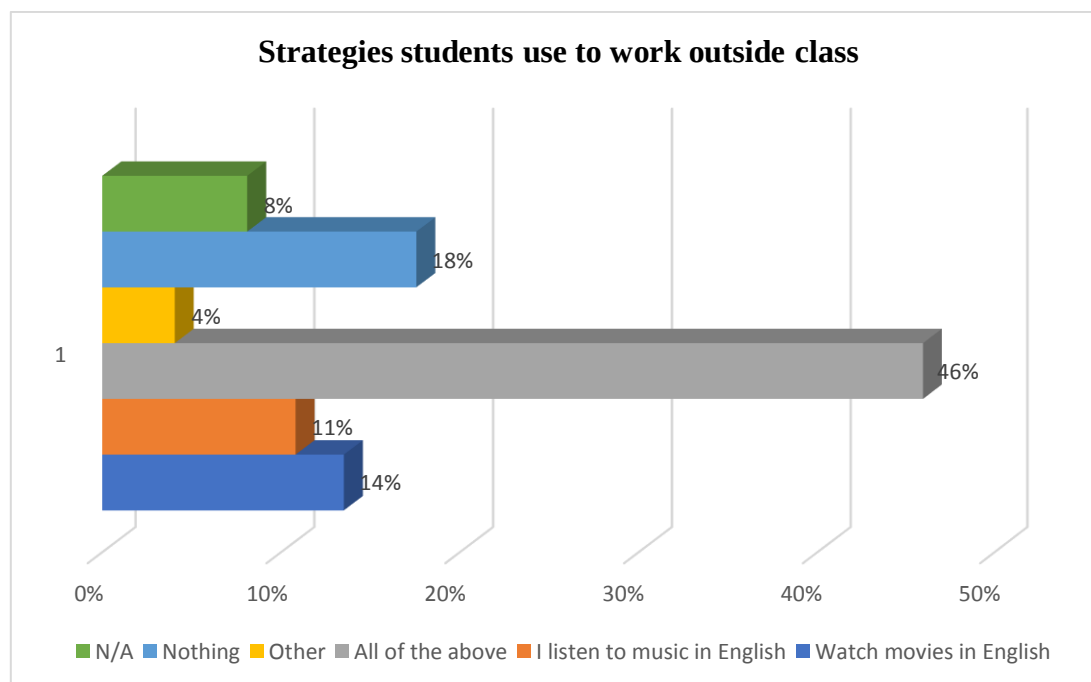


Figure 13

The second aspect to consider, was the extent in which students spoke English outside class. According to the results obtained from the post-questionnaire, *figure 14* shows that 14% of the participants looked for strategies to speak English outside school, whereas 86% of the learners did not speak outside class. Similarly, this item was also asked in the needs analysis, and according to the results gathered from the former, the percentage of students who argued that they spoke English outside class was 2% lower (that 12% of the participants) than the percentage obtained in the post-questionnaire applied at the end of the class. In other words, the need from learners to look for spaces to speak outside class, increased 2% from the beginning of the implementation.

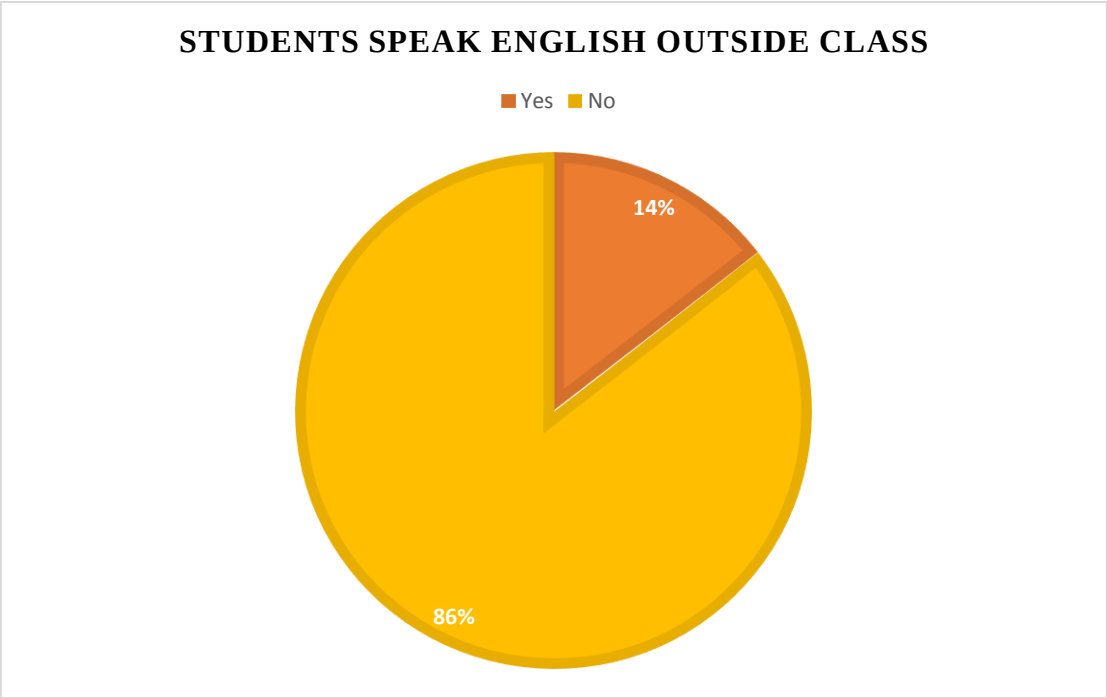


Figure 14

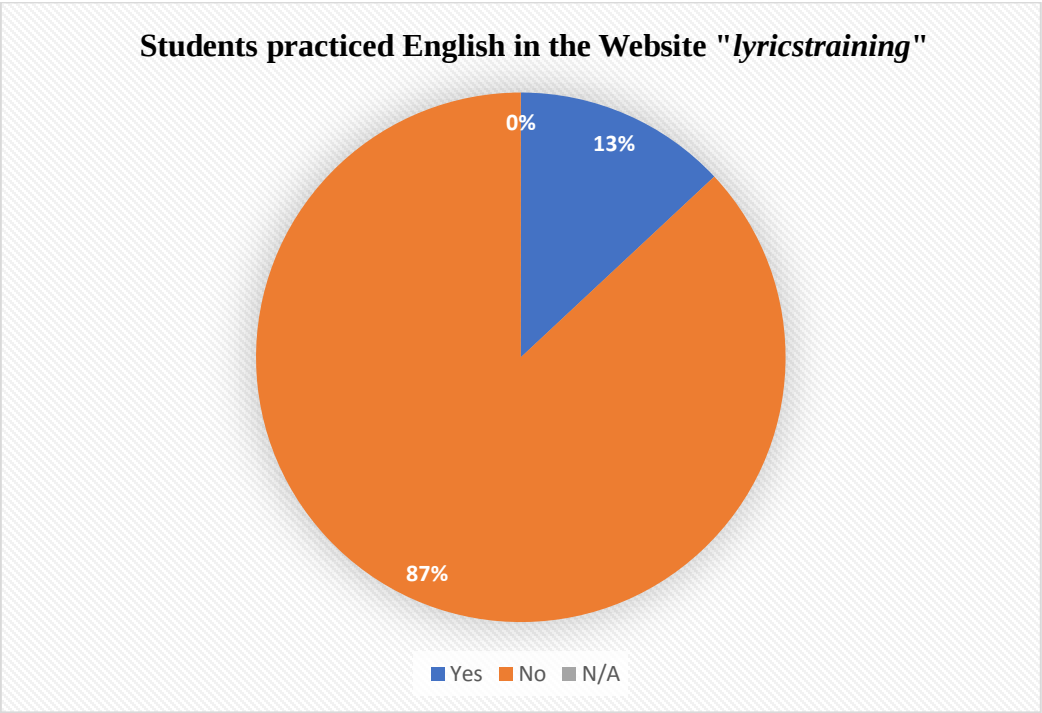


Figure 15

The third element emerged as an expansion activity (following the CALLA framework) from the strategy “*understanding others’ culture*”. The main purpose was to collect data and evidence in regards to the autonomy students showed, in regards to understanding others’ culture. It is worth remembering that, as Oxford (2006) claims, teacher can encourage the use of this strategy throughout the work outside class. Therefore, after the practice and evaluation stages (according to the CALLA framework), I wrote on the board a website in which they were supposed to devote some time and look for words they liked the most, and practice English as they listened to the songs. This aforementioned website was *lyricstraining.com*, a site that allows students to complete the lyrics of a song, whilst they complete it. The main idea was to check whether students used music as a mean for practicing English outside and therefore, strengthen their cultural awareness. However, according to *figure 51*, 13% of the population claimed to have visited the site and have worked on it, whereas 87% of the learners, said to have not checked the website at home. Interestingly, the same percentage of students who have claimed to work outside class remained. That is, 13% or 14% was the average percentage of learners who were interested in practicing English outside class. Thus, it can be assumed that there is a very fixed group of students who are autonomous on their own learning.

2. Category: the use of the social strategies is influenced by the learners’ physical and cognitive factors.

2.1. Sub-category: the social strategies choice is influenced by the students’ English proficiency level.

One of the main factors that influenced the use of the social strategies was the English proficiency level that students had during the pedagogical implementation, because learners considered the strategy a novelty for them and expressed in some of the self-assessment formats, that speaking in English had been difficult for them (see appendix 5). Further

evidence that supports these arguments, can be found in some fragments that learners wrote on the self-assessment questionnaires:

- S7: Me resulta difícil hablar con mis compañeros.
- S9: Porque se me dificulta hablar en inglés.
- S30: Se me dificulta hablar en inglés.

Thus, in order to measure this aspect, I asked students to complete a reading comprehension questionnaire that examined in detail the students' knowledge about the grammar and vocabulary they were supposed to have learned throughout the implementation. As the data shows, 48% of the participants passed the 3,5-score threshold required to have the appropriate level to carry out the tasks suggested in the implementation, whereas 52% failed the test (*see figure 16*).

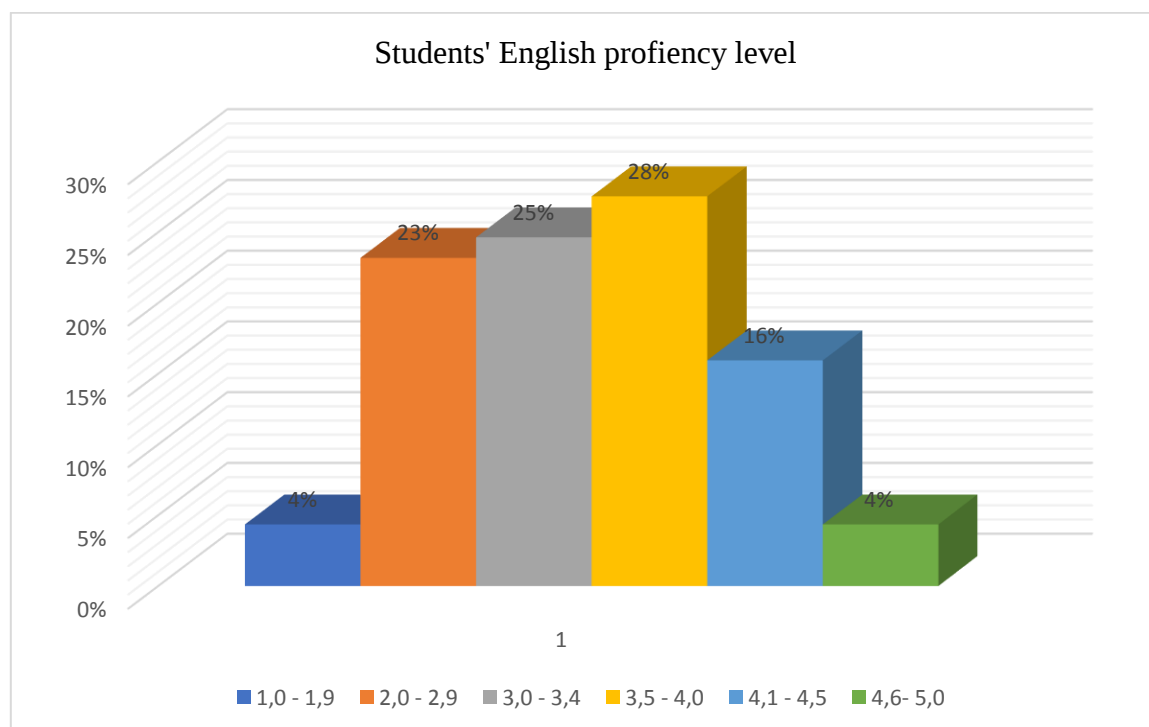


Figure 16

Taking into account these results, the majority of learners were more likely to resort to the strategy *cooperating with others*, since they could use it in Spanish, whereas the strategy *asking questions*, was the least preferred by students, because they considered that they did not have the appropriate pronunciation or suitable English proficiency level to use the expressions for asking for clarification or verification. Further evidence that supports this claim, lies on some of the opinions that students wrote on the self-assessments formats:

- S55: Porque esas frases y hablar en inglés. Cosa que no entendí.
- S20: No sé pronunciar muy bien algunas palabras entonces eso da pena.
- S43: Porque se me hace muy difícil hablar o mencionar palabras en inglés.

On the other hand, learners were more likely to consider the strategy *cooperating with others* as easier, because they were able to use it in Spanish. Some of the excerpts from the video-recordings and some fragments that students wrote on the self-assessment questionnaires, can shed light into these arguments.

- S35: Por qué puedo hacer que mis compañeros entiendan y yo también.
- S18: Porque así puedo interactuar más con mis compañeros.
- S64: Porque nos comunicábamos con nuestros compañeros para resolver las actividades.

Video-recording excerpt 4: a group of students cooperated with one another in order to summarize the reading, using Spanish.

S4 (F): Finished!

T: Ok (...) What did you understand? ¿Qué entendieron? What did you understand?

S4 (F): Ehh que..ellos viajaron por dos semanas a Inglaterra y visitaron museos, ehh conocieron personas nuevas de diferentes nacionalidades. Visitaron a la reina, pero no la pudieron ver. Fueron a un restaurante y aprendieron deportes y...

S10 (F): Fueron a la universidad.

S11 (M): Aprendieron English.

S10 (F): Hablaron de (...) los inventos...

