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Enhancing Learners' Interaction through Self-reflection in an ESP Context

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Research Report submitted

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master in English Language Teaching – Autonomous Learning Environments

Directed by Jermaine MCDOUGALD

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Declaration

I hereby declare that my research report entitled:

[Enhancing Learners' Interaction through Self-Reflection in an ESP Context]

- is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared and specified in the text;

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Abstract

This qualitative, action research study explores eleven young adult learners' interaction in an ESP context while they carry out a self-reflection strategy on their learning process at the Avianca training center in Bogotá, Colombia. A needs analysis evidenced learners' lack of communicative competence and interaction, poor technical English knowledge, and lack of self-reflection strategies and goal setting. Through self-reflection, learners were trained to think about their learning and self-set their learning goals. A pedagogical intervention was designed and implemented where communicative tasks and English for Specific Purposes (ESP: English for cabin crew) were included. Also, learners developed a self-reflection strategy for them to reflect on their learning process at the beginning and end of every communicative task. The aim was to enhance students' interaction and technical English competences to communicate with non-Spanish speaking passengers in their workplace. Data collection instruments and procedures comprised a piloting stage and three data collection stages. Questionnaires, teacher field notes, learners' self-reflection sheets and voice recordings were the data collection instruments applied. The data analysis process took place in the first semester of 2014, using a grounded theory approach(Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Findings suggest that self-set goals and reflection allowed learners to maintain the focus on the specific language functions and vocabulary necessary for them to complete communicative tasks (role plays) successfully and, in turn, led to an increase in learner awareness, confidence and positive self-concept. In addition, learner's evidenced progress on language development in terms of specific (ESP) language functions and technical vocabulary.

Key words: English for specific purposes (ESP); self-reflection strategies; goal setting; communicative activities.

Resumen

Este estudio cualitativo de investigación-acción explora la interacción once jóvenes estudiantes en un contexto ESP mientras llevan a cabo una estrategia de auto-reflexión sobre su proceso de aprendizaje en el centro de entrenamiento de Avianca en Bogotá, Colombia. Un análisis de las necesidades evidenció la carencia de competencia comunicativa e interacción, escaso conocimiento técnico de Inglés, y carencia de estrategias de auto-reflexión y fijación de metas en los alumnos. A través de la auto-reflexión, los estudiantes se prepararon para pensar en su aprendizaje y auto-establecer sus metas. Una intervención pedagógica fue diseñada e implementada, incluyendo y vinculando tareas comunicativas con Inglés para fines específicos (Inglés para la aviación), y una estrategia de auto-reflexión llevada a cabo al comienzo y al final de cada tarea comunicativa. El objetivo es mejorar la interacción y competencias técnicas en inglés de los estudiantes para que puedan comunicarse con los pasajeros no hispanohablantes.. Los instrumentos y procedimientos de recolección de datos (cuestionarios, notas de campo, hojas de auto-reflexión y grabaciones de voz) pasaron por fase de pilotaje y tres etapas de recolección. El análisis de los datos se llevó a cabo en el primer semestre de 2014, utilizando un enfoque de teoría fundamentada (Corbin y Strauss, 2008). Los resultados sugieren que las metas auto-fijadas y reflexión permitieron a los estudiantes mantener el enfoque en las funciones específicas del lenguaje y el vocabulario necesario para que ellos completaran las tareas comunicativas (juegos de rol) con éxito y, a su vez, condujo a un aumento en la conciencia de aprendizaje, creación de confianza y autoconcepto positivo. Además, el desarrollo del lenguaje del alumno en cuanto a ESP, Funciones específicas del idioma y vocabulario técnico se vio favorecido.

Palabras clave: Inglés para propósitos específicos (ESP); estrategias de auto-reflexión; fijación de metas; actividades comunicativas.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   Introduction to the study

Communication is said to be the ultimate and most important goal of language. Although English is not the language spoken by most people around the world (Mandarin is), it is the language that the highest amount of countries can speak (more than sixty according to different statistical sources), and it has become the lingua franca in many parts of the world. In 21-century globalized countries like Colombia, where information is ubiquitous thanks to ICT and connectivity, the need for meaningful language learning contexts in private and/or public education is more and more evident. Learners must be provided with real opportunities for learning; a need to learn English must be created in students, and chances to practice and interact with the language must be offered, even when speaking English within our country (Colombia) is not mandatory or official. In view of these trends, research is a great opportunity to identify needs and/or problematic situations that may influence learners' language development, which can lead to implementing a set of strategies aiming at boosting learning and gaining insights in the ELT field.

The current qualitative action research study took place at the Avianca Training Center (Escuela de Operaciones) which is a private context belonging to Avianca, the leading airline in Colombia and the third largest in South America. The study emerged from the learners' difficulty to interact accurately in order to communicate effectively on the plane with passengers during the different phases of a flight. This difficulty could be attributed to the fact that students did not have opportunities to engage in relevant and meaningful classes where they could use language to talk about and simulate their daily routines at work. Richards (2006) affirmed that second language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful

communication. In fact, this study aims at providing learners with opportunities to use language meaningfully in different contexts and situations from their work context, while reflecting on their strengths, weaknesses and achievements.

The participants of this study were eleven students from Avianca level 3 (A2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). These flight attendant trainees, aged from 18 to 25 years old, come from different regions of Colombia and attended this 'commitment course' as part of their future job requirement; they are expected to fulfill the academic program/activities designed for them to improve their English level before they start working. In order to join the workforce, all flight attendants must have English competences related to general as well as technical English, or specific English they are going to need to assist passengers on the plane in different circumstances.

Throughout the semesters previous to this study, it was noticed that English speaking passengers and crew members at Avianca documented and filed verbal and written complaints about poor interaction with cabin crew members on the airplane. At the training center, students also evidenced their interest and need to strengthen the communicative competence in order to be able to communicate in the classroom, and later at their workplace (on an aircraft) once they started working. Nonetheless, the syllabus being implemented at the training center was still under development and not fully contextualized. Besides, learners were never introduced to strategies that would aid them in self-reflecting on their language development, which would help them be active participants of their learning and progress. In this regard, Harris and McCann (1994) asserted that self-assessment helps learners to think about their own progress and then to find ways of changing, adapting and improving.

1.2   Needs analysis and problem statement

The factors previously mentioned were examined and ratified throughout the needs analysis stage which took place in the first semester, 2013. A questionnaire and an interview were implemented and findings supporting the problem situation previously observed were evidenced. . The importance of having conducted a needs analysis stage in this study is huge: it validated the observations, gave the study reliability, and also provided new insights into the way students perceived English language learning in their contexts. There were also difficulties which relied basically on the design of the instruments; they were time-consuming to code and analyze. The fact of going through questions, refining their wording and avoiding bias was something very enriching since it left me solid foundations for future instrument implementation.

As mentioned above, in this stage, a questionnaire and an interview were conducted. In the questionnaire learners were asked five questions to explore their feelings, opinions and thoughts related to the reasons for studying English, its connection with their future jobs as flight attendants at Avianca, and also the skill they believed they needed to work the most on. Likewise, a semi-structured interview was applied in which students reinforced the information they had conveyed in the previous survey (Appendix A).

Through a crosschecked revision and analysis of the data collected in both instruments, students expressed that their main reason for studying English was their job; they evidenced awareness of the need for a better English level to work in Avianca, which is a commitment they have with the company. Learners also thought that interaction with English speaking passengers was 'very important' or 'essential', fact that was complemented with their opinions stating that there was a need to communicate with non-Spanish speaking passengers on the airplane. Finally, learners commented on their interest in learning technical vocabulary that could help them

communicate better. These categories emerged after having implemented a data collection

analysis following a color coding procedure approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In this process,

key elements of students' questions were analyzed and highlighted. Subsequently, those answers

that shared key aspects where grouped together into codes which would then become categories.

These categories are ultimately samples of students' thoughts, beliefs and opinions about the

language learning process, supporting the problem statement mentioned above.

As part of the pedagogical intervention, one strategy that arose regarding learners'

communication needs was to engage the learners in aviation-based communicative tasks and

activities that involved real life situations. Its ultimate objective would be to promote students'

meaningful interactions in the classroom in order to help them internalize, practice and enhance

the language they need to assist passengers in different scenarios and contexts.

1.3   Research question and objectives

The research question that was posed related to the problem stated above is:

1.3.1   Research question

How might a self-reflection strategy influence A2 young adult learners' interactions when

participating in aviation-based communicative tasks?

1.3.2   Research objectives

To explore the influence that a self-reflection strategy may have on learners' interaction

when participating in aviation-based communicative activities.

To determine the way goal-setting may affect learner achievements.

1.4   Rationale of the study

Bearing in mind students' needs related to their context and environment, it is necessary to refer now to the value of this research study. First of all, it is important to mention that this thesis study was carried out in a private context, where students need English to succeed in their jobs. Although some of them may not have liked English at all, they all knew it was essential and mandatory for their job, and they could not graduate or perform well in their occupation if they had not fulfilled the 'English commitment course' program and requirements. This extrinsic motivation factor, which may have been present in some of the students, helped this research proposal to be focused on aspects different than motivation; from the very first moment that students were enrolled in the trainee flight attendant program, they were motivated to a certain extent to learn the language, since they knew English would be needed for their jobs.

The current study was expected to provide us with insights related to the study of English for specific purposes (ESP) in the private sector in Colombia-which is not something we read about everyday- and also to come up with answers and new questions appealing for further research, applicable to specific contexts. With respect to English language learning and workforce, it is important to point out that English is the official language for Aviation. Since March 5, 2008, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) dictated a set of standards for all airlines to be met. Ever since, all the pilots flying international routes need to meet a certain English proficiency level (level 5 ICAO). Based on this, Avianca, as the leading airline in Colombia, has accomplished this goal with pilots, and decided to start working on flight attendants' proficiency as well. The goal is to increase all flight attendants' English level to level four ICAO (B1 Common European Framework).

