

**Communicative and collaborative activities based on lexical competence to
increase learners' self-confidence in EFL contexts**

**Actividades comunicativas y colaborativas basadas en la competencia léxica
para aumentar la autoconfianza de los estudiantes en la enseñanza del inglés
como lengua extranjera**

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Abstract

Low self-confidence in educational contexts has been a struggle that teachers, students, and parents have to handle during young children's EFL process. For that reason, the main purpose of this study is to determine how communicative and collaborative activities based on lexical competence encourage the development of their self-confidence. The target population is children between 6 and 8 years old from a private school in the south of Bogotá, Colombia, who had demonstrated low levels of self-confidence when completing tasks and academic activities. In addition, taking into consideration a qualitative approach and the action research design, the data analyzed was gathered by using some techniques such as field notes, collected during some classes' observations, virtual interviews, where the possible impact of self-confidence was measured, and video recordings of the same interviews and classes. The main outcome resulted in the application of communicative and collaborative activities based on lexical competence and the observation of how students' self-confidence, behaviors or patterns changed when being immersed in EFL lessons.

Keywords: Communicative and collaborative activities, foreign language, lexical competence, self-confidence, young children.

Resumen

La baja confianza educativa ha sido una problemática que los maestros, estudiantes y padres de familia tienen que manejar durante el proceso de enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera de los niños pequeños. Por esa razón, el objetivo principal de este estudio es determinar cómo se puede fomentar la autoconfianza de los estudiantes a través de actividades comunicativas y colaborativas basadas en la competencia léxica promueven el desarrollo de su autoconfianza. La población son niños entre 6 y 8 años en una escuela privada en el sur de Bogotá, Colombia, quienes demostraron bajos niveles de autoconfianza al completar tareas y actividades académicas. Teniendo en cuenta un enfoque cualitativo y el diseño de la investigación de acción, los datos analizados se recopilaron mediante el uso de algunas técnicas, tales como: Notas de campo, recolectadas durante algunas clases de observación, entrevistas virtuales, donde el posible incremento de autoconfianza fue medido y videograbaciones de las mismas entrevistas y clases. El producto principal resultó en la aplicación de actividades comunicativas y colaborativas basadas en la competencia léxica y en la observación de cómo la autoconfianza de los estudiantes, comportamientos o patrones cambiaron cuando estuvieron inmersos en las clases de inglés como lengua extranjera.

Palabras claves: Actividades comunicativas y colaborativas, autoconfianza, competencia léxica, niños pequeños, lengua extranjera.

Introduction

Young children are willing to learn a foreign language through the interaction and experiences since they connect what they are learning with real-life situations. All this process is connected to the development of students' self-confidence and lexical competence to feel capable to acquire, develop, and use a foreign language. Likewise, it is known that lexical competence is the knowledge in terms of words that enrich a human's lexicon and the understanding of how to use them in different contexts. Therefore, young learners get a strong ability to use certain vocabulary in real situations, even if they make mistakes (Jiménez, 2018). In addition, some emotional factors such as self-confidence play an important role when fostering students' skills; many of the academic struggles that children deal with are related to the way they recognize actively themselves as part of the class. Based on the above, this study analyzes the impact of some communicative and collaborative activities, based on lexical competence, over students' self-confidence in EFL-contexts.

Furthermore, as a complement, it is vital to take advantage of some of the communicative and collaborative techniques that increase the interaction among students and the teacher. For example, role play, jigsaw puzzles, information gap and all those being applied through team work; those activities are essential for the development of the vocabulary while raising natural and meaningful environments, avoiding the use of the mother tongue, something that Toro et al. (2018) explore about. In short, communication may be strengthened through these activities inside the classroom.

In addition, to promote this communication, this study takes into account

another key aspect which is the low self-confidence that young children have at the moment to use English inside and outside the classroom. Interaction during classes is spontaneous and students' self-confidence is involved in this situation. For that reason, the relationships play a main role in terms of allowing that communication to happen, however, there are some cases in which students have low self-confidence and it is an impairment for building these relationships (Singal & Swann, 2011) even when there are some cases in which students' low self-confidence does not define their capacity to build these relationships due to external impairments. To sum up, using English in real communication requires interaction and great relationships involving high students' self-confidence.

Finally, a brief explanation of the principles of this study are going to be discussed, first, the statement of the problem will be described along with our research question and objective. Afterward, the literature review is displayed, our research design, how data collected is exposed along with the analysis of it, then, findings, and conclusions. In short, this study analyzes the impact of communicative and collaborative activities, based on lexical competence, to foster self-confidence in EFL contexts.

Statement of the problem

During some English classes in a private school, which is in the process of becoming bilingual from 2018, located in the south of Bogotá, we noticed a lack of self-confidence in children between 6 and 8 years old when using the foreign language. Moreover, students were translating into Spanish most of the words they listened to or

read in English, demonstrating they felt more confident when doing this instead of using the vocabulary or expressions taught in a natural way. Furthermore, many of the activities proposed were designed to improve their self-confidence while they were planned based on lexical competence; as Caro, & Rosado (2017) mentioned, lexical competence involves the communicative and linguistic competence; thus, they allow the students to apply their lexicon accurately taking into account meaning and form. In addition, it is important to mention that the interaction and communication between students and teachers did not fluently occur naturally since students preferred to use Spanish or keep quiet than participate and tried to use English when the activities required it.

Besides, it is important to mention that these second graders are having their first contact with a formal instruction of English. For all these aspects, we come out to the struggle: the students' low self-confidence was a factor that affected how they responded to different types of interaction inside the classroom at the moment to use the foreign language. Apart from this, this section is going to discuss how the problem was found, and how it is planned to be possibly solved through some literature sources and theories. Therefore, the following paragraphs will explain the identification of the problem, then, we will offer a strategy to address the issue supported by some literature; finally, we will present our research question, objective, and rationale.

First of all, it was noticeable how learners felt scared about participation and making mistakes. A big fear of making mistakes was identified during the application of some communicative activities such as jigsaws, role plays, identifying subjects, and pointing out objects. Also, the needs analysis applied during some sessions showed

that most of the time, students did not interact with the teacher or participate at all when the activities required it, they kept quiet when a question was made. As Ghanbarpour (2016) explains, the importance of social competence development inside the classroom is related to self-confidence, and it influences each students' learning process. In short, students' fear of making mistakes along with a low level self-confidence affected the development of communicative activities in class, something that also showed their low capacity to express themselves and share their ideas with the teacher and classmates.

During the problem identification in their EFL learning process, the main issue that we found while learning and developing lexical competence was the low self-confidence. This used to happen due to the shyness students felt when using the foreign language, especially because their level of English was not in the range expected to develop all the activities proposed. Hence, they did not take advantage of the communicative activities that were focused on helping them to build their vocabulary, as explained by Gardner (2001), integrativeness is one of two major factors that influence overall motivation. It is a complex construct that reflects an interest in learning a foreign language in order to become closer to the FL community. Thus, the term denotes not only attitudes towards learning foreign languages and towards the FL group generally, but also the learner's willingness to interact with members of that FL community attitudes towards the learning situation constitute the second component of Gardner's two-pronged theory of motivation. (Cited in Hsuan-Yan, 2013, p.91)

Furthermore, this research was designed to determine how teachers can face this problem through the use of communicative and collaborative activities such as

jigsaw puzzles, role plays, and information gap, that involves the learners in their lexical competence development (Dobao, 2014), plus, enhancing communicative skills through self-confidence not only as individuals but as a group. To sum up, there is low self-confidence inside the classroom and due to the influence that it has over the lexical building and the proper development of the activities given, this research is looking for an alternative and proposes to handle it based on the communicative and collaborative activities.

In addition, as our purpose is to increase our students' self-confidence to promote communication and foreign language development, we propose communicative and collaborative activities. It is important to mention that these activities allow a more active interaction during class time and encourage students to use the foreign language as much as they can in real conversations with their classmates and teacher. Consequently, children's participation and lexical competence get developed and improved as well with the application of these activities such as jigsaw puzzles, role plays, and information gaps, and all those being applied with group work. In short, through these communicative and collaborative activities, the students' self-confidence is developed in order to observe higher participation in class.

Research question.

Due to the need analysis made, low self-confidence was observed in most of the students and in order to develop it communicative and collaborative activities are proposed as a tool while they are based on lexical competence, for that reason, the following question arises:

- How do communicative and collaborative activities focused on lexical competence affect students' self-confidence?

Research objectives.

In order to give an approach of which is our purpose with this research, the following objective defines the main points that we want to cover:

- To determine how communicative and collaborative activities based on lexical competence encourage the development of self-confidence in young children.
 - To identify how lexical competence boost self-confidence through communicative and collaborative activities.

Rationale

Schools nowadays are more and more interested in building bilingual programs inside their curriculums in order to provide a higher level of education for their students. Young children are essential to this plan, it is very well known how they are predisposed to learn another language at that age; however, it is not considered how they may feel during this learning process or how important is their lexicon to be able to speak or generate communication in another language. Besides, when looking for literature that provides tips or strategies to work on the development of students' self-confidence while learning a foreign language and increasing their lexical competence, which may help them to talk in this new language, there is not enough quantity of resources you can look for that may help you to analyze and search for a solution to this problem. For that reason, this research study is carried out, to fill in the gap about some literature and specific activities that may help in the development of students' self-confidence while learning a foreign language and working on their lexical competence. Therefore, the

purpose of this rationale is to justify our study, showing its relevance and accuracy to contribute to language teaching research.