S4 (F): -student complements the idea- Learner nods her head- Y aprendieron inglés y conocieron varias personas.

T: Uhum. ¿Algún otro aporte?

S12 (M): Fueron a la playa, por las noches se aburrían mucho y tenían que ver vídeos o jugar juegos de mesa.

S11 (M): Y que, ehh, el lugar favorito de ellos, de toda la ciudad, era el museo. Una figura, ¿la estatua? La Maddame Tussard.

T: Very good!

S10 (F): Yes?

T: Yeah, good.

To sum up, proficiency level played an important role on the social strategies preference, because learners were able to use each strategy at ease or with difficulty, depending on their English level. Additionally, it seems that the self-perceptions about the learners' performance at using English could have played another major role (worth studying on further studies), because they considered that they did not have the appropriate English level in order to use the expressions for clarification; however, they were able to resort to the strategy *cooperating with others*, because they could use it in Spanish. All in all, these facts entail that enough input in regards to the use of social strategies is required in order to obtain better results, and additionally, self-perceptions and English proficiency level is a key factor to develop the social strategies.

2.2. The students' gender and age determined the use of the social strategies.

2.2.1. Students' gender.

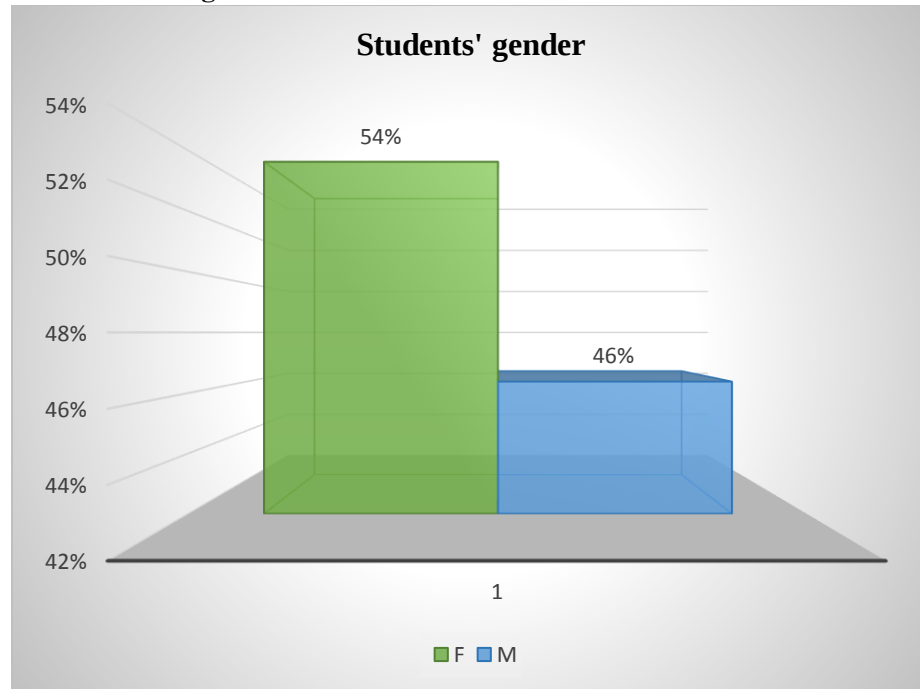


Figure 17

According to the data gathered from the post-questionnaire, 54% of the population are female students and 46% are male learners respectively (see *figure 17*). According to *figure 14*, on one hand, from the 37 female students who participated on the questionnaire, 54% expressed that the strategy “*asking questions*” had been difficult for them, whereas 46% of the participants claimed that they found it easy to use the expressions for clarification. On the other hand, from the 32 male learners who asked the post-questionnaire, 47% claimed that the strategy “*asking questions*” was difficult for them, whereas 53% argued that using the expressions was an easy task to do. In entails that male students were more likely to use the strategy “*asking questions*”, since they considered it an easy endeavor to do, in contrast to the female perceptions towards the strategy (see *figure 18*).

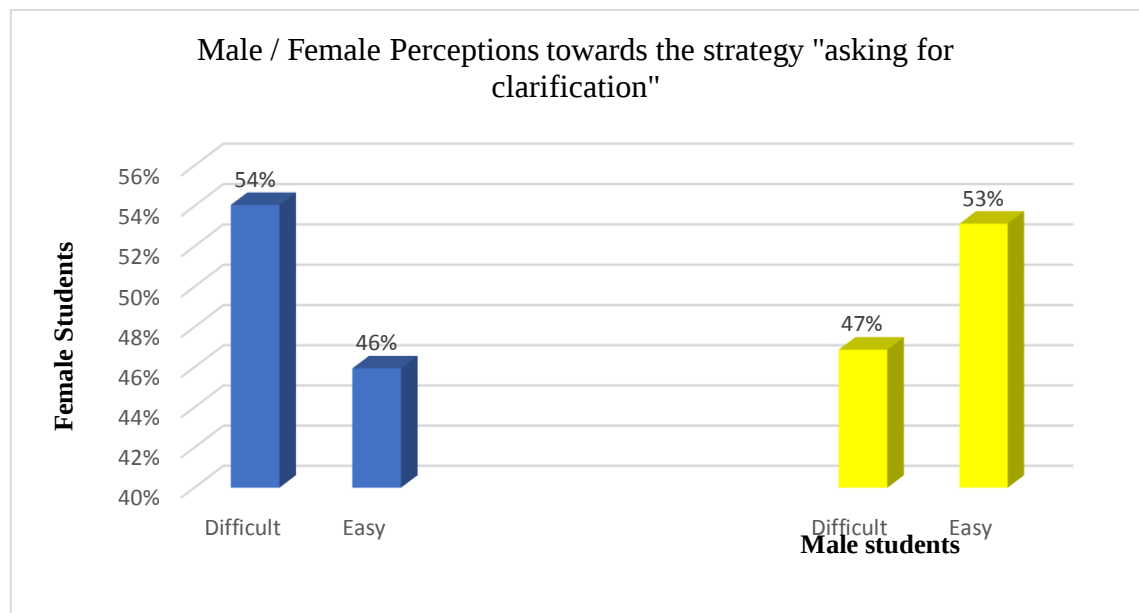


Figure 18

Regarding the strategy “*cooperating with others*”, there is not a significant difference between gender and the students’ perceptions towards the use of the strategy. For instance, *figure 19* reveals that, whilst 37% of the male students argued that they disliked to use the strategies during the tasks, 41% of the female learners expressed that they did not like to use the strategy. Thus, there were only 4% of difference between both genders with respect to the extent they disliked to use the strategy. On the other hand, 59% of the female learners claimed that they liked to use the strategy, whereas 63% of the male learners claimed that they were more likely to use the strategy. One more time, there is a very slightly difference between both gender (4%). It entails that the perceptions towards the strategy were alike between female and male students.

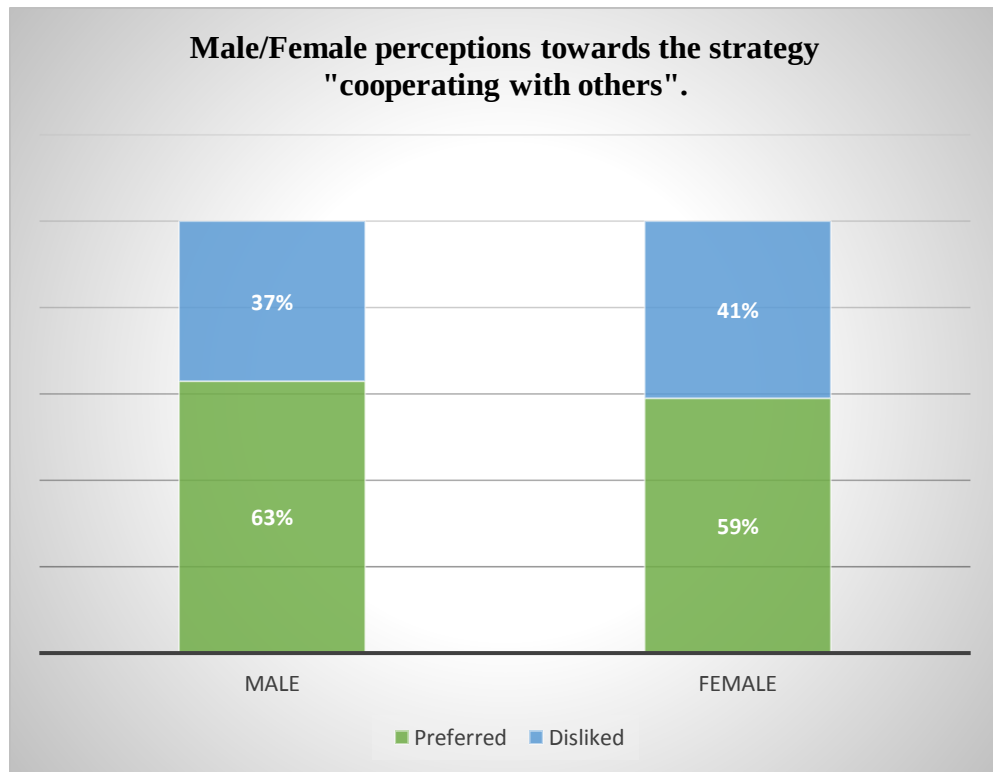


Figure 19

On the other hand, in the post-questionnaire instrument, students were asked to evaluate their perceptions towards the difficulty of the strategy “*cooperating with others*”.

According to *figure 20*, 19% of the male students were more likely to rate the strategy as difficult, in comparison to their female classmates, who only 6% argued that the strategy had been difficult for them. Similarly, 81% of the male students regarded the strategy as easy, whereas the 94% of the female learners considered it as easier. Evidently, there is a big difference between the male and female students’ perceptions towards the difficulty of the strategy; this entails that male students were more likely to regard the strategy as difficult and therefore, they were less likely to use the strategy, in contrast to the majority of their female peers who expressed that the strategy had been easier for them, who were more likely to use the strategy during the tasks.

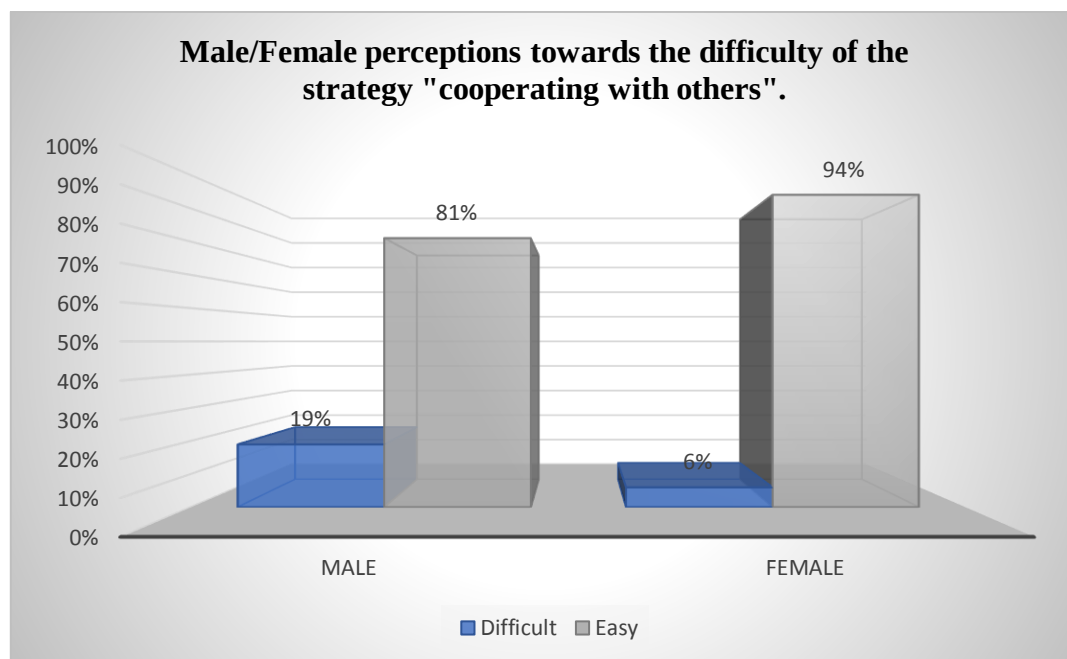


Figure 20

With respect to the strategy “*becoming aware of their classmates’ feelings and thoughts*”, learners’ gender was in some way correlated to the way in which students empathized with one another and the way they used the strategy. Regarding the extent in which learners listened to their partners, *figure 21* shows that 74% of the female students found it easier to listen to their classmates during the tasks; in contrast, 58% of the male learners considered easy to listen to their peers. This means that female students were better listeners than their male partners and additionally, it implies that female learners were more likely to use the strategy than their male classmates. As Oxford (2003) contends, the differences between genders could be given by cultural issues; here, the results may be due to the cultural circumstances that were behind the perceptions towards the use of the strategy.

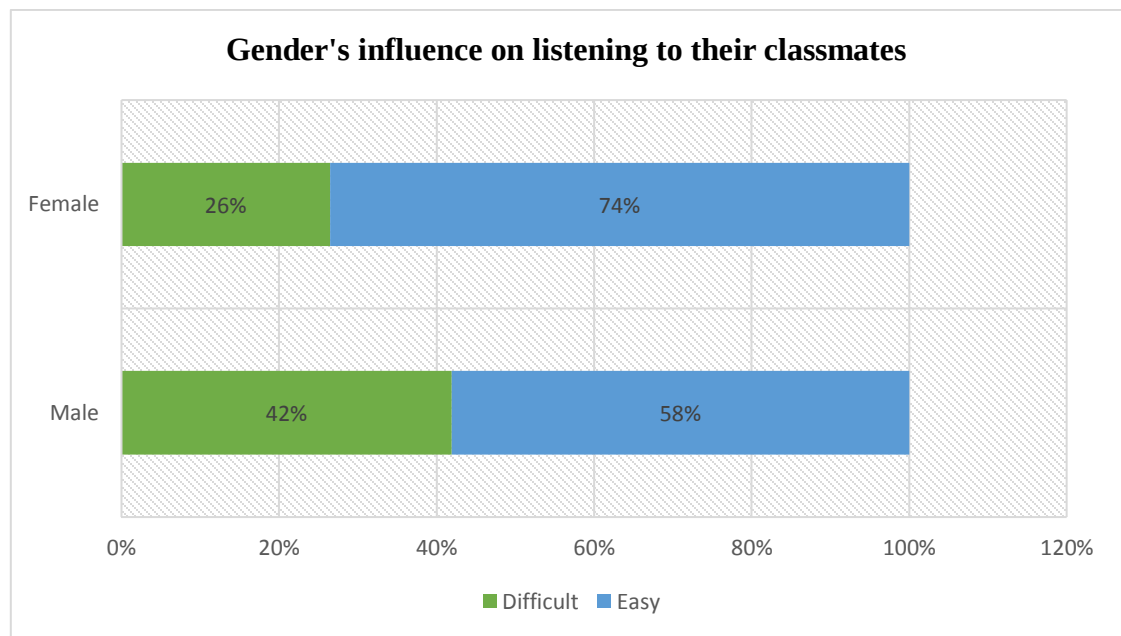


Figure 21

Similarly, the students' gender was also contrasted with the use of gestures to communicate. *Figure 22* suggests that there is no correlation between the learners' gender and the use of gestures, because the difference between both of them is very slightly, and it is not possible to come up with correlations. What is true, is that female students were more likely to regard the use of gestures as an easy strategy (56%), whereas 53% of the male population, claimed that using gestures is supposed to be easier as well. On the other hand, 44% of the female participants considered that using gestures was difficult, whilst 47% of the male students claimed the same.