In terms of goal setting and self-reflection, the importance of conducting this study rests on the fact learners had never set their goals or reflected on their own competencies in the English language course at Avianca training center. This means that the instructional design also had an innovation component when students started learning the strategy, applying it to self-set goals and reflecting on their learning. This will be expanded in further chapters. In the following chapter the most important theoretical constructs, which gave shape and support to the research design and implementation will be discussed.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

2.1   Introduction

In this chapter, the most important constructs related to the current research study are discussed. A focus on English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which addresses the settings, context and underlying principle of the language being taught, will be examined, bearing in mind that English is the international language for aviation. Communicative Activities is the second construct. It will be discussed in order to take a look at some key aspects of the instruction itself, based on the communicative approach and its principles. This construct and ESP work hand in hand; the specific English language my students need to learn (aviation-based), will be framed into a set of principles which ultimately seek to encourage student communication by using the language in real contexts. The third construct will be 'self-monitoring'. It refers to strategies used by learners in order to reflect upon and observe their learning, monitor their progress and become responsible for their academic work. Within this umbrella concept, self-reflection and goal-setting will also be discussed. By reviewing and discussing these constructs it is expected that the study will have a strong base of core theory.

2.2   Definitions

2.2.1   English for specific purposes.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a concept framed within English Language Teaching. It refers to features related to English language instruction, from the point of view of the precise language (technical) that is needed in order for learners to succeed in their different disciplines and careers. Hutchinson & Waters (1991) mentioned that ESP are English courses tailored to specific needs. As a matter of fact, in my learners' context, their needs arise from the

necessity that cabin crew personnel have in terms of interacting and speaking with English

speaking passengers, based on the company's requirements and policies. Belcher(2006) stressed

the importance of carrying out needs analysis, since ESP entails specific learners in specific

contexts: "needs assessment is seen in ESP as the foundation on which all other decisions are, or

should be, made" (Belcher, 2006, p. 135). In this particular research context, the trainee flight

attendants have specific needs for specific contexts (discussed in Chapter 1), which were

confirmed by the researcher through his observations and supported by the learners' opinions.

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) complement the previous definitions by adding that

ESP teaching is linked to a particular discipline or profession and makes use of a methodology

that differs from that used in General Purpose English teaching. By methodology, Dudley-Evans

and St John (1998) refer to the nature of the teacher-learner interaction that takes place in the

language classroom, where the teacher sometimes becomes a language consultant, enjoying

equal status with the learners. Richards (2006) illustrated the origins of ESP:

> Many learners needed English in order to use it in specific occupational or educational settings. For them it
>
> would be more efficient to teach them the specific kinds of language and communicative skills needed for
>
> particular roles, (e.g., that of nurse, engineer, flight attendant, pilot, biologist, etc.) rather than just to
>
> concentrate on more general English. (p.12)

Richards (2006) also stressed the importance of determining the specific characteristics of

a language when it is used for specific rather than general purposes. Such differences might

include vocabulary choice, grammar, kinds of texts commonly occurring, the need of particular

skills, and functions. Hence, the language a flight attendant is expected to produce is very

different from the language a child learns in elementary school; particular expressions,

directions, vocabulary and other technical components are crucial when they face their daily

routines and situations on the airplane. Although learners were meant to strengthen those technical competences in Avianca, the English syllabus was still under refinement in order to include all the technical competences and vocabulary in a Communicative Language Teaching approach, which will be another construct reviewed later on in this chapter.

Complementing the ESP concept, Hutchinson et al. (1991) highlighted the importance of three aspects and instances from which the concept of ESP emerged: 'the demands of a brand new world', 'a revolution in linguistics' and a 'focus on the learner' (p.8). Regarding 'the demands of a brand new world' Hutchinson et al. (1991) mentioned that as English became the accepted language of technology and commerce, it created a new generation of learners who knew specifically why they were learning a language. In fact, narrowing the ESP to English for cabin crew, this concept is evidenced when reviewing the participant's settings at Avianca's operations school. The aviation language is English, and learners know why they are learning it.

Hutchinson et al. (1991) affirmed that the second instance is a 'revolution in linguistics' based on the fact that the language we speak varies considerably from one context to another, and there are differences between, say, the English for law and the English for engineering. They stated: "If language varies from one situation of use to another it should be possible to determine the features of specific situations and then make these features the basics of the learners' course" (Hutchinson et al., 1991, p.7). Those specific situations the authors mention are in fact the learners' context at work: flight attendants welcoming passengers, giving directions to locate their seats, answering questions, offering meal/drinks service, making safety announcements, giving briefings to special passengers, etc.

The third and last aspect that shapes the ESP (Hutchinson et al., 1991, p.8) is the 'focus on the learner'. It highlights the fact that learners are seen to have different interests and reasons for learning the target language, and this supports the development of English courses in which 'relevance' to the learners' needs is paramount. In specific contexts like Avianca, English language learners attend lessons based on the aspects mentioned above: they are immersed in a context where English is used as the global language (aviation), which varies from those specific settings to, say, general English, and finally, based on those specific scenarios, specific needs and interests for mastering that language are created. There is a "need for increased specialization in language learning" (Hutchinson et al., 1991, p.8)

2.2.2   Communicative language teaching.

Linked to the previous construct, communicative activities are a specific factor of analysis framed into Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), a functional approach to English teaching. Brown (2007) defined CLT by mentioning four essential characteristics. Firstly, he stated that classroom goals are focused on various aspects, not only on grammatical or linguistic competences. Secondly, he asserted that language techniques are meant to "engage students in authentic, functional and pragmatic use of language with meaningful purposes" (p.241). In fact, the goal was that learners participated in activities that had a functional component, rather than grammar-based classes, in which they could use and practice authentic language. This is reflected in the language learners making, for instance, 'safety requests' instead of learning what imperatives or modal verbs are.

The third characteristic is fluency and accuracy seen as complementary principles when communicating, where fluency has to take more importance and accuracy at times, in order to keep learners engaged in language use. Finally, the fourth characteristic is that in the

communicative classroom the ultimate goal is to use the target language in unrehearsed contexts. Supporting this characteristic, Harmer (2007) highlighted that activities in CLT typically involve students in real or realistic communication, where the successful achievement of their perfomed task is at least as important as the accuracy of their language use. The author adds that role-play and simulation have become very popular in CLT. These four characteristics encompass the principles upon which the classroom activities were developed at the Avianca operations' school as part of the pedagogical intervention, which will be described in-depth in chapter four.

Having mentioned CLT as the general underpinning approach, it is worth reviewing what communicative activities are. With this view, Richards (2006) stated that "Communicative practice refers to activities where practice in using language within a real communicative context is the focus, where real information is exchanged, and where the language used is not totally predictable" (p.16). These points concerning real communicative contexts and unpredictability seem to me very important to emphasize on. Even when my learners and future flight attendants need specific language and vocabulary to interact on the plane with English speaking passengers, they are going to face completely unpredictable situations at work in which their communicative abilities will be challenged.

Based on the CLT principles, Richards (2006) lists a number of communicative activities suitable to be used in the Language classroom. Those include 'Task-completion activities', which are tasks focusing on using one's language resources to complete a task (puzzles, games, map-reading);'Information-gathering activities' which are student-conducted surveys, interviews, and searches in which they are required to use their linguistic resources to collect information; 'Opinion-sharing activities' or activities in which students compare values,

opinions, or beliefs. Other activities include 'Information-transfer activities' which require learners to take information that is presented in one form, and represent it in a different form; 'Reasoning-gap activities' which involve deriving some new information from given information through the process of inference, practical reasoning, etc. and 'Role plays' which refer to activities in which students are assigned roles and improvise a scene or exchange based on given information or clues. These activities, among others, are the communication activities suitable for the language classroom, and intertwined with the construct of ESP and English for Aviation previously reviewed. A further and deep account of the instructional design, including specific teacher and learners roles will be discussed in chapter four.

2.2.3 Self-monitoring

So far, the constructs of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Communicative Activities have been reviewed as part of the context and purposes of the language being taught, aiming at facilitating the pupils' learning and practice of that specific language. 'Self-monitoring' is a specific construct derived from self-regulation, referring to a set of L2 learning strategies that students learn and implement, as part of their autonomous learning process.

Learning strategies are defined a specific actions, behaviors, steps or techniques-such as seeking out conversation partners or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task used by students to enhance their own learning(Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). Oxford(1990) also defines 'Language Learning Strategies' as techniques implemented by learners to increase their knowledge, understanding, and using a second or foreign language, while increasing their independence and autonomy in the learning process. In order to classify L2 learning strategies, Oxford (1990, 2011) provides six major groups: cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, memory-related strategies, compensatory strategies, affective strategies and social Strategies.

From these six main groups mentioned, 'self-monitoring' belongs to the 'metacognitive strategies' group, since assessing and monitoring oneself in L2 learning entails reflecting upon and evaluating on the learning process (Oxford, 1990). Complementing the previous definition, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) affirmed that metacognitive strategies involve thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring of comprehension or production while it is taking place and self-evaluation after the learning activity. Also, they encourage learners to be responsible for their own learning, to be critical and thoughtful regarding the goals they have, whether they are accomplishing them and the way they are doing it. Bearing in mind these concepts, at the Avianca training center, the A2 young adult learners were meant to have the chance to set their own goals, reflect upon their achievements, difficulties, strengths and interests, and finally set plans for improving possible difficulties. Ultimately this study and intervention sought for students to become responsible and aware of their academic process. Learner goal setting and self-reflection are immersed in the metacognitive strategies, and are two aspects of self-monitoring that are explored in this study.

Schunk (2002) affirmed that goal setting involves establishing a standard or objective to serve as the aim of one's actions, and are involved in different moments: forethought (setting goals), performance control (monitoring) and self-reflection (evaluating goal progress). The benefits of goal-setting include learners focusing on the task, learners exerting effort necessary to meet the task demands, and learners' building self-efficacy when goals are attained. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that setting goals is not as easy as it seems. To illustrate this, Schunk (2002) pointed out three properties that learner goals must have to be successful. The first property is 'specificity'; goals need to incorporate specific performance indicators. The second property is 'proximity'; goals need to be specific as to how far they

project into the future. In this view, short-term goals are achieved more quickly and result in higher motivation and better self-regulation than long-term goals. The third goal property is 'difficulty'. In this regard, Schunk (2002) affirmed that easy goals do not motivate, nor do extremely difficult ones; they may lead learners to lose interest tasks, or may instead frustrate learners when they are not able to achieve the goals. Instead, moderately difficult self-set goals produce high goal commitment, motivation and self-regulated performance. In terms of learners' training for self-set goals, Schunk (2002) stressed that learners may need to be provided with the goals, while the teacher trains on goal-setting strategies simultaneously. Then, as they learn how to self-set realistic goals, learners' high self-efficacy, self-regulation and commitment can be expected.