Throughout this study, we are analyzing and looking for a solution to the problem of low self-confidence in EFL young learners. The population which has been chosen to carry out this research are second graders from a private school, which is in the process of becoming a bilingual institution. In addition, they have shown a low lexical set during the development of some activities or tasks, something that also demonstrated their low interest in participating and low self-confidence when using the foreign language. As Fallah (2014) mentions:

Immediacy to motivation and from motivation to self-confidence and negative paths from shyness to self-confidence and motivation and from teacher immediacy to shyness. Further, it was shown that shyness and teacher immediacy could indirectly affect L2WTC (second language willingness teacher communication) through the mediation of self-confidence and motivation (p.144).

According to the above, communicative and collaborative activities such as jigsaw puzzles, role plays, and information gap, all proposed through team working, will be carried out to explore how these impact on student's behavior in terms of participation and interaction.

Furthermore, we became interested in how young children use the language; although it is not their native language, inside the classroom while interacting with their classmates and teacher, something that can be a struggle due to their low self-confidence. Besides, our desire is to see how communicative activities increase students' participation avoiding the fear of making mistakes, allowing students to feel

capable to use a language different from Spanish to share their ideas and opinions. The proposal encourages us to explore deeper on how young children's self-confidence can be improved with the application of communicative and collaborative activities that work on lexical competence.

Summarizing, the lexical competence is important when learning a foreign language since it allows students to understand and interpret the vocabulary beyond the meaning but using it in different contexts and situations when necessary (Šuvaković, 2018) especially when communicating inside the classroom. That is why, developing and proposing communicative and collaborative activities could be a possibility not only to facilitate the learning process through the experiences and interaction (Monsalve, 2009) but also, to foster children's self-confidence, avoiding many of the issues that teachers face every day like the fear of making mistakes, the low participation and zero motivation during the classes, sometimes produced by the unsure and the low self-confidence (Yang, 2018). These activities are proposed based on topics that foster lexical competence development and at the same time promoting the increase of students' self-confidence to be able to use what they learn in a real EFL context.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Some struggles during the English as a foreign language learning process in children have been explored by many researchers and authors. As a result, there is an extensive and interesting list of studies and investigations that were taken into account when exploring the root of the research problem found in our population. It is important

to mention that the group of students we have been working with showed some behaviors and patterns related to low self- confidence, affecting their attempts to communicate using English. Consequently, we considered that the three most important concepts that we must take into account while carrying out this study are: self- confidence, communicative and collaborative activities, and lexical competence. Throughout this chapter, the theories that support our point of view from each key concept are going to be presented and analyzed. For that reason, this literature review brings to us valuable information and researchers' analysis that support our research project, especially, to better understand the influence of low self-confidence during the lexical competence development in young children and how communicative and collaborative activities may impact their learning process.

Lexical competence

Taking into account that lexical competence is important during children's learning process, it allows them to understand and to communicate fluently by expressing complete ideas or even combining expressions. Based on our population needs, exploring this concept helps us to identify children's strengths and weaknesses when facing new interpretations and vocabulary while using it in real contexts. In short, that is the reason why we decide to involve this competence in each one of our lessons in which communicative and collaborative activities are applied.

To start with, lexical competence development may be more resourceful at an early age improving children's communication (Šuvaković, 2018) since they acquire new words and interpretations and those aspects will develop knowledge about the form, meaning, and the use of each word learned. Therefore, as a result, the word's

association will be developed; as it can be understood as the recognition of their abilities as learners, and also vocabulary size (Choudhury, 2015). Furthermore, even at this early age, children with a lack of vocabulary can develop this competence, in order to increase their participation in class. According to Caro & Rosado (2017), a child can enhance the lexical competence working on it daily, to improve their four language skills to contribute an effective and accurate communication in class. In short, lexical competence can be better developed during the first stages of learning due to the potential that children have to acquire new words and start using them with the foreign language.

Moreover, the development of lexical competence is something complex to carry out in students because we have to take into account that children learn in different ways; however, there are some parameters that teachers can consider. First, as Jiménez (2018) says, they cannot carry out their dexterities in the same way, since not all the students have the benefit to get access to the knowledge that they need to find. By improving the lexical competence, students start using direct and indirect communication through phrases, sayings, or proverbs (Eskermesovna, 2017). In brief, with this competence, we can explore the approach that children can learn in a meaningful way with their interpretations or vocabulary.

Self-confidence

During the EFL learning process, young children are constantly affected by many psychological and emotional factors. These commonly influence their self-confidence including how capable of achieving goals and aims they are, how good they do in comparison with their classmates, and how fast they learn or acquire new knowledge.

All of this can be comprehended as how young children's self-confidence should be encouraged positively by teachers, parents, and classmates since otherwise, may result in low participation, fear of making mistakes, and low motivation.

It is known that low self-esteem and confidence affects humans' daily life, especially when building relations, but when talking about young children, it is important to understand how deeply it impacts their self-perception and their ability to connect and pertain to others. Low self-confidence inside the classroom is something that constantly affects the students' development not only in terms of academic performance, but also when building relations (Singal & Swann, 2011). Students have to recognize themselves not just as part of the classroom and the academic environment but as active individuals that can share ideas and experiences. Besides, self-confidence is important when talking about the children's development since it has been demonstrated that it has a big impact on the students' learning ability and their behavior inside and outside the classroom (Bauman, 2012). In short; since self-confidence affects students' life, to encourage it may help to create an accurate learning environment allowing them to have better behavior and to take advantage of their interaction.

In addition, our role as teachers is crucial over the young children's behavior and confidence as we constantly support them and induce the idea of self-confidence. Thus, according to James, self-esteem is the perception we all have about how good we can be in an area; we are always exploring some dimensions as self-image, self-efficacy, and self-confidence (Yang, 2018) that are reflected on other people's reaction or perception. Besides, in the classroom, the negative perceptions may result in the fear of

making mistakes because of classmates or teachers' reactions. In brief, it is essential to build trust inside the classroom and create meaningful environments for the students to be able to receive feedback when necessary and express their opinions or ideas without any fear so that they can have a better performance in the classroom.

Since it is essential to highlight the importance of self-confidence during this age, young children constantly look for parents and relatives' approval, and inside the classroom, classmates and teachers impact their performance especially when making comparisons. As Möller & Marsh (2013) describe, there is a social and temporal comparison, both of them happen when a person compares his/her abilities and personality with other people's; furthermore, we can say that most students always want to compare with others in the classroom, but we know that all students or people learn in a different way and at a different rhythm. To resume, young children expect a lot from other people's reactions especially from parents, relatives, classmates, and teachers; this interest of knowing what external agents think about their performance and how good they are doing, may result in comparison with them because most of the times children want to have the approval of these important figures during their development.

As a conclusion, interactions inside the classroom should be encouraged by teachers when students demonstrate low self-esteem or confidence. This can be developed through interactive experiences that allow communication among students while learning how to overcome difficulties they may face during the learning process (Habrat, 2018) and also, by proposing activities and tasks that encourage them as individuals by demonstrating their abilities, strengths, and

motivations. On the whole, when young children interact with each other during the classes and share their ideas, their self-perception may change in a positive way.

Communicative and collaborative activities

There are different ways in which children can develop their language skills, but it depends on the type of activities used or applied by the teacher in the classroom. In this case, as Shastri (2009) said: those activities are information gap jigsaw puzzles, and role-plays which enhance the students' comprehension; these activities also encourage their participation in class since students naturally approach the foreign language when communicating and expressing their ideas while avoiding the fear of making mistakes. Therefore, communicative and collaborative activities are strategies that help students to be engaged with their learning process, and besides those are useful activities in the moment of developing self-confidence inside of the classroom for the students. Therefore, communicative and collaborative activities are strategies that help students to be engaged with their own learning process and increase their self-confidence positively since participation and communication are their main characteristics.

Furthermore, communicative and collaborative activities such as role-plays, information gaps, and jigsaw puzzles establish their influence during the learning process of vocabulary in a foreign language and how avoiding having a teacher-centered class may promote students' participation and vocabulary development (Islam, 2016). Besides, the teacher's role is considered a key point during lexical competence development when there is a lack of self-confidence and there has not been previous contact with the foreign language. Moreover, we are focusing on the low self-confidence students have. These communicative and collaborative activities give us an

idea about how to promote their participation in class, avoiding the fear of making mistakes, and increasing their self-confidence. In short, the implementation of this type of activity provides another perspective for students about how they experience a class, in this case, an English class.