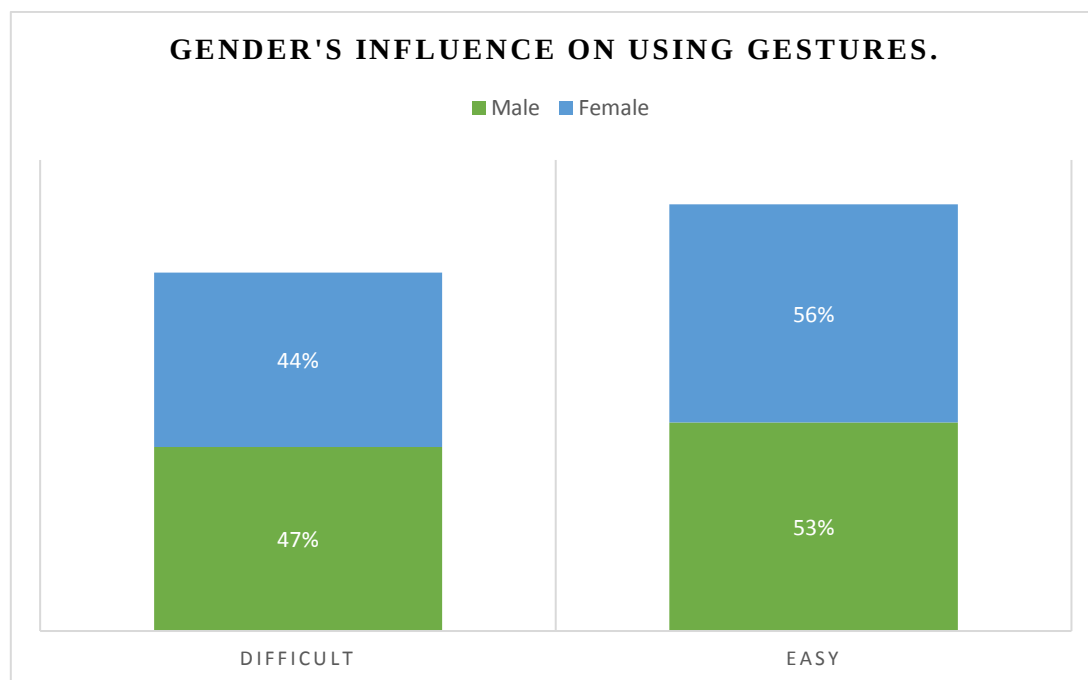


Figure 22

Undoubtedly, gender may be an influential factor in some strategies than in others. It seems therefore, that cultural aspects and students' self-perceptions about their role (and gender) inside classroom may influence the way in which students use the social strategies and at the same time, it may have an influence in the way in which learners interact with their classmates and teacher. Furthermore, interaction cannot be isolated from the micro dynamics of communication, which frames the way in which learners communicate with one another and therefore, pushes them to use the social strategies in different ways. In the current population for instance, female students were less likely to use the strategies for clarification, but were more likely to listen to their peers, whereas male learners were more likely to use the expressions for clarification to their peers and teachers.

2.2.2. Students' age:

The data gathered reveals that 36% of the students enrolled in the class, were 15 years old; 28% of the population belonged to the 16 years old and 20% of the learners were 17 years

old respectively. The population left, belonged to the population who were 14 (7%), 18 (6%) and 19 (1%) years old respectively. By breaking down in ranges the students' age, it was possible to measure in detail the age ranges that were more prone to use one strategy or another.

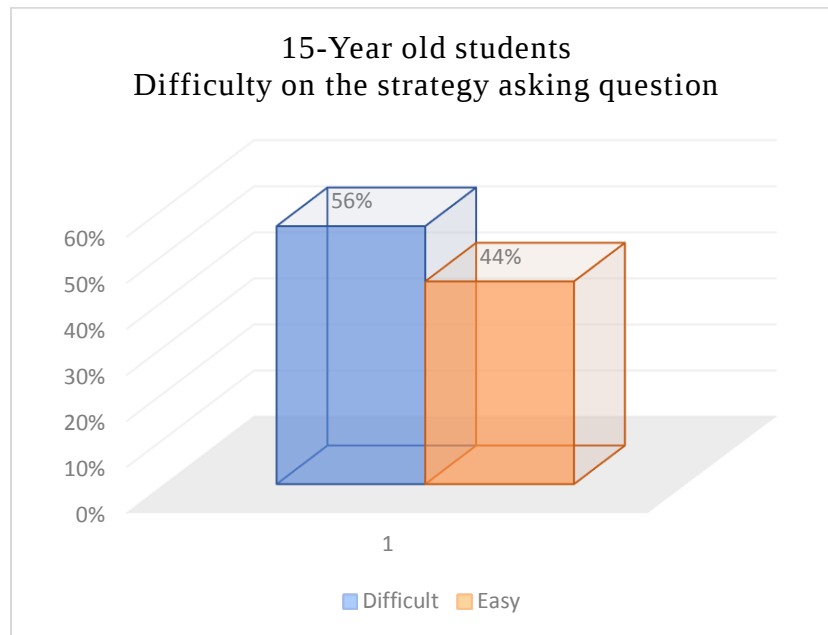


Figure 23

According to *figure 23*, the 15 years old students (that is, the biggest population) considered that the strategy “*asking questions*” had been difficult for them (56%), whereas 11 learners (44%) considered the use of the expressions an easy endeavor. On the other hand, 68% of students whose age belonged to the 16 years old, expressed that the use of strategy had been easy, whereas 32% claimed that they had found it difficult to use the strategy (see *figure 24*).



Figure 24

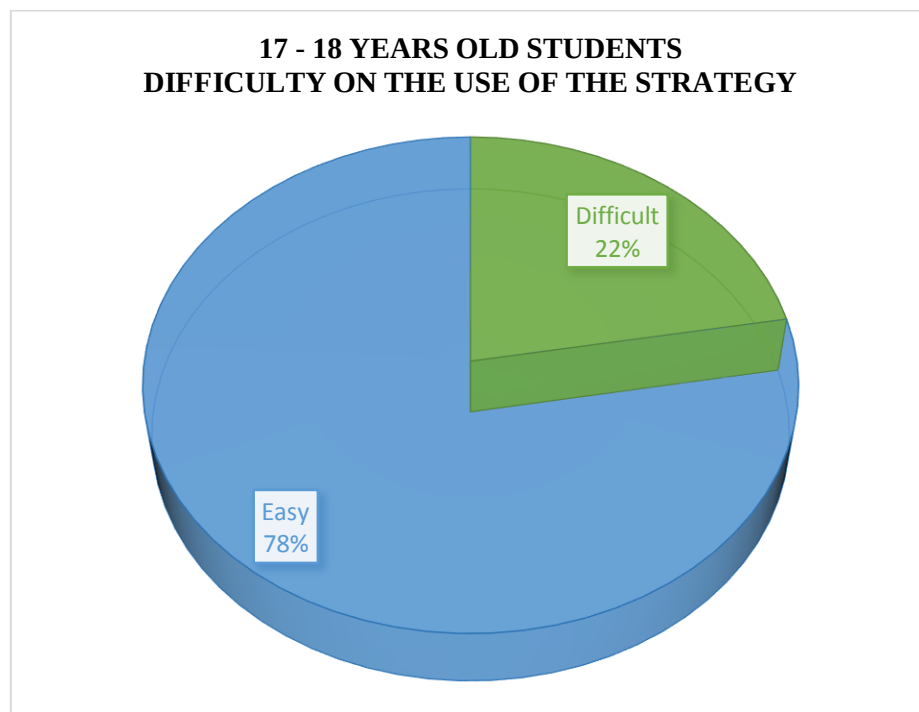


Figure 25

In spite that the age difference is not narrowed, age was one of the main factors that influenced the extent in which learners considered the use of the strategy difficult or easy. From the results gathered, it can be assumed that experience played a role on the use of the strategy, even if the gap of such experience had been 1 year of difference between students. Additionally, students who ranged from the 17 to 18 years old, were more likely to consider the strategy easier than their mates whose aged was lower than them. For instance, 22% of students from 17 to 18 years old, claimed that the strategy had been difficult, whereas 78%

respectively, expressed that the strategy was easy. In other words, the older the student, the easier the use of the strategy (see *figure 25*).

In regards to the strategy “*cooperating with others*”, according to the data gathered, age is not correlated to the strategy use, since there was not a significant number of learners who claimed that the strategy had been difficult. That is, only 26% of the learners who were 16-years old, claimed that the strategy was a challenging strategy to use in class, whereas 74% expressed that it was an easy strategy to use. Therefore, the majority of students (87%) across all ages, expressed that the strategy was easy for them, which entails that there was no correlation between the age and the use of the strategy (see *figure 26*).

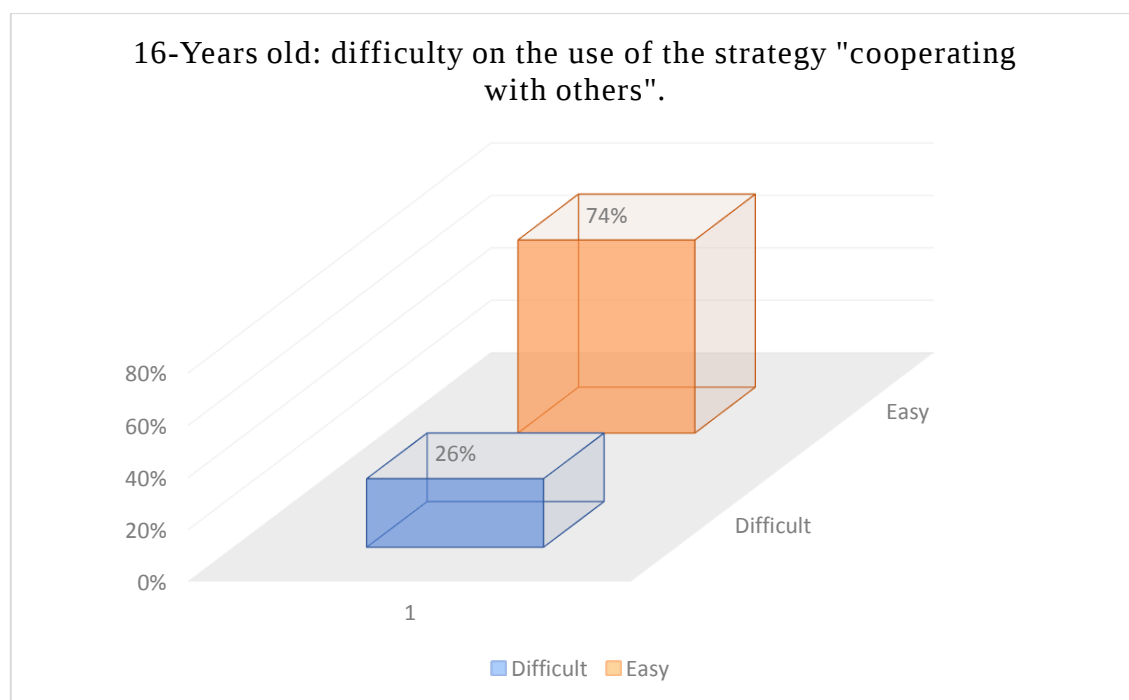


Figure 26

In regards to the students’ perceptions about the strategy “*cooperating with others*” and the learners’ age, in general, the majority of them (across all ages) expressed that they preferred to use the strategy. For instance, according to *figure 27* the population whose percentage is higher than the other ages (that is, 80%), belong to the 14-years old students who participated on the post-questionnaire; whereas those who were 17-years old obtained the

lowest score on rating the strategy as liked. Besides, it seems that the difference among ages did not significantly increased regarding whether students liked the strategy or not, except from the 17 years-old population, who expressed that they disliked to use the strategy (57%). As noted in previous lines, from the data obtained, it can be argued that age is not a determining factor that influenced the use of the strategy, because the values remained uniform across ages, and therefore, the learners' cognitive development is not associated with the use of the strategy "*cooperating with others*".