Self-reflection in this study is the self-monitoring component phase carried out by learners after a certain task, where they express their ideas, opinions and feelings with regard to their self-set goal attainment. Zimmerman(2002) highlighted that learners' reflections may take place as 'self-judgments' and/or 'self-reactions'. Self-judgment occurs when learners compare and evaluate their performance to a standard performance, which can be their own goals, their prior performances or another person's. Self-judgment can also occur when learners point out the causes of errors or successes. Self-reaction involves feelings of positive affect, and/or satisfaction towards one's performance. Zimmerman (2002) also asserted that self-reactions can also take the form of adaptive and/or defensive responses.

Hurd and Lewis (2008) stressed the importance of learners having time and space for reflection, together with a clear explanation of its purpose and likely outcomes. Likewise, it is important for language learners to have opportunities to produce spontaneous writing by means of unstructured journals or logs. However, Hurd and Lewis (2008) stressed that learners may find

it difficult to put their feelings into words, and sometimes their repertoire in the target language may not be enough for them to express everything they want to. Based on these important insights about reflection, the researcher decided to give learners the choice to write their reflection ideas in Spanish, English or mixed, depending on what they felt comfortable with.

The strategy planned, tought, and implemented, was a reflective learning sheet, referred to by Harris and McCann(1994) as "records of students on what has happened in the language learning over a period of time" (p. 72). Also, Harris and McCann mentioned that reflective learning diaries contain a lot of information, such as what went on in class, what students feel they have learned, what problems they have, and what they are going to do to overcome them. Hence, learners at Avianca could think of what they learned and their difficulties; they reflected upon the ways they could tackle and overcome them, aiming at becoming self-directed and autonomous, as the reflective strategy was being mastered.

The literature on ESP, communicative activities and self-monitoring, has given support to the current research study design. The next section in this chapter will review some studies that have been done related to the constructs previously revised, which give the current research study important insights, background and support.

2.3   State of the art

Related to local research in the field of English for Specific Purposes, it has been found that there are not many published studies in Colombia related to the field of English for Specific Purposes. Tajima(2003) mentioned that the aviation field (ESP) is still an unexplored research area with a huge potential for language researchers. Rhoden, Ralston and Ineson(2008) also affirmed that the safety roles of flight attendants have received little attention in the academic

literature. They stressed the importance of assuring that flight attendants-as a group of professionals-be well trained and equipped with skills and knowledge, since English is a very important aspect of their professionalism.

As mentioned above, cabin crew English has had reduced attention in Colombia. Nonetheless, a number of international studies can shed light on the subject matter. Wood(2009) conducted a research study on preparing American ESP learners for the workplace. A set of simulations related to the types of speech these engineering learners would find at their jobs were implemented. This study concluded that formulaic sequences can help in the effective language training for specific situations by providing learners with a repertoire of language expressions and an awareness of the contexts in which they communicate. These finding suggests that simulations along with a repertoire of expressions and language (such a corpus) are key components of an ESP course when they are contextualized and relevant for ESP learners. Dinçay (2011) also conducted research on designing a learner-centered ESP course syllabus for administrative personnel in Turkey. He found that the situational-based ESP syllabus was the one that could suit the learners' needs the most, because of its non-linguistic category: the situation. Based on those situations, the language teacher put together real or imaginary situations in which language occurs or is used. These findings make me reflect upon the responsibility the teacher-researcher has in making the right choice in the scenarios chosen for the learners (e.g. boarding, onboard service, before take-off) for further design of meaningful learning experiences. McDonough (2010) also touches on an aspect currently linked to ESP methodology. He asserted that ESP success is crucially linked to the materials used based on learners' specific needs and contexts. He conducted an investigation on current ESP materials for different professional areas in order to identify key components of ESP coursebooks and courses. McDonough (2010) found

there are no absolute rights and wrongs because what is important for teachers is whether a

course meets learners' needs, and this kind of evaluation can only happen in the context of use.

As a conclusion to his study, McDonough (2010) found common, recurrent tasks in several ESP

courses and textbooks. Such tasks include pair work, gap filling, dialogue completion, role play,

and sentence correction. Of these tasks, gap-filling, pair work and role play are the ones

implemented the most in this study, and will be explained in detail in Chapter 4.

In terms of self-monitoring, Sánchez(2012) carried out qualitative research to explore the

impact of self-monitoring strategies on the learning experience of A1 learners in a blended

learning environment in Colombia. She found that the participants increased their awareness of

the language process, despite the fact they were not required to evidence their achievements. The

current study was designed to have a data collection instrument that could evidence some of the

learners' possible achievements, in order to account for their language development, progress, or

the difficulties derived from or affected by the use of the self-reflection strategy. Sanchez (2012)

mentioned that the participants developed self-regulated learning to an extent, but also

experienced some difficulty when dealing with time and the blended course itself. From

reviewing this study, I can reflect upon my participants and their contexts. By monitoring their

process, they are expected to become active agents, responsible for their learning. Planning,

monitoring and self-evaluating their performance are the aspects to be considered for the

purposes of this study, and the ones that will be explored as the pedagogical intervention takes

place.

Wallace (2012) conducted a research study aimed at exploring the Language Learning

Strategies of Spanish adults when engaging in communicative tasks in a business context. The

findings of this study indicate that the Spanish adults used metacognitive strategies consistently

in all business communication tasks. Also, they recognized the importance and use of English not only in the work environment, but in all aspects of their lives. Clearly, this group of Spanish entrepreneurs needed English for their job, and, surprisingly they evidenced their need to be proficient in their daily lives as well, not only for that specific purpose (business). This suggests, that the use of metacognitive strategies may prompt learners to discover and explore other areas different from the technical English that learners may need to carry out communicative tasks in their workplaces. Förster and Souvignier (2014) studied goal setting and its effects on reading achievement, reading motivation and reading self-concept with students from Munster, Germany. A control and an experimental group were formed to test the effects of goal-setting and self-reflection on their achievements and self-concept. In terms of achievements, the experimental group evidenced significantly higher improvements in reading than the control group. However, although success was defined by reaching or exceeding the self-set goal, inspection of students' reflection sheets indicated that students sometimes misinterpreted exceeding a goal as failure. In this case, only the achievement of the exact goal would have been interpreted as a success, leading to frequent experiences of failure. These interesting, unexpected findings make me reflect about the importance of training and sensitizing learners regarding the purpose of self-set goals, stressing that instead of learner 'failures' there is always 'room for improvement'. Training in metacognitive strategies is crucial, especially for learners who have little or no experience. Moeller, Theiler and Wu (2012) also conducted research on goal setting; a quasi-experimental study examining goal-setting and student achievement in the high school Spanish language classroom. Learners carried out goal writing, action plan writing and reflection, and showed a consistent increase in mean scores. Learners' achievement was influenced positively in the first three years of Spanish, but not as strong in the final years. These

findings suggest that learners did not have a strong extrinsic motivation, since only three levels were required for their school, and the others were optional. In contrast, the progress shown in the first years suggest that goal setting helped learners improve their intrinsic motivation and achievements as highlighted by Schunk (2002). Moeller et al. (2012) found that the quality of goals may also play a significant role in the degree of learner achievement, fact to be taken into consideration as to allotting enough time for training learners in goal setting.

In a more general field, Chimentão and Aparecida de Souza (2013) carried out a research study aimed at analyzing learners' self-regulation practices when planning their own actions and strategies. The result of this study concluded that planning and monitoring one's own learning process is permitted by self assessment only if joined to teacher intervention and motivational strategies, which is in agreement with the findings of Moeller et al. (2012) and Förster and Souvignier (2014). When putting together these enriching results, one could affirm, that, in general terms, self-monitoring strategies like the ones present in this study (goal setting and self-reflection) may need a lot of teacher intervention, support and motivational strategies to be successful.

Some literature and research studies related to the most important constructs in different language learning contexts have been reviewed in this chapter. The following chapter will describe the research design: type of study, context, roles, participants and data collection instruments.

Chapter 3: Research Design

3.1   Introduction

In this chapter, the processes and procedures to be carried out in this research study will be discussed. First of all the type of study will be described, followed by the teacher's role, the context, and the participants. Finally, this chapter will present the data collection instruments and procedures that have been planned and implemented in order to find answers to the research questions. The chart below contains the core concepts that shape the research design and its components:

Type of Study	Qualitative Action Research Study (Burns, 2010)
Context and Participants	Eleven young adult learners with an A2 level in an ESP context (Avianca Training Center)
Researcher's Role	Reflective, observer, teacher-researcher.
Data Collection Instruments	- Field notes (Burns, 2010) - Questionnaires (Cohen et. al. 2007) - Artifacts: Learners' self-reflection sheets - Voice Recordings
Data Collection Procedures	- Pre-Stage (Dec, 2012-Mar, 2013): A needs analysis stage was conducted. Data from a questionnaire and an interview were gathered and analyzed. - Piloting Stage (Aug, 2013): Data collection instruments were piloted prior to the implementation. - Data Collection stages 1, 2, 3 (Sep – Nov, 2013): These data collection stages were carried out throughout the implementation.

3.2   Type of study

The type of study conducted was a Qualitative Action Research (AR). Burns (2010) stated that action research relates to the ideas of 'reflective practice' and 'teacher as researcher'.

In this case, the teacher is involved in 'reflective practice' (observing while teaching) that ultimately seeks the implementation of an action plan based on a problematic situation or a needs analysis. As Burns (2010) asserted that 'problematizing' does not mean looking at teaching as something full of problems, but rather examining and analyzing aspects subject to improvement. In this sense, the teacher-participant becomes an explorer of his own teaching context and realities. Burns (2010) pointed out other AR features. AR is small-scaled, contextualized within a specific social situation, school or classroom. In this case, this exploratory action research is contextualized and framed in a class of eleven students who are taught Aviation English at the Avianca training center. Burns (2010) also mentioned that "the central idea of the action part of AR is to intervene in a deliberate way in the problematic situation in order to bring about changes and improvements in practice" (p.2). The current study sought an improvement: to enhance students' interaction while taking part in ESP communicative activities and goal setting and self-reflection strategies.