In addition, when using communicative and collaborative activities it is important to take into account how students can relate foreign language and everything, they learn with real life situations and other subjects. Therefore, the teacher's role encourages lexical competence development by involving students in real-life situations, to be able to solve problems or speak fluently in a foreign language and being confident in expressing themselves in that language. Monsalve (2009) proposes how teachers can motivate to take risks and simulate situations that students may face in real life; likewise, provides a view about how young children can be motivated to learn grammar and enhance a new vocabulary of their surroundings with different activities. To sum up, communicative activities have to be addressed with real-life situations and students' surroundings; thus, they might feel engaged and encouraged to participate in class, be confident speaking in the foreign language, solve problems with the role plays that they can perform in class and feel motivated and not having pressure at the moment to participate actively in class.

To develop confidence in students using the language speaking skill, the teacher, by implementing strategies that leave the traditional teaching aside, achieves the production of language more directly, that is to say, the student rather than memorizing vocabulary, learn by interacting with their classmates, (Toro, 2018). It is important taking into account, even if jigsaws puzzle and information gap are

activities which enhance students speaking, also there are others as role-plays which facilitate this learning process and as Toro (2018) comments, Interaction is an important factor in language learning due to it allows the students to put into practice their communication skills. In brief, the interaction among students through real situations can improve the way in which students develop their vocabulary and how they communicate their thoughts.

Lastly, it is known that there are situations that do not allow the development of confidence in students, such as poor previous exposure to a different language, memorization, etc. According to that, Callaghan (2013) says that the starting point for this process includes what the teacher does and what the student wants to achieve; that is, through the implementation of communicative and collaborative activities the teacher gives students the opportunity to face situations that help them to improve their self-confidence and thus students can communicate using English, and the students use these activities to understand what their classmates want to express.

To conclude this chapter, this literature review has shown the gap we are trying to fill according to the lack of research about the impact of low self-confidence in the lexical competence development in young children. There are enough literature about how to develop this competence and some factors involved here, and studies that demonstrate the influence of a low self-confidence while this learning process, especially in cases as ours, where students have not had previous contact with the foreign language. Finally, this allowed us to explore more about student's self-confidence, to see how it may influence the fear of making mistakes and to how is extent about the importance of the teacher's role in this process.

Chapter III

Research design

To find a solution to the problematic situation we found in our target group, we decided to develop it through a qualitative design, in which we were carrying out 7 lessons with this population, two face-to-face sessions and five virtual lessons due to the sanitary contingency of SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19), which forced to the Colombian government and the Ministry of Education to stop the in-person classes in public and private educational establishments after having confirmed the first positive case in March 6th of 2020 (Ministerio de Salud, 2020). These lessons were observed with the purpose of collecting our data through field notes, semi-structured interviews, and video recordings; it was analyzed through grounded theory, categorizing, and triangulation. This chapter describes the research design of our qualitative study and provides a wide view of its development. Along with the chapter, we expand on the type of study, the context and the population, some ethical considerations, the data collection instruments, data analysis procedures, and the instructional design while carrying out the study.

Type of study

For better understanding teachers' perception and students' behavior, this action research applied a qualitative approach. This type of study as defined by Leykum, Pugh, Lanham, & Harmon, (2009) it is a research design focused on looking for improvements in teaching practices, searching for a solution to a specific issue, and comprehending the effect of the collaborative work between the researcher and the participants in the process of solving the issue stated in the research project. In brief,

this approach was helpful for the study since it allowed researchers and participants to interact and provide valuable information taking the impulse to use oftener the foreign language.

Action research influenced and facilitated this project in terms of understanding how to foster low self-confidence inside a classroom while checking all the steps to analyze how it happens. This research design allowed researchers and participants to get involved and be able and to get immersed among learners' communication by collecting as many details as possible about this proposal and to observe how it solved or improved this issue in this specific context. As stated by Burns (2009) action research suggests a cyclical process (Figure 1.) in the path of looking for those improvements, which are specific steps we have to follow while developing the research. In short, this design allowed us to comprehend the whole process of how students' increase or not their low self-confidence, and to look for other options to continue working on this improvement.

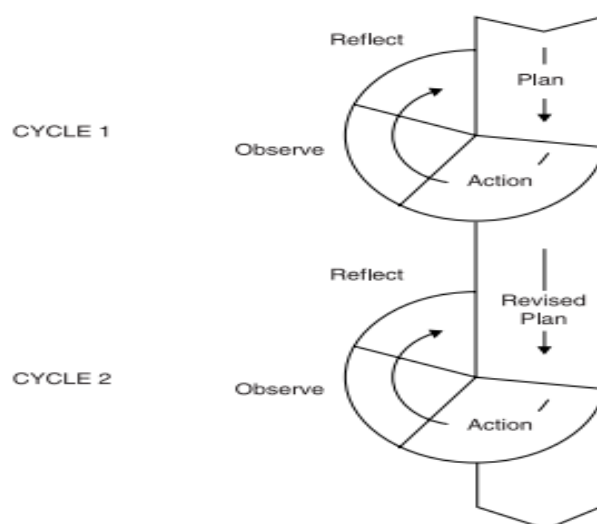


Figure 1. Cyclical model based on Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1998, quoted in Burns., 2009)

Context and population

The target population for this research was defined to include the second graders of a private school in the south of the city. These participants were selected through purposive sampling, due to in this group the issue this study is improving or solving was identified, hence, they addressed the main objective of this proposal. Also, this school is the workplace of one of our researchers, which allowed us to identify a group that had shown some low self-confidence and struggles with their lexical competence development during some English classes. Hence, all those characteristics were considered as the starting point of our research proposal that, as stated in the first chapter, was to observe, analyze and study the impact of the implementation of communicative and collaborative activities based on lexical competence in students with low self-confidence during the foreign language learning process. In short, the characteristics and behaviors described in our research problem were identified in the chosen population and that facilitated and allowed us to better analyze and apply our proposal.

Ethical considerations

As for ethical issues, the study adhered and followed some parameters for quality assurance that helped us and the target population to agree on how the information would be used and protect their interests. First, it is important to say that all the participants, parents, and the school where the classes were given, signed off on a written acceptance and consent to voluntarily participate in our study. Next to this, the participants were informed about the study and its purpose, data collecting methods,

and length of time assuring as well that all the data collected would be treated as confidential and used only for the study and research purpose.

In regard to participants' privacy, all their private information such as full name, identity, and their answers were protected and never shared or distributed for any other purposes than academics. All the documentation used, and procedures followed the national laws in Colombia about study and investigation: "Regulación ética en investigación con seres humanos en Colombia" Solano, E., Cárdenas, M., Escobar, M., & González, A. (2010), which protects participants' rights and privacy. To conclude, all the ethical considerations that took place in our research project looked forward to following all the regulations in Colombia to protect the participants' and researchers' interests and information (Appendix 1).

Instruments

To collect data and the necessary information to carry out this study, some instruments were used expecting to receive as much information as possible from the target population that would be taken into consideration later. The instruments were designed and applied by the researchers taking into account the objectives of the research project and the students' needs by facilitating the data collection. It is important to highlight how they were applied during the virtual lessons, for instance, the interviews had to be carried out virtually instead face-to-face due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

First, we used live stream interviews (IWS) which is an instrument of inquiry that consists in the design of different questions related to the aims and purposes of the study (Patton, 2014). Hence, it allowed the participants to explain their experiences in depth so research could probe the hypothetical considerations behind the behavior

(Lewthwaite & Nind, 2016). Also, it is important to mention that when using this instrument it was better to follow some “social rules” since it allows participants to provide real information from their experiences and knowledge taking the study closer to an ordinary conversation they could better follow (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 96). In brief, this instrument was the main one to collect data we were requiring to observe the impact of our proposal with this population based on the students' perceptions and experiences (Appendix 2).

Likewise, our second instrument was field notes (FTS) which explained by Maxwell (2012) refers to qualitative notes that are taken during or after the observation (Appendix 3). Besides, Schwandt mentions that there are some important characteristics to take into account when building our notes such as recording insights and thoughts, maintaining the focus on the research problem, and writing down as many details as possible. In short, this instrument was chosen because it could be used as a record of activities, behaviors, and informal discussions observed during the investigation working also as evidence of the experiences (2015).

Finally, our third instrument was observation and video recordings (RGS) which can be understood as the process of interaction between the researcher and the target population when data is unobtrusively and systematically collected (Jewitt, 2012). Since we were interested in the social behaviors of the population and its impact on their self-confidence and lexical competence development, observation and recordings became a good instrument to interpret and understand the classroom environments and students' interaction. Then, the three techniques already explained were chosen because both

participants and researchers were able to interact while analyzing the background and later on, compare the data collected with the proposal and the objectives.

Data analysis procedures

After determining and designing the three different instruments that were used during the study, the next step was to follow a method to understand and organize all the data that was collected to be analyzed. Based on the information, we considered coding as the most accurate way and procedure to analyze the data. Coding refers to the process of organizing and sorting qualitative data in a meaningful way (Creswell, 2015) and it is known for allowing the researchers to better relate the information collected with the research questions and proposals. Hence, applying this procedure to our study was easier to tag relevant data collected during the observation to a particular point considered in our research proposal, for example, when analyzing how communicative and collaborative activities impacted the students' self-confidence. Furthermore, we wanted to analyze different factors and constructs such as lexical competence, CLT activities, and low self-confidence. These codes, also known as labels, happened to be helpful to categorize the information based on the different objectives. In brief, coding was selected as the data analysis procedure due to the facilities it brings to our research study when analyzing the information collected such as staggering information, labeling the data, and categorizing it based on the research question and objectives.