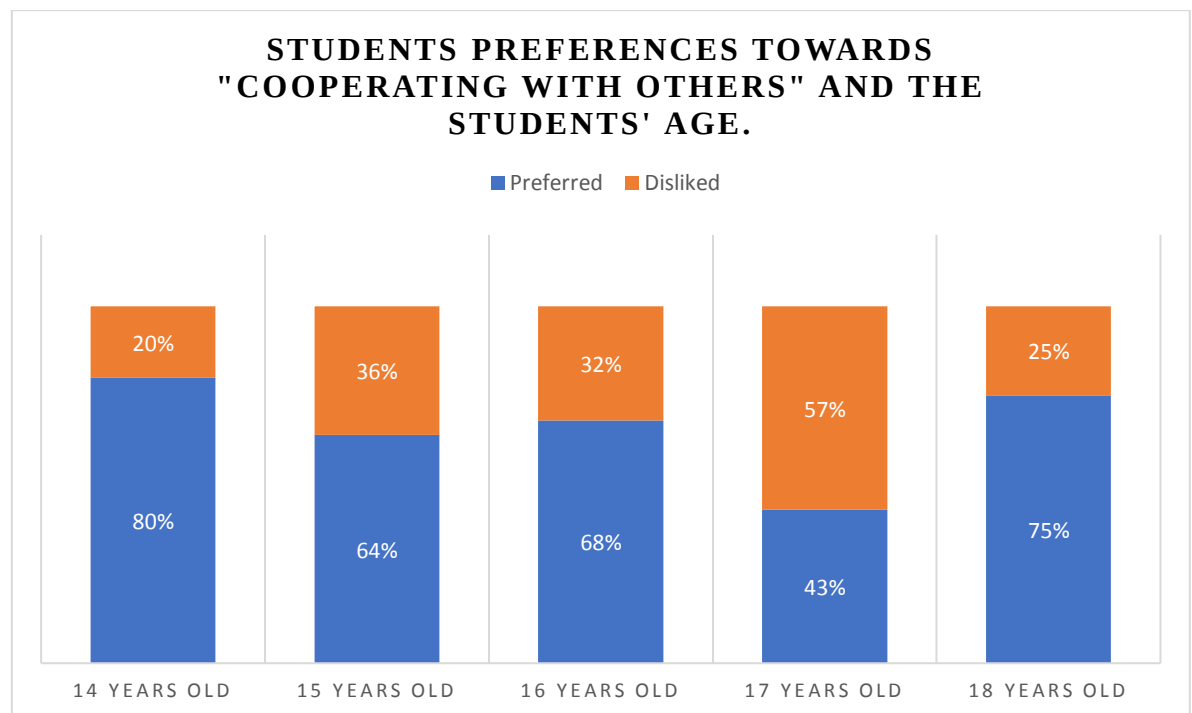


Figure 27

With respect to the students' preference, the strategy "*becoming aware of others' feelings and thoughts*", *figure 28* reveals that only 20% of the 14-year old population preferred to use the strategy, in contrast to the population left (that is, the 15, 16, 17 and 18 years-old respectively), who expressed that they would rather use other strategies to cope with the tasks at hand (for example, *cooperating with others*). In spite that there is not a correlation

between the students' age and the perceptions towards the strategy, it is possible to claim that the strategy usefulness influence the strategy difficulty, rather than the age itself. Similarly, as *figure 29* suggests, almost the same percentages remained the same across ages, except from the population whose students were 14 years old and 17 years old respectively. Accordingly, whilst the former group of participants who claimed that listening to their partners was easier for them, embodied the 80% of the 14 years old population, half of the latter (17 years old) population (50%) regarded the dimension “listening to their partners” as difficult and the other 50% as easier.

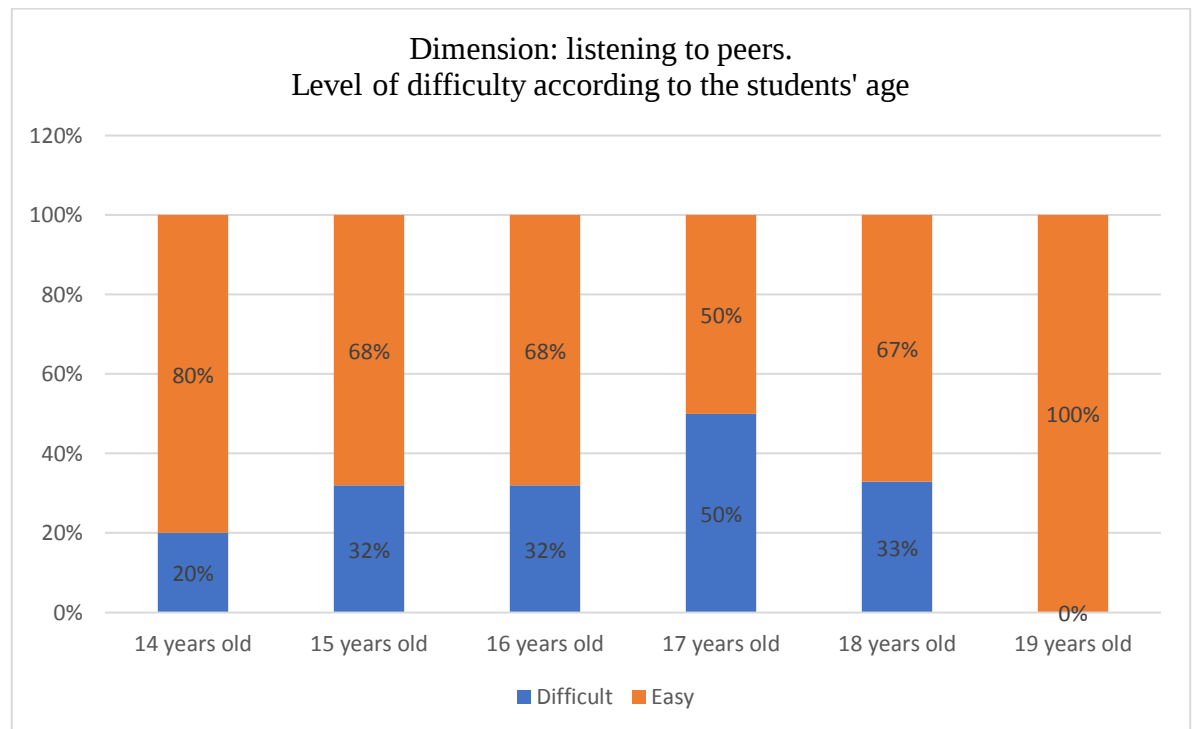


Figure 28

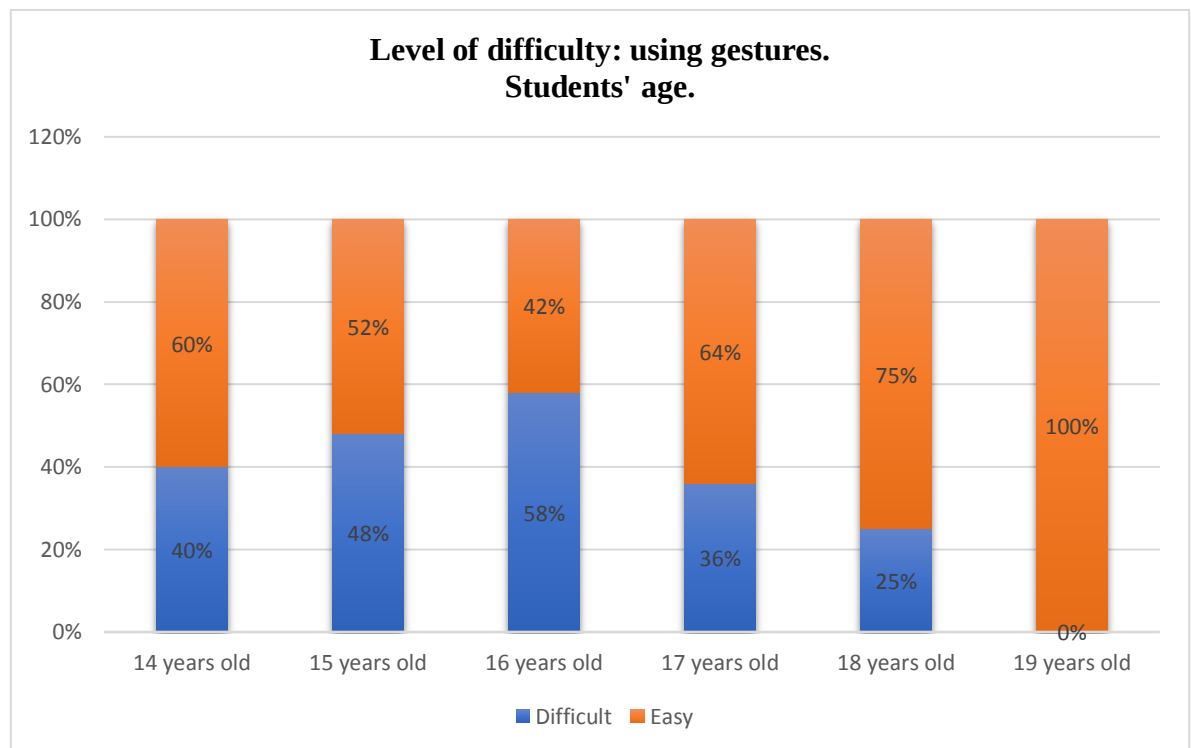


Figure 29

Thus, the results reveal that there is not a significant increase and variability when it comes to compare the students' age and the level of difficulty when learners are asked to listen to their classmates. Evidently, students whose age ranged from 15 to 16 years old respectively, found the strategy difficult, whereas those who were 17, 18 and 19 years old, regarded the use of gestures as an easy strategy to practice. It seems, therefore, that using gestures require more cognitive effort and awareness in order to use the strategy. As some of the excerpts previously presented, students did not use the strategy correctly because they did not know how to use them and were not aware of the importance of using gestures. In contrast, those who claimed to have find the strategy easier, knew the importance of using gestures to convey meaning as effectively as possible. Interestingly, 60% of the students who were 14 years-old considered that using gestures was easier, in contrast to the 40% left. Likewise, this leads to take into account the number of students that belongs to each population, because as noted before, the 15 years-old and 16 years-old of the participants,

embodied the majority of the population studied in this research (36% and 28% respectively); thus, those participants are the ones whose results have more relevance. To sum up, expertise and awareness towards the use of the social strategy were key elements that influenced the strategy choice. Certainly, the more students are exposed and trained to the learning strategies, the more useful they will find it and the more they will use it. Additionally, previous knowledge about the strategies themselves are also important factors that influence the strategy choice.

2.3. Sub-category: the task requirements and level of difficulty determined the way in which learners used the social strategies with their teacher and peers.

The majority of learners considered “*asking questions*” to be the most difficult strategy they had to deal with, during the pedagogical implementation. As some of the students argued in the post-questionnaire, this strategy required from them to use and understand English in an appropriate way. Even pronunciation was one of elements that influenced the use of the strategy. Further evidence that supports these claims, can be found on the following fragments that students wrote on the questionnaire, concerning this fact:

- S55: Porque esas frases y hablar en inglés. Cosa que no entendí.
- S20: No sé pronunciar muy bien algunas palabras entonces eso da pena
- S57: Porque no entendía muy bien las palabras y cuando las usaba, los otros no respondían.

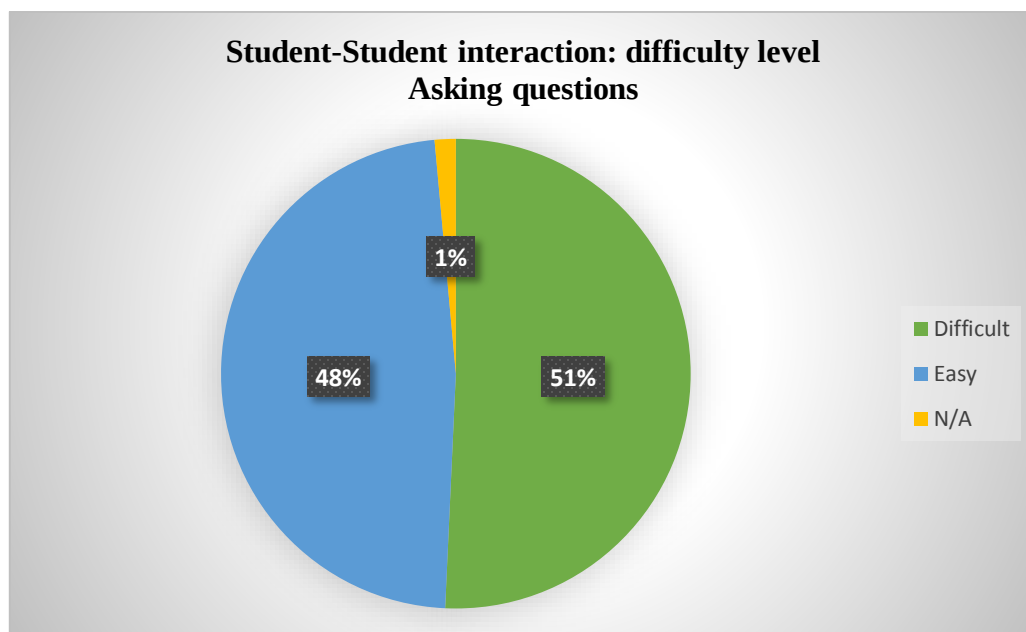


Figure 30

Nevertheless, English proficiency was not the only factor that influence the strategy choice, but also the task requirements and the strategy itself, which, according to the participants was too complex to understand. In the post-questionnaire applied at the end of the pedagogical implementation, half of the learners (51%) claimed that asking questions was difficult for them to follow, whereas the other half (49%) argued that this strategy was easy for them to use (see *figure 30*). Additionally, during the fourth day of the implementation, students were asked to rank the level of difficulty among the strategies they had been using so far. Thus, 42% of the participants expressed that the strategy “*asking questions*” was found it difficult to follow the strategy, whilst 14% ranked this strategy in a medium difficulty, and 29% of the students respectively labelled it as an easy strategy to be used (see *figure 31*).