Action Research has four main components, which make a cycle (Burns, 2010): planning, actions, observation and reflection. (Burns, 2010) referred to this sequence as a 'reflective research cycle' that can be recurrent until the researcher has achieved a satisfactory outcome. 'Planning' is the stage where the teacher-researcher identifies a problem and develops a plan of action in order to improve. This stage of the project was described in Chapter 1, when the needs analysis was carried out at the Avianca training center was presented. In that process, two data collection instruments were implemented and some data regarding the problematic situation was collected and analyzed. The 'action' phase takes place when a deliberate intervention is implemented over an agreed period of time in a teaching situation. This intervention took place from September to December, 2013. 'Observation' as the third stage of the cycle, involves the

systematic observation of the effects of the implementation and the documentation of the actions and opinions of those involved. In this stage, the data collection phase -which will be discussed later- takes place using different tools and instruments. Finally, there is a 'reflection' stage, in which the teacher-researcher evaluates and describes the effects of the action in order to understand the explored issue. This stage is the data analysis stage, which took place during the first semester of 2014.

3.3   Context

This research study took place at the training center 'Escuela de Operaciones de Avianca', which is a private school belonging to Avianca airline. This company is the leading Colombian airline as well as the third largest in South America, which offers domestic, international and overseas flights and is in the process of opening new destinations and routes. Therefore, it is quite necessary for cabin crew members to be able to interact with passengers in English. At the training center, trainee flight attendants study English for four months using a communicative approach. The learners also study subjects in Spanish related to emergency procedures, service on board, customer service procedures and CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation), among others. The English lessons are taught in five face-to-face sessions weekly and each class lasts two hours and fifteen minutes. The training center does not have an English laboratory, which means all the sessions take place in classrooms. However, learners have access to other resources such as projectors and speakers which aid their learning process.

3.3.1   Participants

The participants of this study were eleven students from Avianca level 3 (A2 Common European Framework), one man and ten women. These trainee flight attendant students are aged from 18 to 25 years old., They come from different regions of Colombia and agreed to attend a

'commitment course' in which they are required to fulfill the academic program/activities

designed for them to improve their English level over a period of one year. They agreed to take

part in this research study by signing a consent letter (Appendix B) and answered a survey and a

semi-structured interview as part of the needs analysis process. For their jobs, flight attendants

are expected to address English-speaking passengers using proper and polite language when

performing different actions such as offering meals and drinks on the plane, making

announcements, making safety requests and assisting passengers in general. Although classes

were related to the learners' needs, little or no room had been set apart for students to learn in an

autonomous way or reflect upon their learning.

3.3.2   Researcher's role

The role adopted by the teacher in this study was that of a teacher-researcher, continually

reflecting on the actions happening in the language classroom and observing learners as they

were carrying out the action plan and studied the language. The first part of this researcher's

active process had to do with the identification of the problem or issue of investigation to be

focused on. Of course, this part was not easy to narrow down; the research question based on a

needs analysis, the language skill for the learners to improve, the literature read, and the selection

of the group were vital aspects from which the research design was shaped. Burns (2010)

illustrated that "it can be very frustrating trying to narrow things down so that the focus is clear

and the research is manageable" (p.23). Fortunately, after conducting a needs analysis, the

participants, context and topics to be worked on were narrowed down. After planning, the

teacher-researcher role was based on putting the plan into action. My role was that of an active

participant and observer of my learners while the action plan was being implemented (explained

in detail in Chapter 4) and the necessary data gathered in order to answer my research questions.

3.4   Data collection instruments

The data collection instruments applied were observation field notes, questionnaires, classroom documents, and audio recordings (Burns, 2010; Cohen, 2007). By implementing these four data collection instruments, I intended to give my research study instrument validity and reliability, and also gather as much rich data as possible that could lead to answering the research question.

3.4.1   Description

3.4.1.1   Observation

Observation is a very important strategy suitable to for use in action research studies. Through observation, I wanted to gather as much data as possible related to aspects of learners' interactions that otherwise might not be noticed in the classroom. Burns (2010) highlighted that "collecting data through observation means seeing things that are before our eyes in ways we have not consciously noticed before" (p.57). Through observation, the teacher-researcher is able to see aspects and phenomena that are unexpected, unusual or interesting while asking self-reflective questions about what really happens in the classroom. Since the main focus of this research study was on enhancing students' interaction, observing and note taking through field notes were aimed at helping me obtain detailed and rich data about the way learners interacted, used the target language, set their goals and further reflected on them. Burns (2010) stated that observation as a data collection strategy is self-conscious because it is focused, objective, reflective, documented, evaluated and re-evaluated. Having determined that observation suits the data I wanted to obtain, the next step was to decide on the who, what, how often, where and how. The type of observation I carried out was 'narrative' (Burns 2010), by using field notes. A

narrative observation is a way to make notes telling the story of the events observed as they happen, and requires a great deal of freehand writing. (Appendix C).

3.4.1.2   Questionnaires

The second data collection instrument applied was questionnaires, defined as "a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information, providing structured data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher" (Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K., 2007, p. 307.). The questionnaires that were designed to collect data had both, closed-ended items and open-ended items (Burns, 2010). Closed-ended items are the most frequently used in questionnaires and there is a limited choice of answers (yes/no, true/false, rating scales, numerical scales, multiple choice and ranking scales). With these type of questions included in my questionnaires, I expected to get valuable data, relatively easy to analyze and code, related to the learners' beliefs and thoughts about their self-reflective process as well as language development.

On the other hand, the questionnaires implemented had open ended items which will look at free-form responses. "You could, in fact, have a questionnaire that consists only of open-ended items, but more usually these items complement close items and take responses further" (Burns, 2010, p. 85). The previous assertion supports what was done with this instrument: The researcher complemented the huge richness of open-ended items with the structured, easy-to-code closed-ended items. The fact that students were given chances to express what they thought openly, gave this study opportunities to analyze different aspects. Also, due to the fact that the participants were eleven students, open-ended questions were not that time consuming to analyze. (Appendix D).

3.4.1.3   Classroom documents

Burns (2010) pointed out that classroom documents are all kinds of written documents which can become means for collecting data and identifying key issues. The types of documents that were applied were self-reflection sheets, where students evaluated their own progress and documented their perceptions. With this instrument I received actual information related to learners' goals, achievements, difficulties and action plans. This helped me have objective information on what my students' opinions and perceptions were toward their processes and progress interacting with the target language and strategy mastery.

3.4.1.4   Audio recordings

The fourth instrument applied in this research study was audio recordings. One set of audio recordings was made at the end of the learners' English process; as part of the final exam, learners were recorded while simulating solving different situations that required specific vocabulary and expressions. Such situations included: oversized baggage, passengers in emergency exits, offering meal service, giving directions, apologizing for a booked meal not boarded and offering options, explaining alcohol beverage policies, and making requests, among others. These audio recordings were made and analyzed in order to have an instrument that directly accounted for learner's language development, interactions, and use of technical terminology for specific language functions. Burns (2010) affirmed that although recordings can give the researcher very interesting and useful insights into what is happening in the classroom. Transcribing, however, is time consuming, so it is important to make decisions about how much to transcribe. "It's often enough to transcribe just short extracts where there is something that strikes you, important, or even 'normal', and illuminates the issue you are researching. (Burns, 2010, p. 71). As a matter of fact, the eleven voice recordings were very time-consuming for me

to transcribe. However, following Burns' (2010) recommendation, the teacher-researcher

listened carefully to them in order to extract key fragments (Appendix E).

3.5   Validation

According to the instruments reviewed above, the concept of 'triangulation', supporting

the validity of this study arises. Triangulation is defined by Cohen et al. (2007) as "the use of two

or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behavior" (p. 141).

Burns (2010) asserted that triangulation is where using more than one source of information

gives the researcher different lenses for viewing the situation, and allows for more objectivity.

This concept is represented in the following figure:
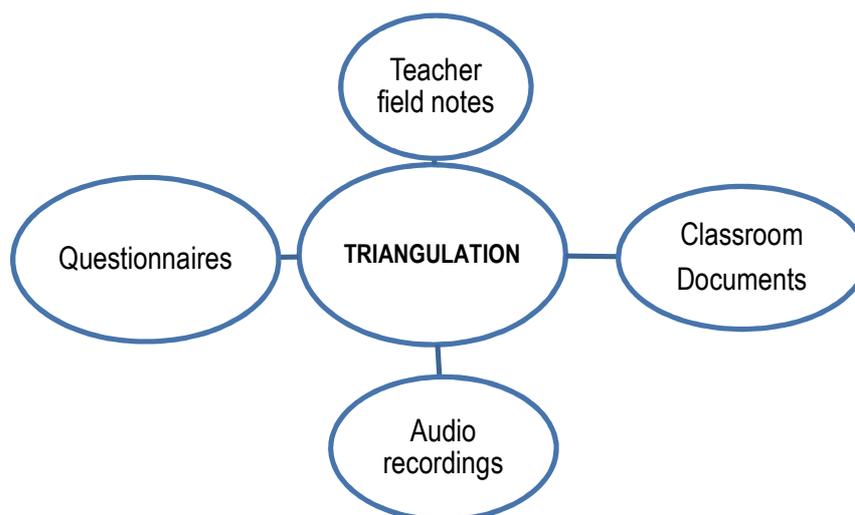
Figure 1: Instrument triangulation

Triangulation (Burns, 2010; Cohen et al., 2007) supports the validity of this study. This

concept refers to the use two or more methods of data collection implemented in order to achieve

validity. Cohen et al. (2007) exemplified that, if for instance, outcomes of a questionnaire survey

correspond to those of an observational study of the same phenomena, the the researcher will be

more confident about the findings. This, in consequence is represented in the 'internal validity'

of the research study (Cohen et al., 2007). After all data collection procedures and instrument

triangulation is carried out, 'internal validity' (Cohen et al., 2007) is achieved when findings

demonstrate that the explanation of a particular event, issue or set of data which a piece of

research provides, can actually be sustained by the data.

3.6   Data collection procedures

The data collection procedures comprise two main stages. The first stage is the 'pre-

planning'. This stage took place in the first semester of 2013. In this stage a needs analysis was

carried out; an interview and a questionnaire were implemented in order to gather data regarding

learners' thoughts, opinions and feeling toward their English learning process at Escuela de

Operaciones de Avianca (Avianca Training Center).