Having coding and categorizing all data collected, grounded theory was carried out as a qualitative data analysis procedure. Hence, it is important to mention the usefulness and purpose of this method, which according to Taylor, et al. (2015) is “a

method for discovering theories, concepts, hypotheses, and propositions directly from data rather than from a priori assumptions, other research, or existing theoretical frameworks.”(p.164) therefore, during the analysis of our information, it was essential to follow this method to endorse the objective and analysis of our study and it contributed to defending the quality of the constructs of this research. In short, this method allowed to reinforce the purpose of this project by giving strength to the arguments discussed to answer the research question through the analysis of the data collected.

At the same time, triangulation is a method used by qualitative researchers to check and establish validity in their studies by analyzing a research question from multiple perspectives (Patton, 2014). In that sense, we were using three techniques taken from CLT methodology to gather the data in order to compare the findings with our proposal, and also to analyze the target population from different perspectives to validate the interpretations that we as researchers had about the information that we found in our need analysis. In general, triangulation allowed us to understand some patterns found in our observations.

Instructional design

First, we decided to choose CLT as our pedagogical approach. It included our main activities stated in our proposal, such as role-plays, jigsaw puzzles, interviews, information gaps and teamwork. Here is where we could develop in a more accurate way each activity for students since they learned from themselves, and their peers. In short, the aim of choosing this pedagogical approach was the ability to communicate in the given or learned language as stated by Toro, Camacho, Pinza, & Paredes (2018).

Besides, as we mentioned, group and collaborative work were fundamental in the classroom, especially because our students were facing a foreign language for the first time. Continuing, our pedagogical method was based on group work that is important for the students to achieve most of the objectives proposed in the lessons, all this through demonstration, games, role-playing, discussions, and interactions; because, we had to take into account that those activities contribute to the purpose of this pedagogical method and for students that are learning the foreign language. In brief, collaborative work promoted communication among students and is the key point of this study.

The development and organization of a class are important for us as teachers, as well as for the students; there is an important sequence at the time of learning and that the student is attentive to it and thus has higher active participation in class. According with the previous idea, we had to take into account some steps to follow in each class which were: warm-up, presentation, practice, production and evaluation, that is to say that during each part of the class planned, the students' behavior and interaction was analyzed through observing their participation, understanding of the proposed activities, and how they interacted with their classmates and the teacher in the foreign language. Briefly, after following this sequence we realized how active the students were if they felt comfortable with the class, and how they performed in relation to the activities in the foreign language.

We took into account that at the time of selecting the topics it was necessary to know the level of the language that the students have. In this case, this population was exposed by the first time to this formal teaching of this foreign language, for that reason,

these topics must be at a basic level so that they can interact step by step in any context. Then, talking about the topics developed, they were related to students' daily lives, for instance, greetings, farewells, numbers, colors, among others, because they would be inspiring for them to speak or interact and to be able to communicate this knowledge in a meaningful way. In brief, these topics were chosen according to the necessities shown by the students.

Moreover, when selecting the topics, we had an approach to the level of the students to have meaningful class development for them. Hence, the criteria for selection of the themes and the organization was following the order of the book from the school "Cool kids 2" (Richmond, 2017), however, we would not take specific activities of the book, but the main idea was to follow on the topics that these ones had, furthermore, they were simple subjects, personal for them and their surroundings. Summing up, in this way they could interact thanks to the CLT techniques that were implemented in the classroom to also have that active participation within it.

| Table 1 | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---|
| <i>Timetable of Lesson Plans</i> | | | | | |
| N° | Theme | Lesson development | Research objective | Class objective | Communicative and collaborative activities |
| 1 | My | Warm up: | Students | To observe | Information gap |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|----------------------|
| | <p>alphabet 1 Video: English Alphabet.</p> <p>Presentation: Elicit pronunciation by the whole class.</p> <p>Random flashcards to say out loud each letter by some students.</p> <p>Practice: Writing on the board of a letter given by the teacher and/or by a classmate.</p> <p>Production: In pairs, they will develop a worksheet of some missing letters by asking for information from their partner.</p> <p>Evaluation: Exchange their papers.</p> <p>Peer- evaluation.</p> | <p>will recognize the alphabet in English and confidently provide their opinion.</p> | <p>patterns of interaction among students.</p> | |
| <p>2 My</p> <p>alphabet 2</p> | <p>Warm-up: Alphabet sound song</p> | <p>They will be able to</p> | <p>To catch the</p> | <p>Jigsaw puzzle</p> |

Presentation: notice the frequency
 Images of objects in difference of the use
 alphabetical order. in terms of of English
 Elicit whole class sounds to
 repetition. and how communic

Practice: they make ate from
 Groups of 3 or 4 students. easier the students.
 Provide specific questions way they
 to ask for letters or speak in
 objects that belong to a English.
 specific letter.

Look for the pieces that
 complete their jigsaw
 puzzle.

Production:
 Same groups.
 Blank flashcards to draw
 their own objects and
 create their alphabet
 taking into account the
 sounds of the letters.

Evaluation:
 Presentation of their

| | | | | | |
|----------|------------------|--|--|---|-----------|
| | | alphabets to the whole class. | | | |
| 3 | Greetings | Warm-up: Students with a video about a song will learn some words greetings and goodbyes. | Students will be able to say hi or goodbye according to any situation among themselves in order to increase their interaction, also improving their knowledge and their vocabulary | To observe how students behave when using English to greet and have a conversati on with their parents. To analyze parents' influence | Role-play |
| 1 | | Presentation: Vocabulary about "Greetings and goodbyes" will be shown with some flashcards. | | | |
| | | Practice: They will have to practice the Greetings and goodbyes | | | |
| | | Production: Students with their parents perform a role play in order to practice the Greetings and goodbyes | | | |
| | | Evaluation: | . | | |

Students will be
evaluated from their
performance about the
role play that they did.

| | | | | | |
|----------|---------------|--|---|--|------------------|
| 4 | Shapes | Warm-up: A song about shapes is played. Presentation: Through flashcards (triangle, square, circle, and rectangle) students will rehearse vocabulary. Practice: Students will receive a code with the shapes and a correspond-ding word to each shape of a different color in order to decode the sentences hidden. Production: Students create their own | Students will distinguish the differences among shapes by sharing their thoughts and answers to the whole class. | To analyze how students react when they are congrat to find expression s in English and share them with their classmates . | Information gap. |
|----------|---------------|--|---|--|------------------|

toy using shapes and
mention actions it is
doing.

Evaluation:

They are going to be
assessed through the
sentences decoded from
shapes, and their toy.

| | | | | |
|----|------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 5. | There is- | Warm-up: | Students | To analyze |
| | There are | Song about insects and numbers with will be played | will learn pets vocabulary | a student's use of vocabulary |
| | | Presentation: | by | through |
| | | The teacher will show a PPP with a brief explanation of the use of | reinforcing there is- there are | role play with a partner. |
| | | There is and There are with some examples. | use. | |
| | | Production: | | |
| | | Students will complete a chart based on an image of some insects. They will | | |

have to complete the
number of a specific
insect, the color and
number of legs of each
one by looking at the
image. Then, they will
have to create 3 phrases
by using There is and
There are by counting the
insects

Evaluation:

They are going to be
assessed through the
chart and phrases
creation.

6 Pets

Warm-up:

Online game. Students
will match images of
some pets.

Presentation:

Students will listen to a
recording called "My

Lions". Then, the teacher will show the cartoon about the same story while reinforcing the pets vocabulary, there is/there are use and pronunciation. They will unscramble 3 sentences related to the story.

Production:

Students will be assigned with turns and organized in couples. Each couple will have a brief conversation or role-play of 3 minutes about their pets.

Evaluation:

They are going to be assessed based on the role play by checking their lexical and communicative skills

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|---|--|---------------|
| 7 | My colorful world | <p>Warm up:</p> <p>The rainbow song.</p> <p>Encourage students to sing the song and answer the questions on it.</p> <p>Presentation:</p> <p>Pieces of paper of each color with its right spelling written on it.</p> <p>Elicit pronunciation of the whole class.</p> <p>Individual participation with each color.</p> <p>Show the colors inside the rainbow.</p> <p>Practice:</p> <p>Reading: What color am I?</p> <p>Production:</p> <p>Groups of 4</p> <p>Jigsaw puzzle activity.</p> <p>Through a web page.</p> <p>Each group with a</p> | <p>Students will be able to ask for specific information they need to their partners.</p> | <p>To observe how students communicate, involving of all them or not, in order to complete a task.</p> | Jigsaw puzzle |
|---|----------------------------------|---|---|--|---------------|

different color of the
rainbow.

Ask for the color of
another group and
complete your jigsaw
puzzle.