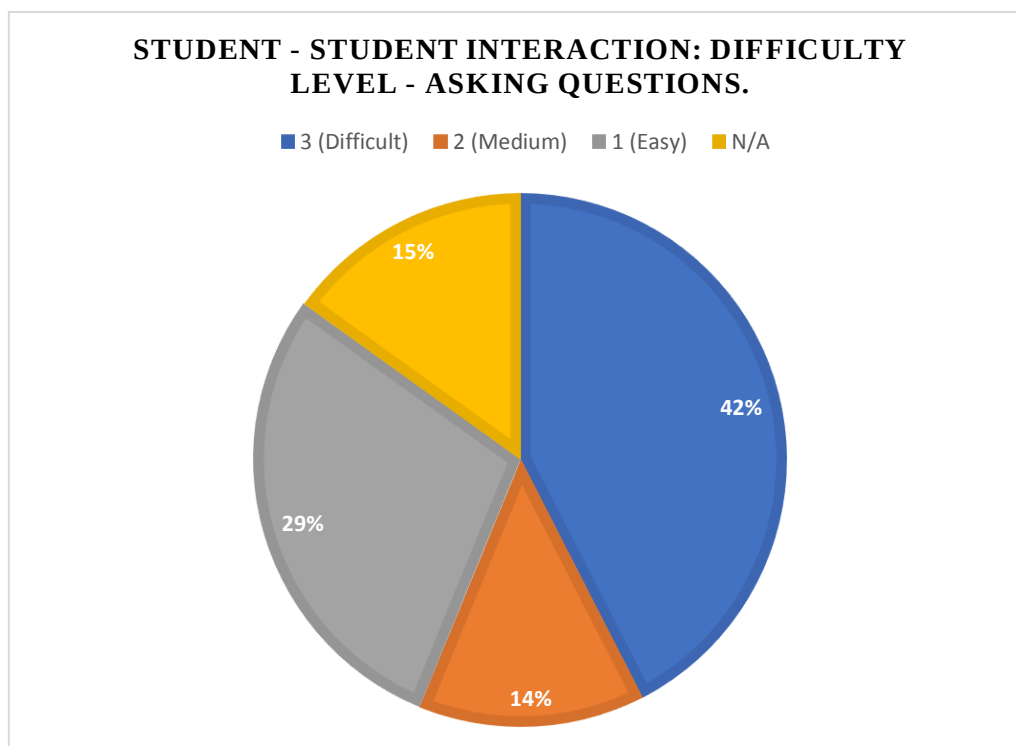


Figure 31

Furthermore, according to the results gathered from the post-questionnaire, students expressed the cognitive difficulties they had in regards to the use of the strategy. Here are some fragments of the opinions that students gave in the post-questionnaire, as a result of their meta-cognitive reflection:

- S64: No me gustó la estrategia, porque casi no la entendí
- S56: No la entendí muy bien (la estrategia) y se me dificultó mucho.
- S22: En algunos contextos, no entendía la estrategia.
- S8: No la logré entender.
- S59: No me aprendí muy bien las expresiones y no sabía en qué momento usarlas.

Doubtless, not only the use of the strategy was influenced by the cognitive constrains and English proficiency level that students had by the time of implementing the lessons, but these factors also affected the way in which students interacted with one another. As noted above, 51% of the students felt that they did not understand the strategy or that they simply

did not have the appropriate level of English to communicate with their classmates (including the pronunciation and vocabulary knowledge), leading them to believe that they were not able to interact with their classmates by means of using the expressions for clarification and verification.

In regards to the strategy “*cooperating with others*”, figure 32 reveals that 33% of the students considered the strategy to be in a medium difficulty, whereas 30% claimed that the strategy had been difficult for them. It entails that in spite that the students’ perceptions towards their performance, the majority of them claimed that the strategy was not easy. Therefore, it seems that there is no correlation between the difficulty of the strategy “*cooperating with others*” and the learners’ performance, by the time they used the strategy.

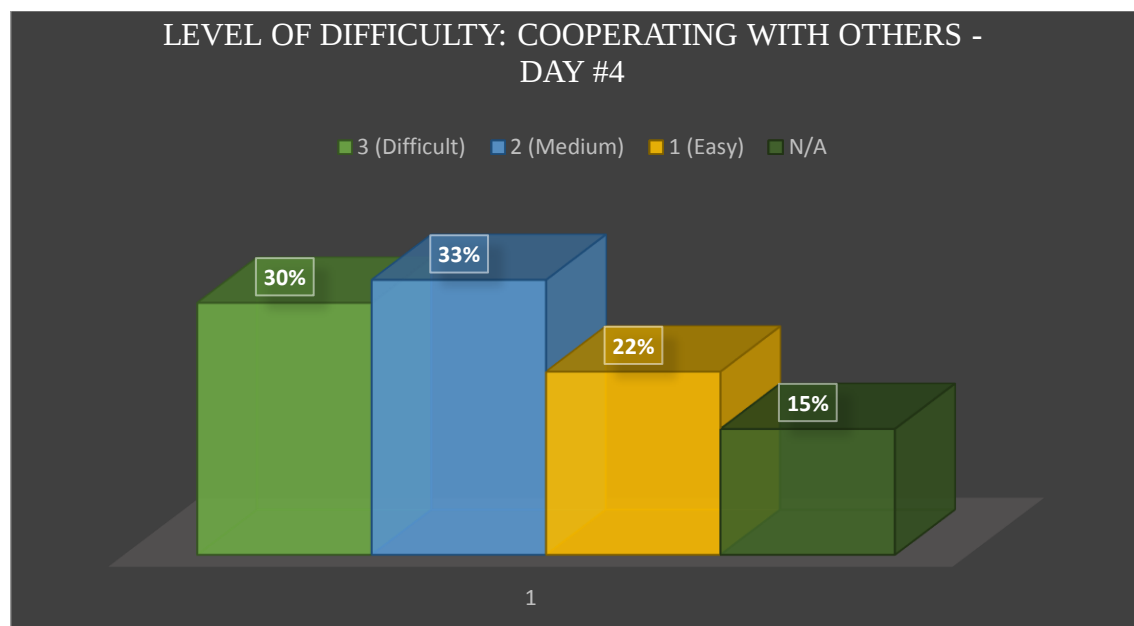


Figure 32

Nevertheless, according to the data gathered from the post-questionnaire applied at the end of the implementation, 87% of the students expressed that the strategy “*cooperating with others*” had been easy for them, whereas 13% claimed that they found it difficult to follow (see figure 33). On the other hand, the data gathered from the post-questionnaire suggests

that students considered that the strategy they liked the most was “*cooperating with others*”, and by contrasting the results, it can be assumed that there is a correlation between the usefulness of the strategy and its difficulty.

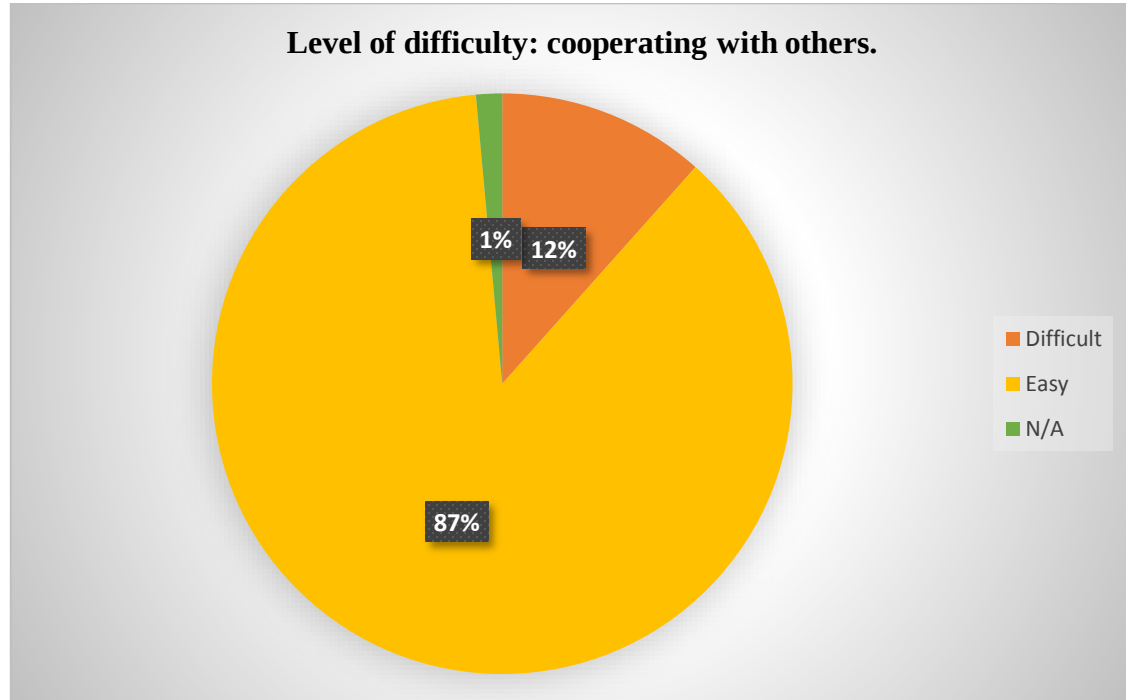


Figure 33

According to *figure 30*, during the second day of the implementation, 88% students argue that the aforementioned strategy had been useful for them, whereas 12% claim that the strategy was not fruitful for them. In short, the results obtained mean that the more students find the strategy useful, the easier they will find the strategy and the more learners could interact with one another. Some fragments support this conclusion. Here are some excerpts taken from the questionnaire which show why learners considered the strategy “cooperating with others” easy:

- S35: Por qué puedo hacer que mis compañeros entiendan y yo también.
- S18: Porque así puedo interactuar más con mis compañeros.
- S9: Ayudé a mis compañeros a realizar las actividades que el profesor nos puso.

- S64: Porque nos comunicábamos con nuestros compañeros para resolver las actividades.

Finally, in regards to the strategy “*becoming aware of others’ feelings and thoughts*” some of the students claimed that it was a difficult strategy, since the majority of the learners did not use or did not understand it. Here are some apprentice’s excerpts taken from the post-questionnaire:

- S8: No lo logré entender.
- S4: Muchas veces no entendía, ni tampoco colaboraban mis compañeros.
- S44: Porque no entendí el tema, no empaticé bien. Se me dificultó.

Likewise, the few people who preferred to use the strategy, expressed that the strategy was easier, because they had had previous experience and knowledge about the strategy. For instance, one of the learners claimed the following:

- S23: Tengo Buena socialización con los compañeros por lo tanto se me hizo más fácil.

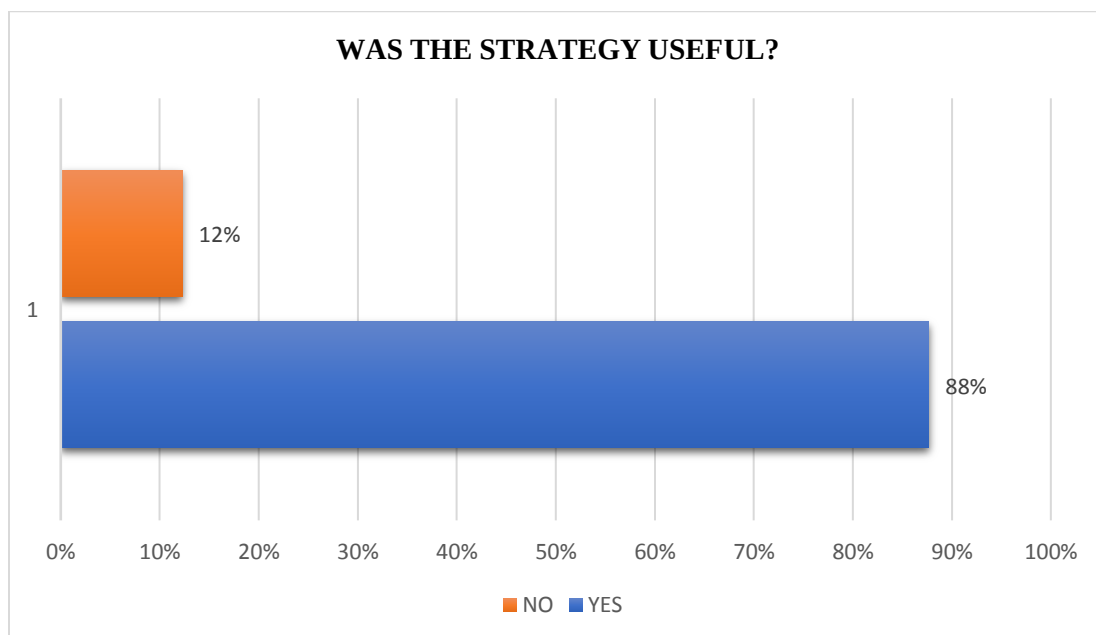


Figure 34

Furthermore, in order to measure the extent in which students considered that *listening to their partners and using gestures* had been a difficult or easy task to carry out the majority of learners considered the strategy to be easy. As *figure 35* points out, on one hand, 62% of the participants argued that listening to their peers was easier for them, whereas 33% of the learners, claimed that it had been difficult for them to listen to their peers. On the other hand, in regards to the extent they considered difficult or easy to use gestures to communicate with their peers, the data suggests that 46% of the learners claimed that using gestures had been difficult for them, whereas 54% expressed that using gestures was an easy endeavor to accomplish. In contrast to the previous dimension, using gestures seemed to be a more difficult strategy to use, because they considered that they did not have the knowledge about the strategy, or they could not do gestures or they did not get along with their peers.

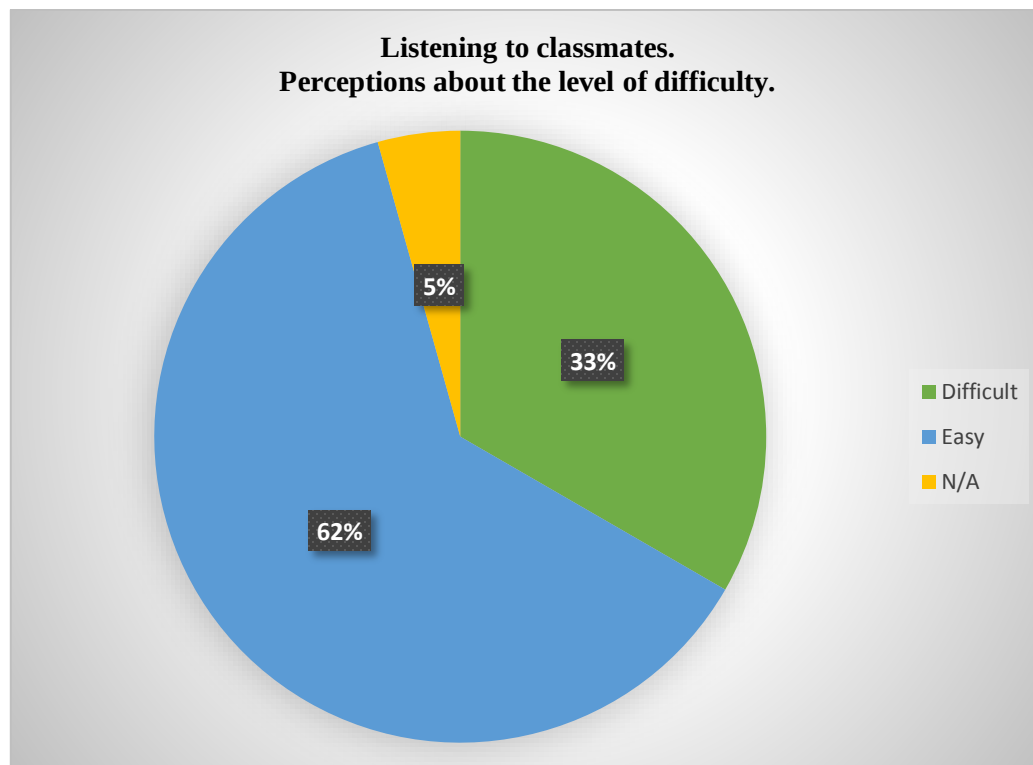


Figure 35

Further evidence that support this claim, lies on some excerpts found on the post-implementation questionnaire, in which they were asked to explain why they disliked the strategy “*becoming aware of others’ feelings and thoughts*”:

- S31: No sé hacer gestos.
- S44: Porque no entendí el tema, no empaticé bien. Se me dificultó.
- S19: Porque no entendí cómo hacer esta estrategia y se me dificultó.
- S29: Porque mis compañeros no hablaban inglés y no hacían gestos ni tonos de voz.
- S58: Muchas veces no nos la llevamos muy bien con los otros compañeros.