Thanks to this stage, a problematic situation was evidenced (learner's lack of interaction),

a research question was formulated and a plan started to arise. The 'while stage' data analysis

procedure comprised both the piloting of the instruments and also the data collection stages as

such. As the implementation progressed, three stages of data collection took place and four data

collection instruments were applied as follows:

STAGE	INSTRUMENT	PURPOSE	DATE
Piloting Stage 16 Sep. 2013 – 18 Sep. 2013 (3 sessions)	Questionnaire (Cohen et. al, 2007)	To carry out possible refinements and changes to wording and questionnaire layout.	Sep 16-18
	Self-reflection sheets (Burns. 2010)	In this stage students worked with the first version of the self-reflection sheet, which lead to some adjustments before the data collection stages.	
	Field notes (Burns, 2010;Cohen et al., 2007)	Recording quick notes in the format designed, in real time, about specific moments in the class. After evaluating those results, the format was changed to the final version.	
Data Collection Stage 1 23 Sep. 2013 – 30 Sep. 2013 (4 sessions)	Questionnaire # 1 (Cohen et al., 2007)	Initial survey information of students' feelings, perceptions of their learning process, goal setting and reflection.	Sep 23
	Self-reflection sheets (Burns. 2010)	Students' reflective writings on their learning process (goals, what they learned/improved, what they had difficulties with, and a reflection/action plan)	Sep 23, 30
	Field notes (Burns, 2010; Cohen et al., 2007)	Quick notes, in real time, about specific moments in the class, especially when learners presented the final speaking tasks in order to discern ongoing behavior and learners' target language development as it occurred.	Sep 24, 30
Data Collection Stage 2 5 Nov. 2013 – 13 Nov. 2013 (4 sessions)	Questionnaire # 2 (Cohen et al., 2007)	Survey information of students' feelings, perceptions of the implementation of goal setting and reflection about their interaction and speaking during the tasks.	Nov. 5
	Self-reflection sheets (Burns. 2010)	After re-training, a third set of self-reflection sheets was gathered, evidencing learner's goal-setting and reflection.	Nov 5, 12, 13
	Field Notes (Burns, 2010; Cohen et al., 2007)	Live, quick notes, in real time, about the final speaking task in order to discern ongoing behavior and learners' target language development as it occurred	Nov 13
Data Collection Stage 3 18 Nov. 2013 – 23 Nov. 2013 (5 sessions)	Final Questionnaire (Cohen et al., 2007)	Last survey of students' feelings, perceptions of the implementation of goal setting and reflection about their language learning process.	Nov. 18
	Self-reflection sheets (Burns. 2010)	Final set of self-reflection sheets, evidencing learner's goal-setting and reflection processes	Nov 18, 20
	Voice Recordings	Information of learners' actual oral production and language development during the final exam of the process.	Nov 26

Table 1: Data collection stages

The next Chapter will describe in detail the pedagogical intervention presented in the

table above as it was carried out during the sixteen sessions.

Chapter 4: Chapter Four: Pedagogical Intervention and Implementation

4.1 Rationale

The current action research study sought to explore the influence that a self-reflection strategy, along with a design and implementation of communicative activities (framed within the ESP context) had on learners' interaction. The reasons for this research study were based on the teacher's observation and knowledge of the context as well as the needs analysis stage in which two data collection instruments were implemented to gather data that could evidence learners' interests, thoughts and worries regarding their English language learning, taking into consideration their future jobs as flight attendants in the leading Colombian commercial airline.

The analysis of the data demonstrated the need for a meaningful, contextualized communicative language teaching approach. A pedagogical intervention that combined technical aviation English with meaningful communicative activities, along with a self-reflection strategy was designed to enhance learners' communicative skills and interaction while encouraging the students to become more autonomous and responsible for their language development.

4.2 Visions of language, learning, and curriculum

4.2.1 Vision of language and learning

Currently Avianca is training future flight attendants to use English to interact with non-Spanish speakers on airplanes, in different situations. The English for Cabin Crew sessions have shifted from a focus on 'general English' to one on technical and functional English. The approach used for students to learn this functional language continues to be Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which is an approach that stresses the importance of having students

practice the language for real, communicative, contextualized purposes. Brown(2007) stressed one of the characteristics that define CLT:

> Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes. (p. 241)

In this study, language is seen as a means for students to accomplish specific purposes such as offering meals, making safety announcements and requests, or providing passengers with other information related to the flight. The instructional design and lesson plans were created based on the language functions and specific vocabulary that learners need for their jobs. Harmer(2004) asserted that the study of functions in language has a profound effect upon the design of language teaching materials, making language purpose a major factor in the choice of syllabus items and teaching techniques.

Taking into consideration language as a means to communicate in specific settings and for specific purposes, the instructional design had a functional approach where students practiced language for different scenarios using communicative activities and, progressively, reflecting on their achievements and possible difficulties. Language is then considered as the means for learners to communicate taking into account a specific set of needs and a context (English for cabin crew members), fact that is aligned with ESP principles. Hutchinson and Waters(1991) stated that ESP is an approach to language learning based on learner needs; an ESP foundation is the simple question, 'Why does this learner need to learn a foreign language?' The answer to that question, which narrows down the vision of language and learning to a functional approach, is: the learners need English to communicate with non-Spanish speaking passengers on the airplane.

4.2.2   Vision of curriculum

Having stated that the pedagogical implementation is framed within an ESP approach, since learners' needs are narrowed down to interacting on the airplane, a curriculum supporting these principles is also necessary. First of all, it is important to note that the contents and functions studied by the trainee flight attendants are aligned to the contents they study in their mother tongue at the operations school (services on-board, safety and security, procedures, etc.), scenarios where learners will need to interact with passengers, using different functions in English. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stated: "functions are concerned with social behavior and represent the intention of the speaker of writer, for example, advising, warning, threatening, describing, etc." (p. 31). Hence, the language syllabus has been designed for learners to construct functional meaning based on that prior knowledge both, of English and their job. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stressed that the move towards functionally based syllabuses points towards learners' needs, which are not to learn the basic grammar, but rather to learn how to use the knowledge they already have. The concepts stated here are related to the vision of curriculum, will be presented in the next section 'instructional design', where the implementation focused on several units and topics with different but specific language functions.

4.3   Instructional design

The pedagogical implementation took place for a total of fifteen sessions, each one consisting of a two-hour and fifteen-minute class. The total time allotted to the implementation was thirty-four hours. The sessions were framed within the communicative approach, the task-based language learning method, and goal-setting principles. This implementation was aimed at promoting learners' interaction and use of spoken English in the classroom with different communicative tasks/activities that integrated ESP (English for Aviation), including language

functions such as giving directions, making requests, offering products, apologizing and giving

information. The following timeline, describes the pedagogical intervention, composed of three

units, and each one subdivided into four sessions of two hours and fifteen minutes, as follows:

STATE	UNIT	DATE	CONTENTS
Piloting stage	UNIT 4	16-Sep	Piloting.
		17-Sep	Training/piloting the strategy.
		18-Sep	Piloting field notes.
Data Collection Stage 1	UNIT 5: THE ONBOARD SERVICE	23-Sep	Foods and drinks (1): Vocabulary.
		24-Sep	Foods and drinks (2): Offering drinks.
		25-Sep	Foods and drinks (3): Offering meals.
		30-Sep	Foods and drinks (4): Problems with food orders. Apologizing
Data Collection Stage 2	UNIT 6: BOARDING SITUATIONS	5-Nov	Take-off: Boarding inconveniences (1) Emergency Exits/ Row 12. Providing information, persuading, giving directions.
		6-Nov	Take-off: Boarding inconveniences (2) Double seat assignment/oversized Baggage. Providing information , directions
		12-Nov	Take-off: Boarding inconveniences (3) Briefing unaccompanied minors. Directions
		13–Nov	Take-off: Safety requests. Polite requests, direct requests
Data collection Stage 3	UNIT 7: E-ZONE AND SERVICES	18-Nov	Entertainment zone: Directions and information
		19-Nov	Products and services. Giving directions, providing information
		20-Nov	Products and services. Giving directions, providing information
		25-Nov	Upgrades and special requests: Apologizing, giving reasons
		26-Nov	FINAL EXAM

Table 2: Pedagogical intervention schedule

4.3.1   Method

The method used for planning the sessions in each of the lesson plans was task-based

language learning (Nunan, 1989; Willis, 1996). Communicative tasks are defined by

Nunan(1989) as pieces of classroom work which involve learners in comprehending,

manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is mainly

focused on meaning rather than form. This method is connected with the functional focus that all

the classes have, and aligned with learners' needs in their ESP context. As explained in this

chapter, the learners' final communicative task for a unit or session consisted of a simulation or

role-play that represented a common situation onboard an airplane, in which flight attendants

needed to interact and convey meaning through the use of certain language functions.

Complementing this concept, Willis(1996) stated that the advantages of developing a

communicative task in pairs or groups include giving learners confidence to try out whatever

language they know without fear of being wrong or corrected, giving learners experience of

spontaneous interaction, giving learners chances to practice and negotiate while building

meaning, and also giving learners more chances to try out communication strategies such as

checking understanding or paraphrasing, among others.

Willis (1996) mentioned the 'pre-task', 'task cycle' and 'language focus' as the stages of

the whole task. The ´pre-task' introduces learners to the topic and the main task as such. In this

stage, which is the beginning of the class, learners at the Avianca training center would set their

goals for the unit in the 'self-reflection sheet' (Appendix F) related to the final task outcome

(simulation or role-play most of the times). Also, some pair or group work activities such as

brainstorming or guided questions would take place in order to activate prior knowledge. The

'task cycle' offered learners chances to use the language in order to carry out the task

(simulation, role-play) and improve that language under the teacher's guidance (Willis, 1996). The last phase, 'language focus', allowed a closer study of some specific features naturally occurring in the language used in the 'task cycle'. This was the time for learners to peer-assess and self-assess their performance using the self-reflection sheet sections 'What I had difficulties with' and 'What I learned/can do better', and finally the 'comments' section where learners were required to write down an overall reflection of their performance (Appendix G).