Evaluation:

Jigsaw puzzles about the
rainbow will be collected
and two students per
each group will show
theirs mentioning the
colors for the whole class.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter presents the research findings of the data collected and analyzed from the study samples taken from different English classes in a private school. It is important to mention that for the data collection we proposed 7 lesson plans (LS), based on the PPP (presentation, practice, production) model, in which 2 of them were applied face-to-face and the 5 remaining were developed virtually due to the sanitary contingency provoked by the Covid-19 pandemic. Besides, this action research came out from some behaviors observed during the English classes that demonstrated

students did not seem to have the self-confidence to express themselves in the foreign language. Moreover, when they attempted to speak in English, they felt pressure from their classmates and kept quiet or used translation trying to express what they wanted only in Spanish; those behaviors were detected in the learners when answering questions, participating in class, or talking among classmates. Hence, it showed the struggle in terms of lexical competence as well, since students were not practicing the vocabulary or applying it during the classes due to in some cases students could know few words but did not have the idea about how to use and connect them. In short, during the development of activities where students showed a lack of qualities related to self-confidence that affected their learning process.

In order to collect data, we implemented the instruments mentioned previously. They were applied once a week during a one hour English class session by the different researchers and were designed to record the students' responses to the class and their self-confidence and lexical competence development; taking into account those instruments we would like to share the role of each one; through the video recordings, we were able to observe the confidence in which the students expressed themselves; with the field notes we could write down what was evident on the students' behavior, participation, and/or attitudes; finally, we carried out interviews where we could get more information about the feelings, behaviors, application, and influence of the communicative and collaborative activities on the students. Moving on, for the interpretation of the data collected we used grounded theory, which is a method to discover different concepts or theories straightforward from data (Taylor, S., et al. 2015). As it is qualitative research, triangulation allowed us to use a variety of methods,

and data sources to study our issue (Heale, R. 2013). To summarize, through the data collection instruments and triangulation, it was possible to find some patterns, and it helped to establish the main categories to continue working with grounded theory in the analysis of this data.

Then, when carrying out our initial data analysis it was possible to find some patterns through a triangulation process, which allowed us to get some categories to analyze the impact of communicative and collaborative activities on the development of self-confidence. Likewise, the purpose of this chapter is to show and explain these categories and present the outcomes of our analyzed data. Therefore, this study came out with three key categories; our first category is related to how students take an impulse to make a decision, solve a problem, or complete a task together, peer-participation as a struggle for self-confidence, the second category aimed at the use of the language in order to communicate among them and complete activities, Natural approach and interest to use the foreign language, and the third one is an approach to identify how students can gain more confidence throughout these classes, teacher's support, and modeling.

Peer-participation as a struggle for self-confidence

During the EFL learning process, learners were used to building an environment in which they paid a lot of attention to their classmates' development. Thus, students may encounter situations where there was a social comparison among people in terms of abilities or personality (Möller & Marsh, 2013). This is what happened in our context of second-graders in a private school at the south of Bogotá, Colombia, who used to

participate when another classmate was doing it too, trying to stand out among them, while other students avoided taking this behavior and not to participate, which led us to observe the low self-confidence in most of the students and how in some cases they helped each other to complete the activities when they did not show enough confidence to participate. Hence, this comparison students made, allowed us to analyze the reason why students tended to have this behavior and what influenced their EFL learning process.

All through these seven lessons applied during this study that special behavior in the students stood out when having communicative and collaborative activities. They took advantage of the participation of their classmates to understand, get involved in the activity, and use more English words during the development of the lessons.

The product of the interactions with other students that are supposed to deal with the same knowledge might actually contribute to each one of the students' learning process as they will have the opportunity to listen to and use what others have to say in order to compare and contrast with concepts and opinions they already have. (Gomez, 2011, p.190)

Keeping this in mind, we found that students gained more confidence when they listened to another classmate participating in English and took the impulse to help each other to complete different tasks. Throughout the following paragraphs, we are exemplifying how students were developing their communicative and collaborative activities while showing how they could work together and help each other to complete a task, learn and practice English at the same time, while they were working on their self-confidence. This information was gathered through the instruments previously

mentioned such as semi-structured interviews, field notes, and video recordings, which allowed us to reach the following outcomes.

We could find from our first lesson how students were showing the importance of co-participating while developing communicative and collaborative activities. During that first class, we noticed certain patterns that allowed us to analyze how they worked together, sometimes unconsciously, but most of the time supporting them to fulfill the activity developed. Certainly, Suárez and Rodríguez (2018) state that: “When participants in the class make use of the foreign language, different interaction patterns take place: student-student, teacher-student, student-teacher, and student-learning context. Student-student interaction involves positions and roles evidenced among students in class” (p.97). The following samples show the patterns of interaction which demonstrated the communicative and collaborative work of the students during these lessons.

Sample 1: (RGS1)

Minute 5:45 - 6:09

T: Ci, very Good, and what animal?

HSs: Cow, cow, cow.

T: My dears, let her try. What kind of animal?, do you know how to say it in English?
Yes or no.

SsSR: Cow!

T: Cow! Very Good xxx.

SsAC: Cow!

T: So, we have ci, and we have...

WC: Di! _

Sample 2: (FTS1)

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Solitude: collaborative activities | | x | <p>Una de las estudiantes hace los gestos de como se dice el animal (cow) en inglés para ayudar a su compañera.</p> <p>Uno de los estudiantes intenta ayudar a su compañera diciendo el animal que ella no recuerda (elephant)</p> |
|--|--|---|--|

“One of the students make the gestures about how to say the animal (cow) in English to help her classmate”¹

Sample 3: (INT1SsVP)

Minute 8:13 - 8:39

T: ¿te gusta más trabajar individual o en grupos? ¿Por qué?

“Do you like to work individually or in groups? Why?”

SsVP: en grupos porque nos podemos ir ayudando con palabras que no podamos entender de inglés, que no sabemos pronunciar.

1. All translations on this study were made by the researchers.

“In groups, because we can help us and go supporting with words that we cannot understand in English, that we do not know to pronounce”

According to the interaction's excerpts and the behaviors presented during these classes, these samples demonstrated the peer-participation and collaborative work among students when developing their communicative and collaborative activities. The first sample showed how students interacted among them and with the teacher during the development of the activities, and they continued participating despite the turn of one of their classmates, for instance, when giving more than one time the answer “cow” to the question made by the teacher to a different student, also that some of them had already given the right answer. As claimed by Clark (2009):

Children may be happy to join in activities or group times without responding or taking part. They may imitate others and show comprehension with gestures and efforts at participating. During group times, such as music and singing, they may join in the actions or echo or mimic another child. At this time learners will respond to keywords actions. (p.17)

Thus, the second sample indicates how one of the students helped her classmate making some gestures with their mouths and hands in order to give her some confidence to say the right answer, and she accepted the help and gave the answer with her classmates' encouragement, which is a key aspect analyzed during this study due to in some cases students looked for other ways to communicate their responses, such as body language and gestures to keep the flow of communication (Pica 1996, cited on Suarez & Ramirez, 2018). Hence, the peer-participation and collaboration

became a very useful help and behavior for the students as a tool to complete and feel more confident when participating in class with the support of their classmates.

Furthermore, young children demonstrated how they participated all together, thus, taking the impulse to talk during the communicative and collaborative activities, helping to build a comfortable and active learning environment. Therefore, this third example helped us to understand how important it was for our students working in groups, although they could make some mistakes, they felt the support of their classmates to practice and work on their vocabulary and language skills. This was a very common answer among the students when responding to this question in our interviews, it demonstrated how they consider that working all together helped them to feel confident and comfortable during each communicative and collaborative activity. As mentioned by Suarez & Rodriguez (2018): “Students learn to repair breakdowns in communication. This enriches the language learning process since gaining self-confidence give students the opportunity to support their own interaction and achieve the proposed tasks in the classroom” (p.106). Hence, this represented how teamwork and the students’ impulse to participate as much as they want to, allowed them to develop their self-confidence and at the same time use the target language. In short, the learning environment built by students and the teacher promoted active participation during the English classes, and this helped them to gain self-confidence.

Sample 4: (INT1SsVP)

Minute 2:01 to 2:56

T: Entonces te voy a leer las preguntas: ¿listo?

“So, I am going to read to you the questions, ready?”

-La primera dice: ¿Cuál fue tu primera impresión cuando empezaste a aprender inglés?

“The first one says: What was your first impression when you started to learn English?”

SsVP: Pues me sentí como que no podía... si, sentí que no podía, que no entendía, pero después ya lo lograba.

So, I felt like I was not able to... yes, I felt that I could not, that I did not understand, but then I got it.

(The person shows a smile as a reaction)

T: ¿Cuál fue la clase de inglés que más recuerdas o la que más te gustó, que resaltas de esa clase?

“What was the English class that you remember the most?”

SsVP: Cuando hicimos lo de que estábamos en grupos en cuatro mesas que estábamos con una cartillita y le íbamos preguntando a los compañeros y a la teacher el animal que teníamos ahí en el cuadrado, todo eso... si, me gustó que estábamos hablando inglés y que aprendíamos más cosas como de los animales.

“When we did groups in four tables, we were with a little book and then we were asking our partners and the teacher for the animal that we had in the square, all of that, I liked we were talking in English and we learnt more things such as animals”.