However, students seemed to be aware of the importance of this strategy. One of the fragments that could support this sentence, is one excerpt of a student, who expressed the importance of using this strategy:

- S28: La estrategia me gusto porque me pareció importante o útil los gestos y cambios de voz.

In short, the task requirement and usefulness of the strategy played an important role on the strategy choice. On one hand, the more difficult and complex the strategy, the less likely the strategy was employed by students. On the other hand, the more useful the strategy, the more it was employed by learners. After all, students should resort to the different social strategies whenever they are facing a challenging task. Finally, the extent in which students were familiar with the strategy also play a key role on the social strategies choice.

5. Conclusions.

Considering the research questions stated at the beginning of the study dealt with describing how the instruction of social strategies played an important role on the way tenth graders at the I.E. La Despensa school interacted with their classmates and the teacher and the factors that influenced the preference towards the social strategy use, it was possible for the current study to make evident the overall outcomes and findings that helped to solve the research questions initially stated. Thus, following are the conclusions that can be drawn from the data analysis:

- The instruction of social strategies modified and configured the way in which learners interacted with their classmates and teachers. After all, interaction is about exchanging meaning in order to accomplish a specific objective which is framed within the dynamics of social interaction. That is, interaction entails paying attention to what the other says, use expressions for verification or clarification, cooperating with the other person, etc. And it seems that after the implementation, learners used more negotiation strategies with their teacher and peers (such as expressions for asking for clarification), were more aware of what was said (listening to the other is crucial for interacting, since the person lets the speaker know that he is paying attention to him), what was left unsaid (body language, gestures, tone of voice, etc.) and were more willing to cooperate with their classmates.
- Even though some learners considered the use of the strategy “*becoming aware of others’ feelings and thoughts*” useless, it is worth pointing out that the importance of instructing about empathy and paralinguistic features, lies on providing students with plenty of tools to communicate more effectively and convey certain ideas and opinions using different social strategies (such as expressing moods, using gestures, changing the tone of voice, etc.) so that students can be understood in a natural conversation either in the target or in their mother tongue in a more meaningful and useful way.

- The social strategies that were introduced throughout the pedagogical implementation allowed students to take an active role over the communicative situations (interactive scenarios) that were proposed as part of each lesson (tasks). This aforementioned role, led students to be autonomous in regards to the use of the expressions for clarification, to cooperate with their classmates in order to solve a linguistic task and to use conversational strategies (such as showing surprise, changing the tone of voice, etc.) to convey ideas and opinions in a more natural way.
- The harder the strategy, the more likely students resorted to strategies that required from them to use Spanish, rather than English. For instance, learners were more prone to employ the strategy *cooperating with others*, because they could use it in Spanish, whereas learners avoided asking questions for verification and clarification, because they considered not having the appropriate English level to use the expressions. Evidently, the students' English proficiency level was an important factor that limited the use of English in class, leading students to resort to their mother tongue in order to ask for verification and to cooperate with one another in order to complete the activities in class.
- Students perceived their classmates as less deficient as the days of the implementation continued. Interestingly, in most of the strategies introduced, students did not regard their peers as excellent at using the strategy either (with the exception of the strategy *cooperating with others*), whereas in the self-assessment formats, learners were more likely to consider their performance slightly better at using the strategies, in contrast to the perception that their classmates had towards them. Considering that students were not accustomed to use the social strategies to interact with their peers (taking into account what the needs analysis also revealed), students were not involved in meta-cognitive reflection about their peers' efficiency and their own performance as well, leading students to perceive in a less accurate way their own performance as well as their peers' efficiency at using the strategies. Still,

for future research, it is suggested to examine in detail the extent in which learners have been trained for using the strategies before carrying out a pedagogical implementation.

- The way in which female and male students interacted with their classmates and teacher, was determined by cultural aspects that influenced the way in which girls employed the social strategies to interact with their peers, in the context of the study. For instance, girls were more likely to feel shier or more insecure about their English level, leading them to use the expressions for clarification and verification less often, in contrast to their male partners.

5.1. Limitations.

The study of social interaction and human behavior can sometimes be troublesome to research. In contrast to the experimental studies, social studies can yield to unexpected results that were not initially considered and may present certain limitations that are worth discussing in the study in order to provide future researchers with recommendations to improve their research and teaching practices.

One of the main drawbacks of the current study, was the number of sessions implemented throughout the study. It seems for instance, that students required more time and sessions to study and practice the social strategies in a more effective way. By looking closely at the results, students were more likely to use the strategies in general and to interact with their classmates in a better way, however, the percentages increased very slightly over time. Moreover, considering that interaction is a key element to be studied and analyzed in detail as Brown (2007) contends, it is the heart of communication) and that social strategies are directly linked to the way in which learners interact, five sessions were not enough to effectively teach the social strategies in the most appropriate way. If we observe closely at the results collected, the extent in which students improved the way in which they interacted, took place little by little and step by step. Not to mention that the students' proficiency level constrained the instruction of the strategies. For further sessions, it is suggested to

work in a longitudinal study that could provide at least more than 5 sessions to teach the social strategies.

Likewise, the time devoted to explain to the students the importance of expanding the use of the strategy was very short and therefore, it was not possible to measure the extent in which learners were autonomous in the use of the strategy outside class.

Furthermore, the number of learners should be considered for further research. For example, the current study dealt with 36 to 40 students for each classroom, for a total of 70 or 80 students.

Evidently, the number of students may have played a role on the study, since it modified the way in which students interacted with one another during the activities (that is, most of the time, students worked in groups rather than in pairs). Likewise, the number of learners limited the scope in which the teacher could monitor and control the use of the strategy during the tasks.

Another important aspect to highlight is the time in which one of the classes took place. For instance, those tenth graders who had the English class during the last academic hours, were less likely to be engaged and motivated in class, because learners felt tired or unwilling to participate. In the same way, the class hour should be considered as well, because the later the class, the less motivated would the students be. In the current study, it seemed that those students who had English class at the end of the day, were more likely to be distracted or to be tired in class.

In regards to the data analyzed from the strategy *developing cultural understanding*, the majority of learners do not practice English outside class, because they were neither provided with appropriate strategies and tools to do exercises at home nor to use strategies to practice this language outside class. Therefore, the majority of students were less likely to have checked the website (*lyrics training*) to deepen their knowledge about the language and its culture. In fact, the extent in which students practiced English outside class, decreased during the pedagogical implementation.

Finally, some of the resources and facilities of the school could not be used appropriately. For example, the video-beam of each classroom did not work. It would have been great to have prepared conversational models for students, so that learners could interact by using as much English as possible. Similarly, some of the materials prepared were not engaging and motivating for learners (see the section *Design 3.6, page 24*). For instance, the song selected for them in the fifth day of class, did not have the best quality of sound and moreover, it was not appealing for students.

5.2. Implications.

This action research study raises new opportunities for further research in regards to language interaction and learning strategies since it provides future investigators with both limitations and findings that can serve as guidelines in order to carry out a study of the same nature following the line of research proposed in previous lines. Of course, more research is necessary to refine, validate and polish the findings presented in this document.

Likewise, factors such as the amount of sessions implemented and the number of students constrained the scope of research in regards to some learning strategies. For instance, the current study could not fully deepen on the instruction of the strategy *developing cultural understanding*. Thus, further research could elaborate and expand on this strategy by enriching the constructs and findings here discussed. By the same token, future research can work on developing a longitudinal research that could tackle the initial problem established (that is, the amount of sessions devoted to introduce the social strategies).

Similarly, further research can work and elaborate on the stage *expansion*, following the CALLA approach. As previously discussed, one of the main limitations of the current study had to do with the time devoted to expand the use of the strategy and therefore measure the extent in which students use the social strategy outside class (or at least another context different from the one

provided in the research project). Thus, further research can focus on specifically on this state of learning strategies instructions.

In short, there is a great deal of work left to do. To this point there are few studies out there, that have been interested in studying about the instruction of a single set of strategies and the role it played on the way in which learners interacted. For instance, the current research project aimed to study the impact that the instruction of social strategy had on the way in which a group of tenth graders interacted with their teacher and peers in a public school. But, what about if the population were kids? What about if the population took place in a virtual environment? Would the results be the same in a private institution? All of these questions can be taken as a reference for further studies.

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Appendix 1: Needs Analysis.



UNIVERSIDAD SANTO TOMÁS

NOMBRE DEL RESPONSABLE: ANDRÉS DAVID BALLÉN ANTONIO

Estimado(a) estudiante, lo invitamos a que responda el siguiente cuestionario, el cual busca conocer las estrategias que usa para interactuar con sus compañeros. Responda de la manera más honesta posible. **Marque con una X su respuesta.**

Generalmente, me gusta trabajar en las clases de inglés de forma (seleccione una opción):

Individual	
Grupal	X
De a parejas	
Ninguna de las anteriores	
Todas las anteriores	

1) Me gusta hacer las tareas de inglés con:

- Mis compañeros (X)
- Individualmente ()
- Mis familiares ()
- Otros (especifique quienes) _____.

2) ¿Qué hago cuando no entiendo una instrucción dada por el profesor en inglés?

- a) Le pregunto al profesor para que repita la instrucción ()
- b) Le pregunto a mis compañeros que me repitan ()
- c) Me quedo callado (X)
- d) Otro (especifique cual) _____.

3) ¿Qué hago cuando no entiendo una palabra en inglés?

- a) Le pregunto al profesor para que repita la instrucción ()
- b) Le pregunto a mis compañeros (X)
- c) Me quedo callado ()
- d) Busco en el diccionario o en el celular ()
- e) Otro (especifique cual) _____.

4) ¿Qué tipo de ayuda pido cuando no entiendo el tema de la clase?

- a) Le pido a mi profesor que me clarifique el tema. ()
- b) Le pido ayuda a mis compañeros para que me aclaren el tema. (X)
- c) Consulto a otra persona diferente a mi profesor a mis compañeros:
¿Quién? (especifique) _____.
- d) Busco en otras fuentes:
¿Cuáles? (ej. Internet, libro guía, etc.) Internet.

5) ¿Qué tipo de ayuda pido para hacer mis tareas en inglés?

- A. Le pido a mi profesor que me ayude fuera de la clase. ()
- B. Trabajo con mis compañeros fuera de la clase (X)
- C. No hago tareas de inglés ()
- D. Busco ayuda de otras fuentes:
¿Cuáles? (ej. Internet, libros, etc.) _____.
- E. Otra (especifique cual) _____.
- F. No utilizo ningún tipo de ayuda ()

6) ¿Profundizo los temas vistos en clase cuando estoy en la casa o fuera de clase?

Sí ☒

No ☐

7) De las siguientes expresiones, indico con una X cuáles conozco el significado en español.

- Can you repeat, please? ☒
- How do you say _____ in English? ☐
- What's the meaning of _____? ☐
- I don't understand. ☐
- Can you speak slowly? ☐
- I have a question. ☒
- Ninguna de las anteriores ☐

8) De las anteriores expresiones, indico con una X cuales uso en el salón de clase:

- Can you repeat, please? ☒
- How do you say _____ in English? ☐
- What's the meaning of _____? ☐
- I don't understand. ☐
- Can you speak slowly? ☐
- I have a question. ☒
- Ninguna de las anteriores. ☐

9) ¿Hablo en inglés con mis compañeros en el salón de clase? (Marque con una X su opción)

Siempre	A veces	Nunca
		☒

10) ¿Hablo en inglés con mi profesor de inglés en el salón de clase? (Marque con una X su opción)

Siempre	A veces	Nunca
		☒

11) ¿Hablo en inglés en otros contextos fuera del salón de clase?

Sí ☐

No ☒

Sí respondió sí, indique en cuales contextos (ej. en institutos de inglés).

Gracias por su participación.



Appendix 2: self-assessment and co-evaluation formats.

Implementation: day 1.

Learning Strategy Assessment			
Nombre: <u>Rober Dario Ruiz Morcia.</u>	Curso <u>10.02</u>		
• ¿Use expresiones como "I don't understand", "can you repeat, please?", "How do you say _____ in English?", para pedir a mi profesor que me aclarara las instrucciones?	😊	😐	☹️
• ¿Use expresiones como "I don't understand", "can you repeat, please?", "How do you spell _____? para pedir a mi compañero que repitiera lo que dijo?	😊	😐	☹️
• Lo que más se me dificultó de la estrategia fue <u>hablar en inglés</u> . • Lo que más se me facilitó de la estrategia fue <u>escuchar</u> .			

Implementation: day 2.

Self-assessment – Day 2.