4.3.2   Lesson planning

The previous concepts stress meaning as the primary focus of the task attached to communicative goals. Related to the goals component it is important to highlight that the criteria of goal specificity, proximity, and difficulty(Schunk, 2002) were also taken into consideration for each of the lesson plans in the goals section (Appendix H). In terms of 'specificity' Schunk (2002) asserted that specific goals raise performance because they specify the amount of effort required for success and provide standards against which to determine progress. 'Proximity' has to do with how far they project into the future, which can be short-term (resulting in higher motivation and self-regulation) and also long-term. The third goal property, 'difficulty', refers to the degree of complexity; moderately difficult goals seem to have better effects on moderation and self-regulation performance (Schunk, 2002). These goal properties were taken into consideration: All lesson plans have these important properties implicit in the goals section. Also, as part of the self-reflection component learners were trained to set their own goals during the 'piloting stage'. As part of the 'pre-task' (Willis, 1996), learners were trained to set their goals for the language task through the use of a 'self-reflection sheet' (Appendix G). Other activities immersed in the 'pre-task' and 'task' cycles, were planned for learners to work in pairs or groups, always maintaining learner centeredness and opportunities for students to interact in

the target language and construct meaning. Some sample activities are displayed in appendices I and J.

In the classes, learners used the self-reflection sheet at the beginning of the session-after introducing the topic and functions-and at the end of the session, usually after they simulated or role-played those functions with common situations onboard an airplane. At the beginning of the session learners would write down their self-set goals, based on the criteria they had previously received training on. However, after collecting the first set of reflection sheets, it was noted that learners were having difficulties in adhering to the characteristics of the objectives (proximal, time based and moderately difficult). Consequently, it was necessary to dedicate a second session for training the students and helping them become more aware of the central aspects of the self-reflection sheet(during data collection stage 1). This sessionincluded not only a focus on goal setting, but also a focus on the reflection and comments they had to put down at the end of the sheet, which were their action plans.

Returning to the beginning of the class, after learners wrote down their goals and some input was given (pre-task), learners usually prepared the task through learner-centered, communicative group or pair work activities. They studied the specific language functions for the session, for instance, making requests, and finally prepared a role play or simulation in groups that represented a real situation. This role play or simulation task presented by the students was the core of the 'task cycle', which was used by the teacher to monitor progress, solve doubts, and also take field notes while learners acted. After some teacher feedback, the last task component, the 'language focus' was meant for learners to think about the language they had used, reflect on possible difficulties and register that on the reflection sheet where they had already written their goals. As lessons progressed, learners gained some mastery in the use

of the reflection sheets, and started to integrate them into their normal class routine.

Nevertheless, learners needed continuous support, advice and emphasis on the self-reflection

process throughout the sessions.

The next chapter will describe data sources, data management, data reduction, open

coding, axial coding, selective coding, core category, categories (1 and 2), and subcategories.

Chapter 5: Results and Data Analysis

5.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis methods and procedures carried out in the research

project, including the findings (categories and patterns) emerging from data in order to answer

the research question: *How might a self-reflection strategy influence A2 young adult learners'*

interaction when developing ESP communicative tasks? The approach followed for analyzing

data was 'grounded theory' (Creswell, 2012; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Cohen, Manion, &

Morrison, 2007), which consists of generating a theory from the systematic analysis of data.

Some grounded theory features highlighted by Cohen et al. (2007) are:

- Theory is emergent rather than pre-defined and tested.

- Theory emerges from the data rather than vice versa.

- Theory generation is a consequence of, and partner to, systematic data collection and analysis.

- Patterns and theories are implicit in data, waiting to be discovered. (p.491)

In this data analysis design, researchers proceed with systematic procedures of collecting

data, identifying categories, connecting these categories and forming a theory that explains the

process (Creswell, 2012). A systematic data analysis was carried out on the data collected from

the instruments applied in the current study (two questionnaires, three sets of self-reflection

sheet, three sets of fieldnotes, and one final audio recording), and conclusions were generated

from it in order to explain whether and how a self-reflection strategy affected learners'

achievements with regard to their interaction when taking part in ESP communicative tasks.

This grounded theory approach to data analysis allowed an inductive exploration and analysis of

data through coding, which lead to the discovery of codes and categories as the analysis

advanced.

This type of study led to a 'systematic design in grounded theory' from which Creswell (2012) emphasized on the importance of analyzing data step by step, through the use of open, axial, an selective coding, as well as the development of a visual picture of the theory generated. These data coding steps will be explained in detail and supported wih samples in the section 'coding procedures'.

5.2   Data analysis methods and procedures

5.2.1   Data management

Data was gathered through physical and printed material in the form of questionnaires, self-reflection sheets, teacher's field notes, and recorded files for the learners' final speaking exam. From these collected documents, a physical folder was created to classify data analysis by stages (Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3). Data was, then, organized in Microsoft Excel charts where open coding took place for all the instruments, using color techniques.

5.2.2   Data condensation

In order for the data to be organized and 'reduced', it had to be condensed throughout the process, not only at the analysis stage; the data was condensed from the very moment the four data collection instruments were piloted and chosen. Miles et al.(2014) affirmed that data condensation refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and/or transforming the data that appear in the full corpus or materials. By condensing data, they become stronger; "it is a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards and organizes data in such a way that conclusions can be drawn and verified". (Miles et al., 2014, p. 12). The data condensation in this research study is present, for instance in the 'segment' section of the data display, where key phrases and certain words from the learners' whole answers were

selected and some parts discarded. To exemplify, in the Questionnaire 2 the student A wrote

down her answer, which included aspects that had little relevance for the analysis. Hence, after

condensing the sample, the fragment subject to analysis was: "*tengo una meta clara y me enfoco*

en cumplirla en cada clase (…) ". Below there is a sample on how data was condensed, using

ellipses (…) whenever something from the segment was not necessary to be present, since it was

complementary or irrelevant information, based on the researcher's criteria and supported on

Miles et al. (2014) theory:

QUESTION	STUDENT	SEGMENT
QUESTION 2		
What happens when you formulate your own goals for the different language tasks?	A	"tengo una meta clara y me enfoco en cumplirla en cada clase (…) "
	B	"el problema es que no soy autodidacta en clase las hago pero salgo y no estudio"
	C	"Is easier to keep the focus to the want to achieve and more easy to get it"
	D	"cuando formulo mis propios objetivos busco la manera de alcanzarlos"
	E	"Sometimes I finish for completed my goals and I feel so good when I realized that I achive my goals (…)"
	F	"De esta manera se cuales son mis metas y hacia donde debo llegar y cómo podré hacerlo"
	G	"I have better challenges about the language. I try to get them"
	H	"así nosotros estamos mucho mas pendientes de alcanzar las metas propuestas."
	I	"aprendo más porque me pongo a reflexionar en qué tanto estoy poniendo de mi parte para mi propio aprendizaje (…) me preocupo por algo específico y así aprendo mas"
	J	"I feel that I'll do it. It's easier to achieve"
	K	Cuando formulo mis objetivos intento realizar o hacer énfasis por medio de las actividades en las habilidadesque debo mejorar.

Figure 2: Data condensation sample from questionnaire 2, question 2

This data condensation also took place after the audio recordings transcription, in order to get key insights and discard information that did not convey anything relevant to the phenomenon under study.

5.2.3   Coding procedures

Coding, as one of the aspects immersed in data condensation, is referred to by Cohen et al. (2007) as the process of disassembling and reassembling the data to produce a new understanding that explores similarities and differences, across a number of different cases. Three types of coding exist in grounded theory: Open, Axial and Selective (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Cohen et al., 2007). Creswell (2012) also identified these three types of coding, which are part of the 'systematic design' for grounded theory mentioned above.

5.2.3.1   Open coding

Cohen et al. (2007) mentioned that 'open coding' involves exploring the data and identifying units of analysis to code for meanings, feelings, actions, etc., creating categories and subcategories, creating new codes and integrating them when relevant. Creswell (2012) asserted that in this first phase, the grounded theorist forms initial categories of information about the phenomenon being studied by segmenting information. In this study, open coding was carried out with each of the instruments though a color technique, extracting segments (condensing the data) and then giving similar responses or insights a name or a 'code' which would then become preliminary categories. Below, a sample of open coding:

QUESTION	STUDENT	SEGMENT	CODES	CATEGORIES
QUESTION 4				
	A	**Me doy cuenta** que si marco mis objetivos los alcanzo más rápido	awareness	
	B	**Me doy cuenta** que tengo y debo estudiar en mi casa. No solo en la escu	awareness	
	C	**I understand** that I have to learn and **practice more**. The learning is a constant process	awareness	
	D	Lleva a exigirme mucho más, **a buscar la forma mas práctica de aprender y mejorar.**	learning and improvement	
What happens whe you reflect on your goals, achievements and difficulties after a lesson?	E	**I realize for myself** what things about the English class I need to reinforce for improve in my english class and my autonomous learning	awareness	
	F	**Me preocupo por corregir y mejorar en mis dificultades** y trato de aplicar lo aprendido en el futuro.	correction and improvement	
	G	Depend, if the situation is positive, I feel good but when it is negative I try to look for an option to better	emotions	
	H	**Que puedo estar mucho mas segura de que es lo que tengo que mejorar.**	awareness	
	I	Pienso en qué tanto realizé por el cumplimiento de mis objetivos, qué tanta honestidad tengo conmigo misma y mi tiempo.	learning achievement	
	J	I have more enthusiasm with the items I have difficulties	challenge	
	K	Cuando reflexiono **identifico las posibles dificultades para mejorar**	awareness	

Figure 3: Open coding sample from questionnaire 2, question 4

5.2.3.2   Axial coding

'Axial coding' is referred to by Cohen et al. (2007) as the process of making links between categories. It is to explore codes, examine their interrelationships and compare codes and categories with existing theory. Creswell (2012) asserted that the researcher in this stage selects an open-coding category, positions it at the center of the process being explored and then related other categories to it. These other categories are causal conditions (aspects influencing the core phenomenon), strategies (actions taken in response to the core phenomenon), contextual and intervening conditions (specific and general situational factors that influence the strategies), and consequences (outcome from using the strategies). To illustrate this crucial process of the data analysis, Appendix K represents the real categories of the current research study, after having analyzed the data and the interrelationships between the core and other categories.