T: ¿Cuál actividad crees que te motivó principalmente para hablar en inglés?

“What activity encouraged you to talk in English mainly?”

SsVP: Pues cuando bailábamos y cantábamos ahí me motivaba para hablar inglés, me sentía confiada porque veía a mis compañeros hablando y cantando y a la profesora que canta bonito le entendía lo que decía y yo hablaba también. (Finaliza con una sonrisa)

“So, when we danced and sang, that motivated me to speak in English, I felt confident because I saw my classmates talking and singing and to the teacher that sings pretty, I understood her what she said and spoke too”. (Finishes with a smile)

Sample 5: (INT7SsJG)

Minute 4:02 up to 6:39

T: Ok, very good. ¿Cómo te has sentido cuando escuchaste a tu profesora hablar en inglés todo el tiempo?

“Ok, very good. How did you feel when you heard your teacher speak full time in English?”

SsJG: me sentí... feliz (sonríe)

“I felt ... happy. (smiles)”

T: ¿por qué?

“Why?”

SsJG: porque así voy aprendiendo a hablar en inglés y voy aprendiendo... es que me gusta mucho el inglés para poder aprender.

“Because I am going to learn to speak in English and I am going to learn... It is that I love so much English to be able to learn”.

T: ok, listo. ¿Con qué frecuencia hablas dentro o fuera del salón en inglés?

“Ok, right. How often do you speak inside or outside the classroom in English?”

SsJG: Lo hablo en mi casa muy poquito porque voy aprendiendo aquí, voy aprendiendo como decir, como aprendiendo a hablar cosas de acá... ahhh yo hablo inglés poquito, poquito. Voy paso a paso.

“I speak it at home a little because I am going learning here, I am going to learn how to say it, like learning to speak about things here... oh I speak English very few, few, I am going step by step”.

T: Super. ¿Usas tu vocabulario de inglés en conversaciones cotidianas?

“Cool. Do you use your English vocabulary in daily conversations?”

SsJG: EHH... el abecedario (choca la mano con la persona que lo acompaña).

“Ehh... the alphabet. (hi-five with the person that is with him)”

T: el abecedario, bien. Súper. ¿Qué tan seguro te sientas para hablar en inglés en este momento?

“The alphabet, right, cool. How confident do you feel to speak in English at this point?”

SsJG: me siento como... me siento como orgulloso, feliz (sonríe)... me siento seguro... ¿cómo es que se llama?... si, orgulloso y feliz.

“I feel like...I feel proud and happy (smiles)...I feel confident... What is its name?... yes, proud and happy.”

Sample 6: (RGS7)

Minute 53:49 - 54:54

T: xxx, go ahead and give us your color.

SsVP: Gold teacher, gold (smiles)

T: Gold (...) that's a beautiful color xxx, very good (the students continue smiling).

SsVP: Teacher the rainbow is crazy!! (hi-five with her father)

T: Yes, it's crazy.

(The whole class laughs loudly and some students clap and raise their arms)

Sample 7 (FTS1)

Self-confidence:
classmates
speaking

Uno de los estudiantes pide la oportunidad para participar con el león, se siente confiado para hacerlo. Este mismo estudiante participa más adelante y da sus respuestas sin que la profesora le pregunte y cuando esta asiente, el niño sonríe y se muestra feliz.

La estudiante a pesar de dar una respuesta errónea lo dice con seguridad.

Se escucha a algunos estudiantes diciendo ahora si es el tiger.

Taking into account the development of students' vocabulary to speak in English through communicative and collaborative activities, the previous samples demonstrate the increase in self-confidence during the process. The fourth example shows a student's perspective of how she felt during the classes listening to her teacher speaking in English all the time. In that way, it was evident that at the beginning, the

student did not generate any type of connection or relationship with the class.

Afterwards, as time passed and as she was involved in our communicative and collaborative activities, she considered that she was more capable of applying what had learnt that allowed her to interact more with her partners and the teacher, as it is supported by Clarke (2009):

Children need to demonstrate an awareness of other children around them and be able to relate to others in a social context. Being able to take a risk and talk to a peer or adults even with only a few words in English is an indicator that a child is 'socially' ready for school (p.14).

Thus, the student began to increase her self- confidence by being aware of her skills at the moment of getting involved in an English class. The fifth example demonstrates that the continuous interaction with English during classes allowed the student to change his thinking, besides, the student was able to develop his vocabulary with the intention of applying it outside of an academic context due to he received certain prize by some of his relatives as it is noticed during the interview; thus, this is a way of developing his self-confidence by being aware of his own process, highlighting that his progress is a reason that makes him to feel proud and happy. Therefore, the interaction with the teacher and a complete English class is quite important at the moment to increase self-confidence in students to allow them to generate collaboration with each other.

By the end of these seven lessons, there was a special sample about how these communicative and collaborative activities promote the students' use of the foreign language after having worked all together to get a unique outcome. The previous sixth

sample of this category was taken from the last lesson applied in this study and it shows how one of the students feels proud of the whole class development during the activity, so she took the impulse to say with a lot of joy and very enthusiastically the phrase “Teacher, the rainbow is crazy”, which represented for the whole class a very emotional and funny moment. Therefore, this student’s reaction allowed us to analyze if while she took the impulse to say that phrase in English, it was a sample of high self-confidence; according to what Fu, Wang, & Wang (2012) state: “students with strong self-confidence often grasp the nettle, and show initiative in class discussions” (p. 115), it is a great demonstration of how she felt so confident to speak in English during this communicative and collaborative activity; also it promoted on the students a comfortable and funny environment to continue working and provide different colors to continue making the “crazy rainbow”.

Besides, it is important to mention how this extraordinary sample presented above, which arises from the peer-participation and the collaborative work showed by all the students regardless if they could make some mistakes, as Al-Hebaish (2012) claims: “self-confident learners usually take risks at speaking another language even if they do commit mistakes” (p.61); for that reason, we decided to highlight this important outcome from the last session. In short, peer participation, collaborative and communicative activities helped us to discover how both promote the development of self-confidence in young children leaving apart their fear of making mistakes and building meaning all together.

In conclusion, the influence of communicative and collaborative methods encouraged in the students a more confident use of the foreign language while being

working with their peers. We as researchers could discover how important it is for young children to discover a new language, in this case English, noticing their classmates' and own mistakes, using the language with their peers in class time, and how essential it is to look for and find support among them without any impairment. Finally, this technique enhances the good communication among young children when building all together their language knowledge.

Natural approach and interest to use FL

When analyzing our students' behaviors, it is important to recognize those that affect positively their learning process along with the strategies we as teachers use. Also, it is known that promoting a pedagogy that fosters the spontaneous and voluntary sharing of knowledge is a good mechanism for students to increase their internal locus of control and their self-confidence. Taking that into account, one of the most important findings was that students tried, in an autonomous way, to express their ideas or respond to the different activities using the foreign language or at least, selecting a group or words they already knew mixing those with L1; these always demonstrated an interest of students for showing what they were capable of expressing and how they were using the target language with the teacher and their partners, which is directly related to three important components of self-confidence: esteem, concept and efficacy (Wheeler, Rios, DeMarree, and Petty 2010). Next, the following paragraphs will provide some evidence of how the progressive impulse to use the foreign language was effective to increase students' self-confidence and the development of some skills such as autonomy and positive self-image.

It is important to mention that we located some tendencies of behaviors and responses that showed how students were progressively increasing their self-confidence among all the seven lessons applied. During session number five, for example, we noticed that students were always receptive to the activities and after a few participations and interventions from the teacher, some of them opted to share their knowledge or ask by using the foreign language only and in a voluntary way. The next samples show how students' active use of the foreign language and participation are evidence of their self-confidence improvement and their knowledge development in interaction with their academic self-concept and skills.

Sample 1: (RGS5)**Minute 0:18:14- 0:18:28**

T: So, please my dears, open your book on page forty-seven. Open your books on page forty-seven.

MSs:Your book on forty-seven

SsDR: What page teacher?

Taking into account the relation between self-confidence development and the EFL process, the previous sample shows how students have the input to use the foreign language in a natural and voluntary approach, affecting positively their self-perception and confidence in an academic context. First, sample 1 showed two different behaviors that demonstrate the EFL does not only include some grammatical systems, but also involves the children's self-perception and image, taking them to build their self-

confidence (Livaccari, 2013). The first student repeats the instruction given by the teacher but with her own words and shorter, demonstrating that is the way she feels comfortable to confirm the information and staying ahead with the activities while using FL only; while the second student, opted to confirm the same instruction by asking about it, this time formulating the question correctly and using vocabulary that was progressively presented during the previous classes. Therefore, these behaviors showed how students' use of vocabulary is totally connected with their motivation, autonomy, and most importantly, their self-confidence in relation to the foreign language use.

Sample 2: (RGS5)

Minute 0:32:34-0:33:15

HSs: Teacher, how do you say piel in English?

T: Piel?

HSs: How do you say... how you say color piel... in English?