Learning Strategy Assessment			
Nombre:	Curso		
• ¿Use expresiones como "I don't understand", "can you repeat, please?", "How do you say _____ in English?", para pedir a mi profesor que me aclarara las instrucciones?	😊	☹️	😐
• ¿Use expresiones como "I don't understand", "can you repeat, please?", "How do you spell _____? para pedir a mi compañero que repitiera lo que dijo?	😊	😐	☹️
• ¿Cooperé con mis compañeros para completar la historia?	☹️	😐	☹️
• Lo que más se me dificultó de la estrategia de cooperar con mis compañeros fue <u>Nada</u> . • Lo que más se me facilitó de la estrategia de cooperar con mis compañeros fue <u>que todos cooperamos para entender la historia.</u>			
Marque SI o No con una X:	Si	No	
La estrategia "cooperar con mis compañeros" fue útil para mí.	X		
Las instrucciones dadas por el profesor fueron claras.	X		
La actividad fue una pérdida de tiempo.		X	
Participé activamente en clase.	X		

Co-evaluation – Day 2

Learning Strategy Assessment - Co-evaluación			
Nombre:		Curso:	
Mi compañero usó expresiones como "can you repeat that, please?", "how do you spell ____" para completar la historia.	😊	😊	✗
Mi compañero cooperó conmigo para completar la historia.	😊	😊	✗
Mi compañero:			
➤ Fue excelente usando la estrategia "cooperando con otros" 😊	😊	(X)	
➤ Necesita trabajar en algunos aspectos de la estrategia "cooperando con otros" 😊	😊	()	
➤ Necesita trabajar mucho más en la estrategia de cooperar con los demás 😊	😊	()	

Implementation: day 3.

Self-assessment and co-evaluation formats.

Learning Strategy Co-evaluation			
Nombre:	Curso:	Fecha:	
Mi compañero hizo movimientos y gestos para expresar sus ideas en inglés	😊	😊	😊
Mi compañero utilizó diversos tonos de voz para expresar sus ideas y emociones en inglés.	😊	😊	😊
Mi compañero me escuchó atentamente cuando le hablé en inglés	😊	😊	😊
Mi compañero:			
Fue excelente usando la estrategia "empatizando con otros"	😊		
Necesita trabajar algunos aspectos de la estrategia "empatizando con otros"	😊		
Necesita mejorar y trabajar mucho más en la estrategia	😊		

Auto-evaluación			
Nombre: Xiomara Rincón	Curso: 70-03	Fecha: 28/03/13	
¿Puse atención a los movimientos, gestos y tono de voz de mi compañero cuando hablaba en inglés?	😊	😊	😊
¿Escuché atentamente a mi compañero cuando me hablaba en inglés?	😊	😊	😊
¿Esperé a que mi compañero hablara, para poder hablar?	😊	😊	😊
Marque SI o No con una X:			
	SI	NO	
La estrategia de "empatizando con otros" fue útil para mí.	✓		
Las instrucciones dadas por el profesor fueron claras	✓		
La actividad fue una pérdida de tiempo.		✓	
Participé activamente en clase.	✓		

Implementation: day 4.

Co-evaluation format – Day 4

Learning Strategy Co-evaluation			
Nombre: Paula Vergara Loloano	Curso: 10-03	Fecha:	
Mi compañero usó expresiones como "how do you say ____ in English?", "What's the meaning of ____ in English/Spanish?" "Can you repeat that, please?", etc.	😊	😊	●
Mi compañero cooperó conmigo para desarrollar la actividad.	●	😊	😊
Mi compañero me escuchó atentamente cuando le hablé en inglés	😊	●	😊
¿Mi compañero se le dificultó (ej. El uso de las expresiones):			
¿Mi compañero se le facilitó (ej. Cooperar conmigo):			

Self-assessment format – Day 4

Appendix 3: Post-questionnaire.



UNIVERSIDAD SANTO TOMÁS

NOMBRE DEL RESPONSABLE: ANDRÉS DAVID BALLÉN ANTONIO

Estimado(a) estudiante, está cordialmente invitado a responder el siguiente cuestionario el cual busca conocer el uso de las estrategias de aprendizaje adquiridas, y su estilo de aprendizaje. Responda de la manera más honesta posible.

Nombre: Johan Beltrán Díaz

Edad: 16

Curso: 10-03

Indique el nivel de dificultad al usar las siguientes estrategias de aprendizaje. Marque con una X su respuesta:

I. Estrategia de clarificación y verificación.

	FACIL	DIFICIL
a) Usar las expresiones de clarificación y verificación en inglés (ejemplo: "how do you say...", "What is the meaning of...", "I don't understand", etc.) para hablar con mis compañeros		X
b) Usar las expresiones de clarificación y verificación en inglés (ejemplo: "how do you say...", "What is the meaning of...", "I don't understand", etc.) para hablar con mi profesor.		X

II. Estrategia de cooperación.

	FACIL	DIFICIL
a) Ayudar a mis compañeros en el desarrollo de las actividades.	X	
b) Cooperar con mi compañero para desarrollar las actividades en clase.		X

III. Estrategia de cultura y empatía.

	FACIL	DIFICIL
a) Escuchar atentamente lo que mi compañero me decía en inglés.		
b) Usar gestos y tono de voz para mostrar interés a lo que mi compañero decía en inglés.	X	
c) Consulté la página " lyricstraining " para practicar inglés con canciones.	SI	NO
		X

1) ¿Profundizo los temas vistos en clase cuando estoy en la casa o fuera de clase?

Sí ☐

No ☒

2) ¿Hablo en inglés en otros contextos fuera del salón de clase?

Sí ☐

No ☒

Sí respondió sí, indique en cuales contextos (ej. en institutos de inglés, redes sociales, etc.).



UNIVERSIDAD SANTO TOMÁS

NOMBRE DEL RESPONSABLE: ANDRÉS DAVID BALLÉN ANTONIO

- 3) De las anteriores estrategias sociales (Clarificación, cooperación, cultura y empatía), ¿Cuál le gustó más?**

¿Por qué?

- 4) De las anteriores estrategias sociales (Clarificación, cooperación, cultura y empatía), ¿Cuál le gustó menos?**

¿Por qué?

Appendix 4: didactic unit.

GENERAL ASPECTS

Title: Time flies.

Level: 10°.

Term: first and second period.

Temporalization:

Author: Andrés Ballén Antonio

INTRODUCTION

The current Didactic Unit will cover the first and beginning part of the second period of an EFL group of tenth graders at the I.E. la Despensa School and consisted of sixth sessions (including the final lesson). There were several topics that were covered throughout the implementation and which were considered according to the curriculum of the school. Moreover, the aim of the Didactic Unit, is to provide students with plenty of communicative and interactive tasks, so that use the social strategies in order to facilitate communication between their classmates and their teacher.

JUSTIFICATION

Long time ago, the MEN began to see about the ways to implement strategies so that teachers and students, in some years could improve their level in English as a foreign language. The purpose of the ongoing Didactic Unit, is to provide plenty of interactive spaces throughout the practice of speaking and writing skills, based on tasks that ask from them to engage in reading and listening exercises. Furthermore, students are expected to get enough social strategies in order to facilitate the communication in English with both, their peers and teachers. For that reason, learners will be asked to complete certain tasks at the end of each lesson. These activities are meant to allow students use the language in a free-practice way and at the same time, use the social strategies taught by the teacher researcher. Likewise, based on the needs analysis, it was possible to find that learners do not use English as a mean to communicate in the target language and that they do not use expressions for clarification, even if they know about these expressions. Additionally, another concern emerged from the needs analysis and has to do with the way in which learners interact with their peers or teachers. For instance, most of them expressed that they are more likely to ask questions to their teacher when they do not understand the instructions provided by the educator or when they do not understand the grammar topic; however, the data showed that the participants are less likely to ask questions to their partners, meaning that learners need interactive spaces to communicate with their peers. In some way, based on the data gathered, students seemed to be accustomed to a more teacher-centered methodology, in which they did not have the opportunity to interact with their peer during the English classes. In order to cope with this situation, several lessons were planned, considering the students' immediate interests and suggestions that were noticeable in the needs analysis questionnaire.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the first term, students will be able to:

- Use social strategies in order to communicate and interact using basic expressions in English with their teachers and classmates.

Communicative

- Talk about future and past events.
- Use gestures and tone of voice in order to communicate their ideas in English in an easier way.
- Express an opinion about general interests and personal information.

Linguistic

- Use expressions of time by talking about future and past events.
- Use *zero conditional* to talk about scientific facts that happens a 100% of the time.

	Practice their reading skills throughout the development of reading comprehension exercises.
Attitudinal	- Cooperate with their partners in order to solve reading and listening comprehension problems in the target language. - Respect the opinion and perspectives of their peers in class - Empathize with their classmates feelings. - Participate actively in class - Listen and follow the teachers' instruction appropriately. - Engage in all the activities planned - Interact actively and collaboratively

CONTENTS

Grammatical content	- Simple present - Simple past - Simple future (will) - Zero conditional.
Lexical content	Irregular and regular verbs, expressions of time, adjectives and time clauses.
Socio-cultural aspects	- To have a sense of awareness towards others' opinions by using the learning strategy <i>"empathizing with others"</i>. - To have a sense of cultural awareness towards the English speakers' cultures by employing the learning strategy <i>"developing cultural understanding"</i>.
Previously acquired knowledge	The students should know basic vocabulary and grammar such as: - Possessive pronouns. - Auxiliaries (simple present and simple past aux). - Prepositions (of place). - Adjectives (of place and people). - Articles. - Frequency adverbs. - There is / there are.

METHODOLOGY

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach is a philosophical approach whose main purpose is to teach by context, that is, the themes to be worked should be meaningful for students (Brown, 2007). That said, the context in which the students are framed cannot be dismissed, instead, it should be considered in order to appeal to the students' interests and needs. For instance, some of the activities developed, were designed to let students relate their own reality, with the foreign language. Furthermore, as Nunan (2004) contends, learning as a social process has been a matter of concern over the last years, since language is not seen as a rule-governed system, instead, it has been thought as a vehicle for communicating. After all, Brown (2007) claims that interaction is the heart of communication and therefore, this latter is a mean for allowing the students to achieve that comprehensible input and to achieve the ZPD that authors such as Vygotsky and Krashen have advocated and supported over the years. Additionally, when teachers place communication at the center of the curriculum and the means (that is, procedures, strategies, etc.), it is more likely that learners start to communicate by communicating (Nunan, 2004).

Thus, the Task-Based Learning (TBL) methodology plays an important role, because it represents the realization of the CLT in regards to the syllabus, the activities designed and the methodology (Nunan, 2004). In fact, according to Ellis (2004), conversational tasks are key elements to develop communication in class, not to mention that, when the task is carried out throughout “*instructional conversation*” teachers can help learners to build zones of proximal development, because the nature of the same conversations allow students to take linguistic risks (Ellis; 2004). It is worth noting that the TBL methodology is embodied by three separate stages: *the pre-task, the while-task and the post task*.

The purpose of the pre-task is preparing the students for the development of the task (Ellis, 2004). As reported by this author, some of the activities involved may range from completing the same task that is going to be developed during the *while* stage, or modelling the way in which the task should be performed. For the current instructional design, the *pre-task*, was related to *non-task preparation activities*, which according to Ellis (2004), these are preparation exercises that are meant to activate the students’ prior knowledge by means of brainstorming, mind-mapping, flashcards, etc. Ellis (2004) supports the use of this type of pre-task activities for focusing on vocabulary, since it helps students to obtain a better performance to develop the task, in contrast to elicit grammar from learners.

The most important stage is the *while-task* (Ellis, 2004; Nunan, 2004). In this stage, what is at stake is the performance of the actual task. According to Brown (2007) tasks can be divided into two types: the *target tasks* (the ones that are accomplished beyond classroom and which are authentic by nature) and the *pedagogical tasks* (which are the core activities in classroom). For Nunan (2004) a task is defined as a work that was carried out in classroom and whose result is the comprehension and understanding of the language by means of the grammar structure and whose intention is to convey meaning. In short, a task is an activity in which students were asked to use their knowledge in order to communicate and express meaning. Nevertheless, as Ellis (2004) points out, teachers and students can influence the way in which a task is conducted depending on the prior experiences that both learners and educators have in regards to teaching and learning. And yet, another salient characteristic according to Nunan (2004), is that tasks are exercises from which students can select a wide variety of language structures in order to achieve the outcome.

However, tasks can also be interactive and can allow students to communicate effectively. According to Ellis (2004), since TBL is a methodology underpinned by the assertion of “learner-centredness”, students are constantly controlling and shaping the social practices during the tasks. Therefore, as Pica (drew by Ellis, 2004) argues, tasks are meant to allow students to interact among themselves without the intervention of the teacher, this therefore, supports learners to take risks whilst they develop the communicative tasks. After all, classroom contexts are also communicative environments (Ellis, 2004).

The final stage of the TBL methodology is the *post-task*. The purpose of this stage may range from spotting pronunciation errors, to encouraging metacognitive reflection about the students’ performance towards the task developed (Ellis, 2004). And that is precisely the aim that was considered at the end of each lesson during the study. For instance, after students have completed the task, I asked students to self-evaluate their performance, whilst at the same time, I asked students to self-assess their use of the social strategies. In this regard, Ellis (2004) calls this type of post-task *reflecting on the task*, in which learners are expected to reflect and evaluate their own performance in order to develop their metacognitive strategies of planning, monitoring and evaluating (Ellis, 2004).

The CALLA framework:

The CALLA framework, specially designed for instructing learning strategies, is comprised by five stages: Preparation, Presentation, Practice, Evaluation and Expansion. All of the stages have a different purpose depending on the students’ beliefs’ and phases of the lesson (Chamot et al.; 1999). Thus, the CALLA framework is characterized for being flexible enough for allowing the teachers to plan language lessons that integrate the instruction of language learning strategies with the topics and the activities initially planned by educators; in other words, it is not separated from content or content-related activities (Chamot et al.; 1999).

For the ongoing Didactic Unit, we are planning to embrace this framework in order to instruct the Language Learning Strategies for one lesson or two lessons, where we will be able to get some insights in regards to the way in which students react to this type of framework.

Appendix 5: proficiency test.

I.E. LA DESPENSA

PROFICIENCY TEST

APRIL 6TH, 2017

3.0

NAME: Johan Beltran 0107

COURSE: 10-03

1). Read the following text and answer the questions:

Last summer, Joel and Sara travelled to England for two weeks. They travelled in August and stayed in a college with other students in Brighton, the South of England. It was really fantastic because they talked to a lot of students of different nationalities and learned a lot about other cultures and customs. Of course, they learned a lot of English too because they practiced it every day. In the morning they studied a little, they asked the teacher to speak slowly when necessary and answered her questions. In the afternoon, they visited different places or played different sports at the college. It was so much fun. They often walked down to the beach with their new friends and played or chatted. In the evening, they were tired so they sometimes watched videos or played board games.