5.2.3.3   Selective coding

Finally, the third phase of coding consists of selective coding. According to Creswell (2012), "in selective coding the grounded theorist writes a theory from the interrelationship of

the categories in the axial coding model. At a basic level, this theory provides an abstract explanation for the process being studied in the research" (p.426). It is the process of integrating and refining the theory and will be explained in depth in the 'categories' section below.

5.2.4 Validation

Data validation is a crucial process that gives reliability and validity to the findings presented. The analytic strategy 'constant comparative procedure' was adopted (Creswell, 2012; Corbin & Strauss, 2008, Cohen et al., 2007); different sources of data were triangulated in order to confirm and retrieve evidence from two or more instruments. This means that for open coding, excerpts from different instruments were being constantly compared in order to establish differences and similarities among data to be able to classify them into concepts and future categories. Corbin and Strauss (2008) asserted that data which are conceptually similar are grouped together under a higher-level descriptive concept. However, as Cohen et al. (2007) stated that whenever there is a poor fit between data and categories, categories need to be modified until all data is accounted for. In view of this, it was crucial for me as researcher to be careful when open coding, in order to carry out a more in-depth exploration of data and information from all my instruments, so that all relevant data were taken into consideration and included in the emerging patterns: "In constant comparison, then, discrepant, negative and disconfirming cases are important in assisting the categories and emergent (grounded) theory to fit all the data" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 493). The instrument triangulation that led to the identification of the categories took place as follows:

Categories	Instruments Triangulated
Awareness increase	Questionnaire # 2, Self-reflection sheet
Goals to stay focused	Teacher's field notes, Questionnaire # 2
Pre confidence and self-concept building	Self-Reflection Sheets, Questionnaire #2
Interaction improvement	Questionnaire # 3, Audio Recording

Table 3: Instruments triangulated for the different categories

Figure 4 shows fragments taken after data was collected and analyzed. An example of how validation of data through instrument triangulation was carried out is found in the final audio recordings and final questionnaire:

SUB-CATEGORY: INTERACTION IMPROVEMENT	
EXCERPT: AUDIO RECORDING STUDENT K	EXCERPT: QUESTIONNAIRE 3, STUDENT K
T: Excuse me! I ordered a Kosher meal k: let me see, I'm gonna check in the galley... your... special [meal] T: [Yeah?] I called two days ago and they confirmed. K: I am so sorry but in the flight the Kosher meal doesn't aboard [because] T: [Oh my god], do you meal was not boarded?! K: Cuz we had a problem with the catering and in Bogotá the meal, the food. didn't aboard. So, would you like to order maybe a... a vegetarian meal?	Question 5: Have English classes helped you improve your fluency? Why? Yes. Porque he aprendido nuevo vocabulario y nuevas expresiones que me hacen sentir segura y así tener fluidez en el idioma.

Figure 4: Data validation sample.

5.3   Findings

This qualitative action research study has explored the effect of a self-reflection strategy on learners' interaction when taking part in ESP communicative tasks. After implementing a set of strategies and data collection instruments, four categories were found, which can explain the

phenomenon under study. These categories were named 'goals to stay focused' (core category),

'awareness increase' and 'confidence and self-concept building'. Some subcategories such as

'interaction improvement' and 'attainment of specific goals' were also identified. Figure 1 shows

the main category and the way it relates to the other supporting categories:
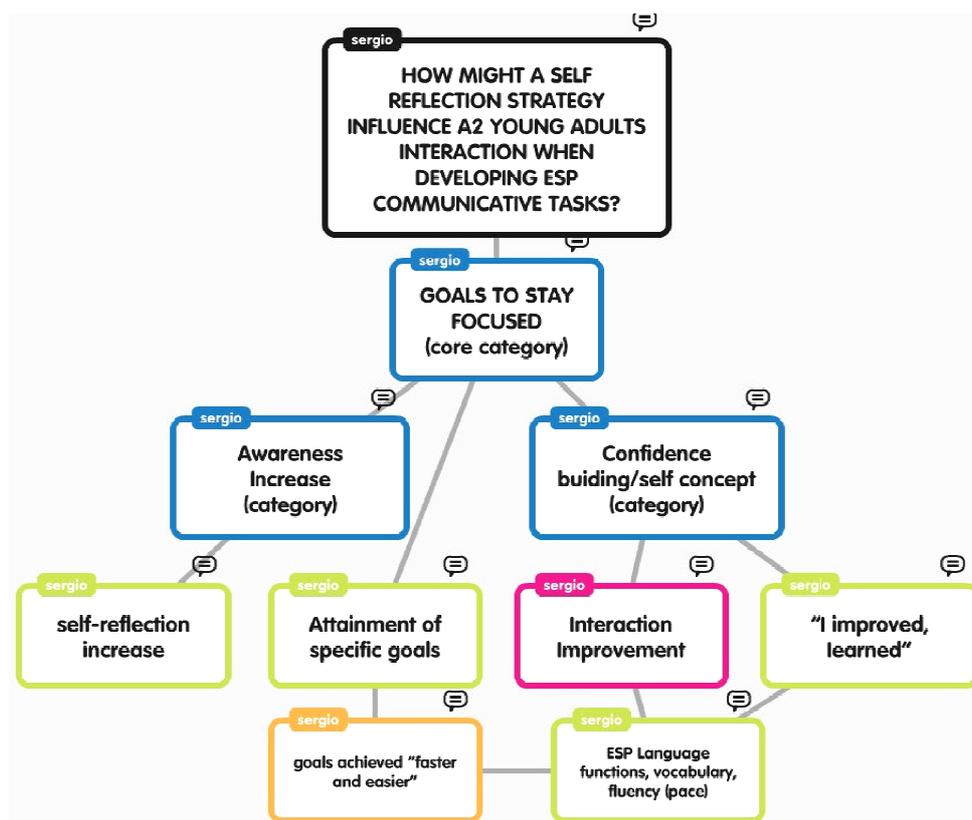
Figure 5. Coding paradigm. This figure illustrates the interrelationships between the core

category and other categories and sub-categories

5.3.1 Core category: goals to stay focused

After the data analysis, the core category found was 'goals to stay focused'. As

mentioned in previous chapters, learners were trained to set their goals based on the criteria of

'specificity', 'proximity' and 'difficulty' proposed by Schunk(2002). Because of the fact that

learners had not set their own goals before, two training and sensitizing phases were necessary,

so that learners could carry out this process in a better way. Below, there is sample of how a

student's goals became more specific:
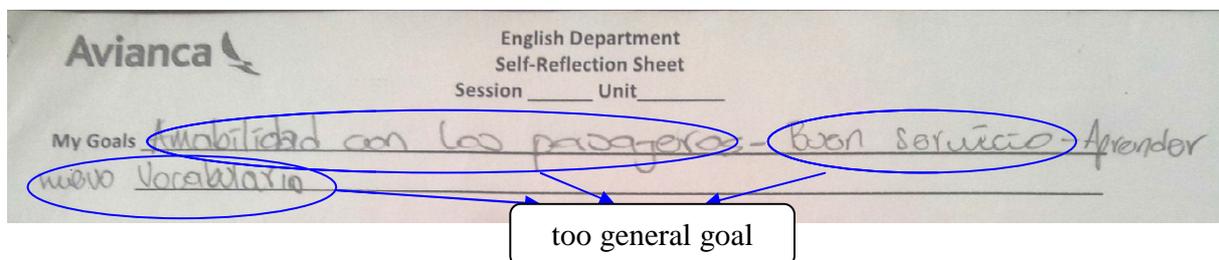
Figure 6: Student goal setting process after first training
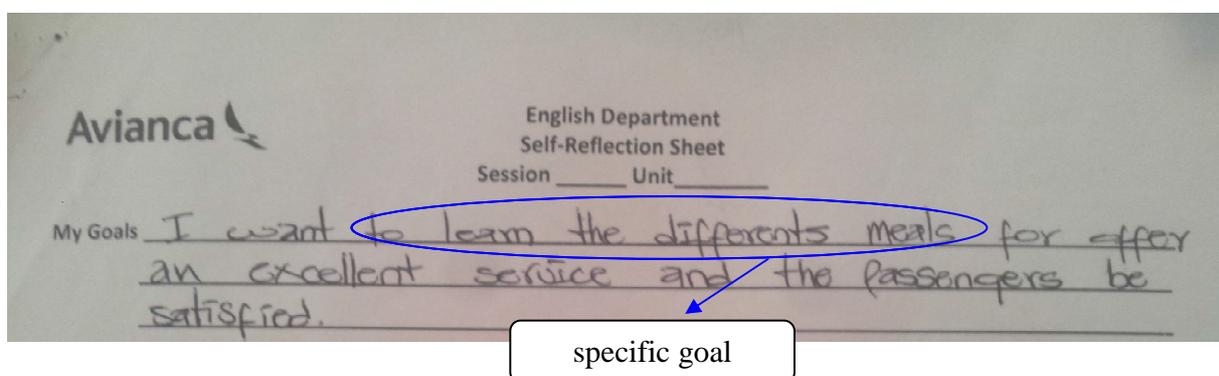
Figure 7: Student goal setting process after second training

Data found in this study suggests that when learners set their goals at initial moments of

a unit, they were able to keep the focus on them, pointing out and narrowing down what they

wanted to learn or improve, for instance, polite expressions, technical vocabulary, or any given

language function based on the unit focus. Below, are some excerpts that support these findings

on 'goals to stay focused'.

"My goals: more fluence and vocabulary, excellent service on board, good modals."