Furthermore, it is demonstrated that the social-emotional dimension deserves the same attention that the language proficiency and cognitive development (Livaccari, 2013), and taking care of both of them results in a positive EFL learning process and also, a self-confidence improvement. Then, the second sample taken from the session number five, shows how one of the students used the foreign language in a very assertive way when asking, formulating the question by following the grammatical system taught by the teacher, but most important, how he feels comfortable with the set

of words he used in English. Also, it is important to highlight this behavior since it is voluntary and spontaneous participation that in comparison with the very first lessons, became the wisest way for this student to approach the foreign language and also increase his lexicon while interacting with the teacher. Based on the previous information, one of the most important components of self-confidence was perceived: self-efficacy, which is described as the individual expectation to execute the behavior required to produce a declared outcome (Yang, 2018), in this case, formulating a question in foreign language while manifesting confidence in a very natural and autonomous intervention. Hence, the described demeanor is evidence of how the lexical competence and vocabulary building can be improved when students show positive self-confidence in the academic spaces.

Sample 3: (INT4SsSR)

Minute 0:14:02-0:14:53

T: Super. ¿Sentiste que tu impulso de hablar, incrementaba cuando tus compañeros también lo intentaban?

SsSR: Si señora

T: Si ellos hablaban ¿a ti también te daban ganas de hablar en inglés?

SsSR: si

T: ¿Por qué crees que pasaba eso?

SsSR: Porque al ver que mis compañeros lo pueden hacer, yo también.

Next, based on the fact that the reaction of others and the comparison with peers are very significant when developing self-imagen inside the classroom (Miller & Moran, 2012, p. 31), the previous sample demonstrates how the collaborative activities and techniques affect assertively students' self-confidence and promotes the use of the target language. Correspondingly, the third sample of this category shows how working in groups fosters the student to keep trying; it was notable that she might doubt about her capacities, however, throughout a positive comparison and collaborative work she developed a feeling of support and accompaniment by her peers that more likely may result in a very high increase in her self-confidence as an individual. The way she described how seeing her partners using the foreign language made her feel secure is evidence of a progressively increase in her self-confidence, and as Wallace (2016) say, through comparing with others, we learn the standard of good and bad and shaping those standards to the student's own skills results in a positive and better self-perception especially is respect is a value among the classroom and every participant. In short, the previous sample indicates how students are able to handle factors that affect their self-confidence with positive comparison and continue developing their foreign language learning process.

Sample 4: (FTS5)

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Attitudes: Sharing ideas. | x | <p>Every student who entered the class greeted and showed emotion about class asking what they would do.(they smiled and shake their hands) Intervention to say how much they liked the song, they asked for repetition.</p> <p>Students does show interest to participate and when their turn to participate is announced they show happiness and emotion. They confirm they are ready and when someone else does not respond, they try to intervene.(they raised their hands)</p> <p>Students correct each other when developing the activities in group.</p> <p>Intervention to ask about vocabulary (demonstrates curiosity by asking about how to say something in L2)</p> <p>Showed emotion when teacher allowed them to choose an animal to work with. Most of the students proposed their ideas.(they smiled, jumped)</p> |
|---------------------------|---|---|

In addition, there are a few factors that are developed when interacting with peers and participating that lead to the high and authentic self-confidence construction and the success with facing challenges. Hence, the sample presented before, evidences some of the most notable behaviors that indicate positive feelings by the students not only about the lesson or the activities but about themselves. During the development of the fifth lesson, the participation was very active and students showed emotion when they had the opportunity to share their ideas or proposals dealing, at the same time, with their lexical and communicative skills in the foreign language; this behavior evidences how they tended to act with the leadership of their own abilities increasing then their self-confidence in relation to the activities (Rubio, 2014). Also, the fact they demonstrated a certain level of confidence and positive feelings throughout some non-verbal expressions like smiling, dancing, and jumping can be related to their encouraging development, which is essential when creating our own self-image and

further, self-confidence (Yang, 2018). Then, the interaction and the verbal and non-verbal expressions were notable and evidenced how the interaction and participation increased students' self-confidence.

When summarizing the experience among all the seven lessons, we discovered how important it is for students to feel comfortable when using FL and how that behavior is an evidence of students' self-confidence. Then, it is important to highlight the positive impacts of students' natural approach to foreign language such as autonomy, confidence, lexical competence improvement, motivation, and active participation. The benefits mentioned are also a good example of some of the most notable conducts students usually show when they have positive self-confidence, self-perception, and self-image. Hence, all the samples presented demonstrated how progressively autonomous participation is connected to FL students' perception and how it impacts their development and self-confidence.

Teacher's support and modeling

First of all, as years go by, education has had important changes in our students, at a grammatical, didactic level, or even the way in which the classes have been taught; thus, the main factor in this language learning process is the influence that a teacher provides. The support from teachers is evident every day, and has an impact on some activities, whether it is to help our students or to give them some pieces of advice to promote their confidence and participation in class. Therefore, according to Kiefer, Alley & Ellerbrock (2015). "Teachers can help meet childrens' basic and developmental needs and promote positive adjustment by engaging in need-supportive teaching and

providing students with appropriate levels of autonomy support, structure, and involvement". Furthermore, following the previous idea, it is important that the teacher shows support to the student in any lesson of learning for them, so that students feel motivated and confident when expressing or talking themselves in the foreign language.

Hence, teacher support and modeling influence gave us a wide perspective about the importance of support for young EFL learners in order to develop a strong self-confidence throughout this language learning process; furthermore, they had a meaningful learning and an appropriate environment in the classroom in order to participate actively with the foreign language and the improvement of their lexical competence; as Ballester (2014) states: "In teaching, it is important to know how learners learn. If we teach in a connected and related way, most of them will learn properly" (p.200). Continuing, we present some evidence which supports this category in order to provide information about the seven lessons applied and how the students feel using the foreign language, all this taking into account the support provided by the teacher and parents, which was key during all this study and helped a lot to our students when try to avoid their fear and speak in English.

Throughout the classes, teacher's support was essential for our students' self-confidence development. All the communicative and collaborative activities proposed, such as role play, jigsaw puzzle, and information gap required certain support, especially by the teacher. Students always looked for her help and approval when trying to say something or participate, the same happened when parents got involved in the lessons since they represent a support. Thus, according to MacLellan (2014), "Learners who have contact with their teachers outwith formal instruction, feel intellectually and

emotionally more confident” (p.11). Therefore, the help for students was required and searched for, allowed us to analyze how important it was for them to work and study together with the teacher in order to feel more confident in English classes and when trying to speak in this language.

Sample 1 (INT1SsVP)

Minute 4:46-5:06

T: la siguiente, la numero 5, ¿usas tu vocabulario en conversaciones cotidianas?

SsVP: pues a veces en la casa los uso.

T: ¿si, a veces les dices palabritas a tus papitos en inglés?

SsVP: si

Sample 2 (RGS7)

Minute 10:07 - 10:46

SsJG: teacher you finished.

T: I finished, si tu me dices eso es como si yo hubiera sido la que termino de hacerlo..

listo, entonces para decir que terminaron pueden decir “I finished o I´m done ”

SsJG: I´m done

SsSR: I finished teacher

SsLA: teacher y si por ejemplo no hemos terminado y lo vas a pasar que decimos

T: No yet ... no yet ... very good, so. Hurry up because we have lots of things to do today

According to the evidence presented before, we can say that when student was going to speak she felt a little shy, but did not take away her willingness to participate. It was clear that she felt supported by the teacher driving her to respond in an accurate way; furthermore, the teacher is attentive to motivate her to participate and to express "you can do it". Furthermore, with the previous idea, this allow the student to participate and learn in the foreign language together with them as peers in real-life situations that will help her to improve her self-confidence in another language; Nevertheless, the student knows that the teacher supported her in a way that makes comfortable for her and then she can express more words or interact without the fear of making mistakes, even she makes a mistake, she understands that her teacher will be there for here if she needs help.

Sample 3 (FTS1)

Self-confidence:
classmates
speaking

El estudiante demuestra
seguridad ante la pregunta de la
profesora y su rostro demuestra
felicidad cuando se le dice que
sus respuestas son correctas.

Besides, it is important to notice the influence that the teacher's role has to encourage the students to participate and give an answer as a whole class. Moreover, how students show more confidence when they have listened to the right answer and

they repeat it, so they all are building their new vocabulary and creating a more confident learning environment, as it is supported by Gómez (2011) who states that: “as teachers, we are helping in the process of building a development of language learning in which students feel confident enough to interact among themselves establishing a relation between the things they have learnt and the things they haven't” (p.196). In short, our role as teachers is key when we are the main model inside the class.

As a conclusion, considering these categories, we can get to the outcome that communicative and collaborative activities promote young children's development of their self-confidence. Moreover, group work and peer-participation demonstrated as a struggle to achieve the goal of this study, students showed the importance of working all together, helping each other, and building their knowledge in a very active and meaningful way. Furthermore, students' autonomous use of language was essential, they were looking for the opportunities during English lessons to speak and participate in the foreign language, all this helping to the development and increase of their self-confidence. Finally, this study has demonstrated the willingness that young children have for learning a foreign language and how this helps them to build strong self-confidence.