The best days were Saturday and Sunday because they travelled to London. The city is very big and they visited all the monuments like Big Ben, The London Eye and Buckingham Palace. They wanted to see the Queen but they didn't see her, only her guards!

They liked everything in the city but their favorite thing was the museums, especially Madam Tussards. There were lots of realistic figures of famous people there.

At the end of the two weeks, they were sad to return home. The holidays were fun and different from usual. They cried a little when they waved goodbye to their new friends and promised to write or send emails when they arrived home.

I. True or false:

Example:

Joel and Sara travelled in august: I

- Joel and Sara travelled to England for three weeks. f ✓
- They stayed in a college. T
- Brighton is the North of England. f ✓
- They sometimes walked to the beach. T X

15

II. Answer the following questions:

1. What did Joel and Sara do in the afternoon?

- a) They visited their parents.
- ☒ b) They visited different places and played sports at college.
- c) They slept.

2. What did Joel and Sara do in the evening?

- ☒ a) They played board games or watched videos.
- b) They visited different places.
- c) They had lunch.

3. What museum did they like?

especially madam Tussards

4. Why Saturday and Sunday were the best days?

travelled to london

5. Why Joel and Sara were sad to return home?

The holidays were

6. What happened at the end of the story?

**GOOD
LUCK!**

Appendix 6: Video transcripts.

Date: March 28, 2017

School: I.E.D. La Dispensa

Population: 10th grade – 80 Students.

Profesor: Andrés David Ballén Antonio

Topic: Simple past and expressions of time.

Learning Strategy: empathizing with others.

Link to the video: https://youtu.be/CFQUM_h_YVI

T: Are you working?

S1 (M): (student nods his head).

T: Are you working?

S1 (M): Yeah.

T: Are you working?

S2 (F): Ya casi.

T: Ujum.

S3 (M): (inaudible)...Si porque a veces se va mucho.

T: In English? (when the teacher asks the question, students stare fixely at the teacher).

T: So, remember to ask questions like: *“what did you do on Sunday before...*

S4 (M): ...what is much?...

Student shows the paper filled out to the teacher as way of saying that she finished the activity.

T: Ok! Ask more people.

S5 (F): Profe, ¿pero ya quien más?

S6 (F): Ya? (points to her partner)

T: Ujum.

S5 (F): ¿Me está grabando?

T: (nods his head).

S5 (F): Profe, ya no me deje de grabar.

S7 (F): Si ya, ya, ya.

S8 (M): Ehh, ¿antes de las dos?

T: Before two (2)?

S8 (M): Ehhh...

T: Before (...) two (2)?

S8 (M): No, es que él me está preguntando, él no me está diciendo en inglés.

T: So...

S8 (M): Dígale que le diga en inglés.

T: In English, in English...

S9 (M): Profe, ¿cómo se dice...? ¿Cómo se dice...bueno...?

T: How do you say...?

S9 (M): No profe, ya me acordé.

S10 (M): Profe! Se puede así en fila, o ¿toca pregunta por persona?

S8 (M): ...Venga Paula...

T: Pregunta por persona. (...)

T: Are you working?

S11 (M): ¿Qué es lo que toca hacer?

S12 (M): Tiene que preguntarle a alguien qué hizo el domingo a esta hora, después de esta hora, después de esta hora, después de esta hora...

S11 (M): ¿Todo a la misma persona?

S12 (M): Si... (student nods his head).

S13 (F): (inadubible).

T: What are you doing?

S13 (F): Ya profe...

S14 (F): ...Me estoy enamorando...

S13 (F): ...ya acabamos.

S14 (F):Y no puedo evitarlo.

S15 (F): Profe, ¿cómo se dice calle?

T: How do you say what?

S15 (F): What...callecita.

T: How do you say...(?)

S15: How do you say in (...) -student thinks about the word- English, calle?

T: Tacho?

S8(M): No, tiene que hacerlo con una pregunta: I have a question.

T: Ok, you have a question. How do you say...

S15 (F): How do you say calle in English?

S16 (F): ¡Onces cómo se dice! ¡onces cómo se dice!

T: Calle, ¿street?

S8 (M): Si.

T: Street.

S8 (M): Cómo, ¿cómo, ¿cómo se escribe?

S15: ¿Cómo se escribe?

T: How do you spell it? S, T, R, E, E, T. Here, S5 helps S19 writing the word by translating to him the alphabet in Spanish.

S16 (M): No pues dígame, ¿qué hizo?

T: In English!

S17 (M): Ahh mira!

T: In English! You have the questions!

S18 (F): ... Watch T.V., watch T.V.

S17(M): Two P.M.

S17 (M): What did you do on (laugh)...

S18 (F): ... What did you do...(?)

S17(M): ...ehh, Sunday after two p.e.?

S19 (F): Toca completar todos los cuadritos?

T: Ujum.

S19 (F): Profe, ¿acá cuando es pasado se coloca -ed? O sólo se coloca así.

T: Do you remember the past?

S19 (F): ¿El pasado simple?

T: Had lunch.

S19 (F): Ahhh. Gracias teacher.

S20 (F): Así, ¿ya? ¿O toca llenar todas las casillas?

T: Ujum, ya (...) So, what did Gina do on Sunday before twelve?

T: Are you working?

S13 (F): Profe, ¿la verdad? What did you...

T: You are not working.

S13 (F):On Sunday (...) ah?

T: Try to ask questions.

S13 (F): ¿Que le pregunte?

T: Aja! You have here the questions, so what did you do...What is your name?

S14 (F): Luisa

T: Ok, Luisa. What did you do on Sunday before twelve?

S14 (F): Ummm (...) No sé cómo decirlo en inglés, profe.

T: (points to a flashcard)

S13 (F): Have lunch.

S14 (F): Comer.

T: What did you do? In Spanish, don't worry.

S13 (F): Antes de la seis, ¿almorzar?

T: So, you had lunch. Remember? Have lunch, had lunch.

S10 (M): Teacher, I have a question: ehhe. Necesariamente toca llenarlo o es por pregunta cada persona; porque es que así yo lo estoy llenando con la misma persona todo el cuestionario.

T: Sí, también puede ser así.

S10 (M): ¡Por eso! Y yo le dije eso ahí, cuando estaba este man.

T: O puede ser una pregunta a una persona, otra pregunta a otra persona. No importa.

S10 (M): Ahh bueno.

T: La idea es que usen (inaudible).

T: Como tú ya acabaste, entonces lo vas a llenar todo también.

S19 (F): Ahh pero con otros también.

T: Ujum.

T: Are you working?

S21 (F): Miren que ustedes dos...

S22 (F): Miren que ustedes dos ¿qué?

S21 (F): Miren que están grabando.

S22 (F): Si!

T: How about you?

S21 (F): Profe, espere. Ya lo hacemos.

T: Ujum.

S21 (F): En serio.

S22 (M): Ehhe, teacher. Como yo ya lo hice así, entonces pues (...) ¿puedo seguir haciéndolo así sin llenarlo?

T: Yeah! (...) Are you working?

S12 (M): Ya casi, profe.

T: Ujum. Ask questions! Come on! (...) Come on, come on.

T: What is your name?

S23 (F): Tatiana.

T: Tatiana, what did you do before two (2) p.m.?

S23 (F): ¿Cómo? Otra vez, otra vez.

T: What did you do before two (2) p.m.?

S23 (F): Ehhh, study.

T: Studied (correcting the student). (...) Studied.

S24 (M): ¿Cómo se escribe, profe?

T: Tatiana studied.

S23 (F): Que se lo deletree, profe.

T: S-T-U-D-I-E-D. Very good.

S25 (F): What did you do on Sunday afternoon?

S26 (M): Ehhh (laugh). Pere, pere. Si, si ya sé. Después de la seis, ¿qué le había dicho? (...) Ah, ir a la casa. ¿Tocaba decirlo en inglés?

T: Yeah. So, you went

S25 (F): Si, claro.

S26 (M): Entonces, I (...) I went a house.

T: So, you went to the house.

S26 (M): Thank you, teacher.

Date: March 23, 2017

School: I.E.D. La Dispensa

Population: 10th grade – 80 Students.

Profesor: Andrés David Ballén Antonio

Topic: Simple past and expressions of time.

Learning Strategy: cooperating with others.

Link to the video: <https://youtu.be/PMoyomfLg9E>

S1 (F): Ayy no.

S2 (M): ¿Quién quita que en la Universidad se consiga uno mejor?

S3 (F): Hola! (looks shy at the camera).

S4 (F): Hola profe.

S2 (F): Profe, ¿porqué nos graba?

T: Para la tesis. Es un proyecto de investigación.

S5 (F): Profe, dígame que dice aquí.

T: And you story?

S7 (F): Le toca.

S8 (F): No sabe que historia es.

S7 (F): Yo también la tengo.

T: ¿Cómo comienza la historia?

S8 (M): La historia comienza con que estaban, estaban...

S7 (F): ...estaban caminando en la playa. Y estaban charlando y jugando. Y conocieron amigos.

S8 (M): No sea mentirosa que se cansaron y se fueron a dormir y se aburrieron.

S9 (F): Profe, no sé porque creo que no jugaron. Entonces se nos pareció mucho.

S7 (F): Porque entendimos toda la historia, para que vea que si podía escuchar.

T: A mí se me hace que se comieron un pedazo.

T7 (F): ¡No!

S8 (M): Ahh! Y después viajaron a Londres...

S7 (F): ...Y fueron a Londres.

S9 (F): Pues o que te había dicho...

S7 (F): Y vieron el ojo de Londres. Fueron al palacio de Londres.

S8 (M): El palacio de Buckingham

S7 (F): Querían ver a la Reina...pero no podían

S8 (M):Pero no podían.

S9 (F): Porque estaban los guardas (laugh)

S8 (F): Pero no estaba guardada (laugh).

Date: March 23, 2017

School: I.E.D. La Dispensa

Population: 10th grade – 80 Students.

Profesor: Andrés David Ballén Antonio

Topic: Simple past and expressions of time.

Learning Strategy: cooperating with others.

Link to the video: <https://youtu.be/yn9D9ToQzQo>

T: Tienen que decir lo que entendieron.

S1 (F): Yeah! (student nods her head).

T: No leerlo. Don't read it.

S2 (M): Venga, qué dice, ¿qué dice acá? ¿Walked es caminar, o caminaron?

S3 (M): Caminaron.

T: Estamos jugando o estamos haciendo.

S4 (M): Sorry.

T: Thank you! Listo, ¿ya están diciendo qué fue lo que entendieron? In Spanish, don't worry.

S2 (M): Profe, yo tengo una pregunta. What is walked down? Caminaron...

T: ...Caminaron.

S2 (M): Bueno, caminaban. Pero ¿“down” qué es?

T: Ehh, eso es un phrasal verb. Pero, básicamente significa “caminaban en la playa”.

S2 (M): Caminaban.

T: Exacto, sí. Perfect.

S5 (F): Profe, ¿qué toca hacer? ¿toca traducir?

T: Digan lo que entendieron. Compartan sus ideas.

S6 (F): Que ellos fueron a la playa e hicieron una pequeña charla.

T: Ujum.

S6 (F): Después viajan a...

T: No es conmigo, es con ellas (teacher points to the group of students).

S5 (F): Pero lo decimos. ¿O charlamos o qué?

T: Charlen. ¿Qué fue lo que entendieron? La idea es armar la historia, recuerden. Armarla.

S7 (F): Profe, ¿qué toca hacer?

T: O sea, tienen que discutir...

S7 (F): ...Pues es que ya...

T: Aquí tenemos A...

S8 (F): ...B, C, D.

T: A, B, C y D.

S7 (F): Si, todas.

T: Todas. Entonces., van ahora a armar ustedes la historia. ¿Cómo? Hablando.

¿Listo? Van a negociar.

S8 (F): En español.

T: In Spanish if you want.

S7 (F): ¿En español o en inglés?

T: Sí lo pueden hacer en inglés, perfecto.

S9 (M): Profe, ya acabamos.

S2 (M): Profe, ¿qué es chatted? O sea, y jugaron o...

T: Hablaron.

S2 (M): ¿Hablaron?

T: Es decir, la idea es que...

S2 (M): ...In the evening, ¿sería en la tarde?

T: ¿Quién es el C acá? ¿Quién es el C?

S2 (M): Yo (student raises his hand). Yo soy el C.

T: La idea es que si usted es C, les explicara a ellos lo que entendió. No que ellos lo leyeran, porque no tendría sentido. La idea es que usted les diga qué fue lo que entendió, ellos no tienen por qué leerles. ¿Listo? Entonces dígame a él que le explique.

S10 (F): ¡Profe, ya!

T: Finished?

S10 (F): Finished!

T: Ok (...) What did you understand? ¿Qué entendieron? What did you understand?

S10 (F): Ehh que..ellos viajaron por dos semanas a Inglaterra y visitaron museos, ehh conocieron personas nuevas de diferentes nacionalidades. Visitaron a la reina, pero no la pudieron ver. Fueron a un restaurante y aprendieron deportes y...

S11 (F): Fueron a la universidad.

S12 (M): Aprendieron English.

S11 (F): Hablaron de (...) los inventos...

S10 (F): -student complements the idea- Learner nods her head- Y aprendieron inglés y conocieron varias personas.

T: Uhum. ¿Algún otro aporte?

S13 (M): Fueron a la playa, por las noches se aburrían mucho y tenían que ver vídeos o jugar juegos de mesa.

S12 (M): Y que, ehh, el lugar favorito de ellos, de toda la ciudad, era el museo. Una figura, ¿la estatua? La Maddame Tussard.

T: Very good!

S10 (F): Yes?

T: Yeah, good.

S13 (M): Una pregunta.

T: What do you have as a question? What is your question?

S13 (M): No, es que le iba a preguntar.

T: So, you say: I have a question.

S13 (M): I have a question.

T: I have

S13 (M): I have...

T: I have a question.

S13 (M): I have a question.

T: Aha. Tell me.

S13 (M): Yo le iba a preguntar una palabra. Stayed, creo que se dice *stalled*, ¿qué es eso?

T: So, do you remember?...