Chapter V

Conclusions

This research arose from the concern of how communicative and collaborative activities helped students to build their self-confidence. The students demonstrated a more active role during the English lessons, the peer-participation, when working and

building meaning all together, the search for translations from Spanish to the target language, and the teacher's support and modeling encouraged to build their self-confidence in a meaningful way. All in all, the outcomes showed how communicative and collaborative activities are a good technique to foster the students' self-confidence.

Throughout this chapter, the conclusions in light of all the categories presented in chapter four are going to be demonstrated. In that sense, the findings from the categories "Peer-participation as a struggle for self-confidence", "Natural approach and interest to use FL", and "Teacher's support and modeling" are developed in order to show comprehensible assertions; furthermore, some of the challenges faced during the development of this study are discussed, and finally, further research questions are proposed. In short, this chapter aims at showing the answer to our research question, how this study contributes to the field of EFL, and to outline possible further research.

The students' active role and communicative and collaborative activities proposed by us had an influence on their self-confidence development. First, it is important to mention that the instruments used during the data collection were designed for us to better recognize some patterns about how children increased certain aspects, such as participation, motivation, spontaneous interaction with peers and the teacher, and with the foreign language. Hence, during the lessons, we noticed gradual progress in terms of how students communicated their ideas by using the foreign language; at the beginning, most of the children felt incapable of using the foreign language or having a natural approach to it, but by the application of our communicative and collaborative activities like role play, information gaps, and jigsaw puzzles, we noticed they increased their participation and interaction not only with the teacher but with their peers. This

exchange of ideas and opinions was carried out through the use of gestures, chunks, and keywords, which promoted the building of a more comfortable environment where students felt capable and more motivated to use the foreign language when completing certain tasks and being involved in the class. In short, communicative and collaborative activities promoted a very active role of the students, which allowed them to feel confident in how they were able to use the foreign language, giving a positive influence on them and the class development.

Furthermore, when analyzing some of the interviews applied to the students, we noticed that lesson after lesson their perception of English changed. They were turning it not only as an important and mandatory subject but also as an opportunity for them to communicate differently, learn new things, and reinforce previous knowledge. Moreover, some of the students recognized as well their progress in terms of their lexical competence, highlighting how they felt comfortable by trying to communicate their ideas and using new vocabulary when it was applicable. This is evidence of how their confidence was getting higher and more positive in regard to the class itself and their capacities. Besides, we discovered that communicative activities worked in the majority of students to develop better communication skills and also, to increase their self-confidence in a positive way. It was demonstrated that students' perception of the foreign language was progressively changing throughout all the lessons and so did their self-image. In sum, it is important to mention that even if the interaction among them was not as planned due to the sudden implementation of virtual lessons, the activities proposed resulted to have a positive impact on students' self-confidence as individuals and as a group.

Taking into account the selected categories and concluding with the third one, we could realize how the teacher's support during the classes was essential for the development of students' self-confidence. It demonstrated the advancement of each one of them and thus promoted the learning of the foreign language in terms of lexicon, and the good use of it in class development; furthermore, we could see how students had the confidence to participate in class with this language, therefore, when students made some mistakes of pronunciation, the teacher gave feedback for them in a way that they felt comfortable and encouraged them to avoid being afraid about it, allowing the students to increase their awareness of the usefulness of making mistakes. All in all, the support and motivation from the teacher towards the student were important in each of the classes for the proper development of their learning process and to be able to interact or make use of some words of the foreign language.

Throughout this project, we have highlighted some positive aspects, which are worth to be mentioned, due to the fact that they have been meaningful for students and researchers. We took into account that our research has had a fruitful development for students learning a foreign language, group work, enhance their self-confidence, lexical competence, and even more to be together in this pandemic to achieve the results that were obtained in each student. This research taught us that it does not matter where we are, but how to adapt in any context to work and be able to impart knowledge to the students in an effective way, even though it is not easy to learn a language virtually; however, the innovation of our project, data collection instruments we used in each of the sessions, along with the lesson plans, were important for the development of each student's learning process due to it was noticeable how students were using more the

foreign language in different contexts, feeling they were capable to express themselves without the fear of making mistakes and the support of their classmates.

Finally, some challenges affected in different ways the application and development of the lessons; therefore, the data collection and analysis were also affected. The lessons were applied from March to May of 2020, but the global sanitary emergency provoked by the Covid-19, became an obstacle for us to apply all the activities that required a face to face interaction from the students. The pandemic took us to find new tools and strategies that allowed us to maintain the objectives of the lessons planned and continue working on the research question. Later, the way we recognized some behaviors of patterns of communication and participation changed, since the interaction was totally different during the virtual sessions as the development of the activities.

This study demonstrated the usefulness of the communicative and collaborative activities to foster self-confidence in young children. As this pedagogical implementation was applied during seven lessons, two face-to-face and five virtually, the interaction and behavior in both scenarios were different, but, even so, the three categories mentioned previously maintained throughout the classes showing its worthiness. Lastly, we would like to see how in a virtual environment students are able to work on their communicative competence and how in that same learning environment young children can build strong social relationships as an influencing factor in their learning process.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent form

Carta dirigida a los padres de familia

Autorización de padres y/o representantes legales y/o acudientes de estudiantes que hacen parte del proyecto de investigación a cargo de la docente

Establecimiento Educativo:

Educador investigador:

Yo, _____ [madre, representante legal o acudiente], y yo, _____ [padre o representante legal], mayor(es) de edad, del(la) niño, niña _____ de _____ años de edad en calidad de estudiante del Establecimiento Educativo, ***** he (hemos) sido informado(s) acerca de la grabación del video del proyecto de investigación a cargo de la docente ***** que tiene como propósito registrar 7 clases en la institución.

Teniendo en cuenta lo anterior, manifiesto (manifestamos) que entiendo (entendemos) que el tratamiento de datos comprende la recolección, almacenamiento, uso y/o conservación, del video e imágenes obtenidas del registro, así mismo y luego de haber sido informado(s), comprendo (comprendemos) que la participación de mi (nuestro) niño, niña, en el video:

- No tendrá repercusiones o consecuencias en las actividades escolares, evaluaciones o calificaciones en el curso derivado de los resultados obtenidos.
- No generará ningún gasto, ni remuneración alguna por su participación o realización.
- No habrá ninguna sanción en caso de que no se autorice su participación.
- No será publicada la identidad de mi (nuestro) niño, niña, así como, los videos, imágenes, sonidos y datos personales registrados durante la grabación.
- Los sonidos e imágenes del video se utilizarán únicamente para los propósitos de la investigación.

Así mismo entiendo (entendemos) qué:

• Las imágenes y sonidos registrados en el video de mi (nuestro) niño, niña, adolescente o representado legal que sean recolectados serán tratados por el responsable y/o encargado dentro del marco del cumplimiento de la política de protección de datos contemplada en la Ley 1581 de 2012 y su Decreto Reglamentario 1377 de 2013.

• Los sonidos e imágenes del video podrán ser usados para temas investigativos y/o académicos propios del proyecto de investigación.

En ese orden de ideas, manifiesto (manifestamos) que comprendo (comprendemos) en su totalidad la información sobre esta actividad y autorizo (autorizamos) el uso de los videos, imágenes, sonidos y datos personales, conforme a este consentimiento informado de forma consciente y voluntaria.

☐ SI AUTORIZO (AUTORIZAMOS)
(AUTORIZAMOS)

☐ NO AUTORIZO

.....
FIRMA MADRE CC/CE

.....
FIRMA PADRE CC/CE

.....
FIRMA REPRESENTANTE LEGAL

Appendix 2: Interview format



| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Interviewer's name | | |
| Interviewee's name | | |
| Objectives: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To know how you felt during the classes. • To know what your perceptions were towards to speak in English as much as possible. • To analyze how did you improve with using English outside the classroom. • To observe your confidence to speak in English as much as you can. • To examine how did you feel when listen to your teacher and classmates when speaking in English | |
| Allotted time | 15 minutes. | |
| 1. What was your first impression when starting to learn English? | | |
| 2. What is the most remarkable class you have? Why? | | |
| 3. How did you feel when listening to the teacher speaking in English all the time? | | |
| 4. How often do you think you speak in English inside and/or outside the classroom? | | |
| 5. Do you use your English vocabulary in daily conversations? | | |

| | |
|---|--|
| 6. How confident do you consider yourself to speak in English at this point? | |
| 7. What activity applied do you think was the one that encouraged you the most to speak in English? | |
| 8. Did you communicate easier with your classmates when doing the communicative and collaborative activities? | |
| 9. What were your main feelings during these 10 classes when you attempted to speak in English? | |
| 10. Did you like to speak in English during our classes? | |
| 11. Do you think the activities we organized were useful to motivate you to speak in English? Why? | |
| 12. | |
| 13. | |

Appendix 3: Field notes

| | |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| Date: | Length of lesson: 50 minutes |
| Lesson n° | Participants: |
| Topic | |

| Criteria | Yes | No | Comments |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| Self-confidence: classmates speaking | | | |
| Self-confidence: teacher speaking | | | |
| Group work: discussion to make decisions | | | |
| Lexical competence: Use of translation | | | |
| Solitude: collaborative activities | | | |
| Attitudes: Sharing ideas. | | | |