(reflection sheet, student D)

"Ha sido una gran experience (…) me parece una forma ordenada de lograr unos

objetivos propuestos por mí y realmente alcanzables en cuanto al aprendizaje del inglés

en mi campo laboral" (questionnaire 2, student E)

"los objetivos son buenos ya que logro marcar unas metas a corto plazo con mi estudio

de inglés" (questionnaire 2, student A)

"everyone has done a great job in this class focusing on their down-to-earth and specific

objectives" (teacher field note 2, Sep 30)

Schunk (2002) supports these findings by stating that goals help people focus on the task,

select and apply appropriate strategies, and monitor goal progress. Schunk (2002) also

highlighted that goals direct individuals' attention to relevant task features, behaviors to be

performed, and potential outcomes. In fact, learners' self-set goals improved in terms of

specificity, proximity and time-based, as more training and practice was provided. This

ultimately resulted in benefits in learners language interaction, since learners focused on specific

language functions, studied them and then used them during the simulations, as exemplified in

figure 9. These benefits are supported by the subcategory 'specific goal attainment' which was

evidenced, not only in their feelings about what they had learned, but also in their actual

speaking performance. Below some samples that support this subcategory 'specific goal

attainment':

Yes. Porque he aprendido nuevo vocabulario y nuevas expresiones que me hacen sentir

segura y así tener fluidez en el idioma.(questionnaire 3, student K)

"I feel that I'll do it. It's easier to achieve" (questionnaire 2, student J)

```
STUDENT J: Yes, sir?
PASSENGER: Excuse me, I am travelling with my girlfriend.
She is row 19 and I am row 17: Could you please help us sit
together?
J: Yes, let me see what can I do for you.
P: Ok

J: I'm so sorry for you but we can't change the seat because
the flight is full, and it's impossible to change.

P: oh::: my God! I mean... you should be willing to help
people in this situation. How long is the flight?
J: it's only 45 minutes
P: ok... umm... What can I do for the next time not to, , you
know, to avoid this
J: Yes, eh, in the check in you can tell to the, umm... the
ground staff that the seat stay together.
P: Yes! Because the problem was that she was a little bit
late and I checked [first]
J: uh::: yes! You can do check in at the same time if you
want to travel together. It's more easier
P: I understand! Thank you!
J: You're welco:::me!
```

Figure 8: audio recording, student J

5.3.2   Category 1: awareness increase

The first category, 'awareness increase' is closely related to the core category. Data

suggests that learners became more aware of their learning process, thanks to the goals they set

for each unit and the reflections made after they performed orally. Learners evidenced sensitizing

to an extent about what they needed to learn, their weaknesses and strengths. The following

excerpts illustrate this category, 'awareness increase'

> *"I realize for myself what things about the english class I need to reinforce for improve in*
>
> *my english class and my autonomous learning." (questionnaire 2, student E)*

I reflect many times. Because esto me ayuda a estar consciente de mi avance y de mis

falencias.” (questionnaire 2, student H)

“Cuando reflexiono identifico las posibles dificultades para mejorar.” (questionnaire 2,

student K)

 “The few vocabulary makes I can't have a fluid English” (reflection sheet, student D)

Undoubtedly, the learners increase in their awareness of their learning process after

setting their goals and reflecting on them, are enriching and fulfilling steps towards becoming

autonomous learners. This awareness increase also entails learners' putting more effort to set

specific and attainable goals, and also to attain them. Schunk (2002) stressed that it has been

found that self-set goals enhance motivation and self-regulation because they produce higher

goal commitment. In turn, learner's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995) increases, which encourages

learners to formulate further challenging goals and strive to achieve them.

Aprendí expresiones de servicio. He mejorado la forma de expresarme y mi propósito es

seguir aprendiendo. (reflection sheet, student K)

5.3.3   Category 2: confidence building and self-concept

Data found in this study suggests that when learners developed goal-setting and self-

reflection practices, their emotional state is also influenced, based on their goal-attainment and

reflection per-se. Learners not only expressed their perceptions related to their achievements and

language development, as part of a process influenced by their goal-setting and reflection

practices, but also they evidenced 'confidence building' and positive self-concept' to an extent.

Below are some samples that illustrate the third category 'confidence building and self-concept':

"I feel that I have learned a lot not only for the class, if not for our lives" (reflection

sheet, student J)

"Sometimes I finish for completed my goals and I feel so good when I realized that I

achive my goals (…)" (questionnaire 2, student E)

 "I am happy for to learn more about this job in the plane" (reflection sheet, student C)

"aprendo más porque me pongo a reflexionar en qué tanto estoy poniendo de mi parte

para mi propio aprendizaje (…) me preocupo por algo específico y así aprendo mas"

(questionnaire 2, student I)

Based on the data findings and the previous excerpts supporting 'confidence building and

self-concept' category, it could be said that learners' positive feelings based on their goal

attainment and reflections may have increased their self-efficacy which is referred to by

Zimmerman (2002) as a context-related judgment of personal ability to organize and execute

course of action to attain certain levels of performance. As my learners have created positive

attitudes toward the whole self-reflective process, evidencing tangible outcomes positively

influenced by these metacognitive strategies, it can be expected that they can challenge

themselves by self-setting more ambitious, but still down-to-earth objectives, based on their solid

self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995). Due to time constraints, an in-depth exploration into learners'

self-efficacy could not be possible. However, this study provides some insights into the subject,

and a research study on learners' self efficacy based on on their experiences related to their goal

setting and self-reflection can be suggested.

5.3.4 Sub-category: interaction improvement

Data analized in this study also evidenced learner progress in terms of adequately paced and accurate interactions when learners addressed to passengers in scenarios simulated in their daily role-plays and final speaking exam. Data suggests that self-reflection and goal-setting helped learners to stay focused, become aware of their difficulties and needs, and then to incorporate and practice those language chunks when speaking.

> *"porque he aprendido nuevo vocabulario y nuevas expresiones que me hacen sentir segura y así tener fluidez en el idioma" (questionnaire 2, student K)*

> *"The majority of learners evidenced development of language communicative skills, enhancing their interaction in terms of using language functions (apologizing, offering, requesting, giving directions) and technical vocabulary. Although learners evidenced error making with grammar structures, most of them mastered technical vocabulary of the plane and language functions related to the day-to-day interaction with passengers, which was clearly aligned with the objectives they set at the beginning of each function unit" (Researcher reflection on audio recordings):*

> *"because I speak more, and the activities give me more confidence" (questionnaire 2, student B)*

> *"porque en clase promueven mucho la participación, los ejercicios de actuación me han ayudado mucho para perder la pena a hablar en público. Es importante todas las expresiones que nos enseñan (questionnaire 3, student I)*

Learners also expressed their interest to learn vocabulary for their specific context, and although this was not the main research focus, data findings suggest that many of the learners'

goals were focused on vocabulary learning for their specific purposes and contexts, which

contributed positively to the interaction in terms of adequate speaking pace and accuracy. Below

are some samples of learners desire to deepen on vocabulary learning (self-reflection sheets),

their actual interaction when speaking (audio recording transcript), and their opinions of what

they had learned (questionnaire sample answers)

"my goals: to know vocabulary and learn some expressions about services on board and

meals"

"my goals: know about meal's vocabulary to improve my fluency, pronunciacion and my

service on board" (reflection sheet, student H)

"porque las clases nos ayudan mucho a practicar y a realmente aprender más

vocabulario" (questionnaire 2, student H)

STUDENT E
PASSENGER: Excuse me lady!
S: Yes, can I help you?
P: Yeah look. Um... I'm trying to fit my bag in the overhead bins as you said, but it doesn't fit, I don't [know]
S: [ok] I am afraid that it won't fit in the overhead compartments
P: oh my [God]
S: [It's] oversized
P: But they didn't tell me that in the counters
S: yeh... if you want, you can try. If the hand luggage... fit, you can keep the baggage, but if not we have to send the hand baggage to the cargo compartment
P: yeh, I already tried and it didn't fit, I am sorry. You said cargo compartment, but I have my laptop and [my]
S: [please] take it... out. Give me your hand luggage and I will go... I will... give you a bag tag to reclaim your luggage at the airport, at the baggage claim area.
P: ok, thank you very much
S: Your luggage will be safe
P: wonderful
S: Have a nice flight

Figure 9: Audio recording student E with technical vocabulary highlighted

Supporting these evidences, Harmer (2007) stated many learners derive great benefit from simulation and role play; since they can be used to encourage general oral fluency and/or to train students for specific situations, especially where they are studying ESP.

In this chapter, the findings have been analyzed and discussed. In Chapter 6, conclusions from this study will be stated as well as insights for further research.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

This final chapter discusses the conclusions, pedagogical implications and further research ideas derived from the findings. After having performed the analysis and interpretation of data, it is possible to come to the following conclusions related to answering this study's research question: *How might a self-reflection strategy influence A2 young adult learners' interaction when participating in aviation-based communicative tasks?*

Through data collection and analysis, the research question was answered by means of three categories, which together evidenced some initial steps towards the mastery of learner self-reflection and goal-setting. The study concluded that *self-set goals and reflection allowed learners to maintain the focus* on specific language functions and the vocabulary necessary for them to interact during the communicative tasks (role plays) successfully and, in turn, led to an *increase in learner awareness. Confidence building and positive self-concept* also emerged as a result of tangible goal attainment encouraged by those practices. In addition, learner's language development in terms of specific (ESP) language functions and technical vocabulary made progress, *enhancing their interactions* as evidenced in the final audio recording, and supported also by their opinions about their learning process in their questionnaires, and by the teacher-researcher in his field notes.

Self-set goals and self-reflection favored ESP language learners –to a great extent- to stay focused on specific language they needed for the different tasks. As a result, learners used different language functions and technical vocabulary, as pointed out in their goal and reflections, to enhance their quality of interactions during the simulations. Thanks to this process, learners could also identify that vocabulary was a key element for them to succeed in their

simulations or role plays representing those specific instances and stages of a flight. When learners were asked to think about what they needed and what their goals were, an emerging language aspect (somehow different from the class focus) was highlighted by them: vocabulary learning. While learners self-set their goals and reflected on achievements and difficulties, their awareness about what they needed to succeed in the job as flight attendants in terms of language increased. Hence, learners started to self-set proximal, short-term and moderately difficult goals, through which their language development was favored and, in turn, some positive confidence building features and self-concept thoughts emerged. Although learners needed continuous support and help with the reflective strategy instrument, little by little they evidenced a certain degree of mastery, and they started making the process a daily habit.

In terms of the pertinence of the current study, there are two aspects to be considered. Firstly, this study is relevant since it represents innovation at the local context: Learners had never been trained on goal-setting and/or self-reflection, which aligned with a student-centered pedagogical intervention, sought to meet learners' language needs despite the challenges and limitations that training in brand new strategies may have had. Secondly, it is important to bear in mind that reports of studies in the field of ESP in similar private Colombian contexts have been limited. This implies that the conclusions here stated for this specific private context can shed light on the phenomena explored, which may be transferable to similar contexts, and also provide insights into the process of young adult learners' self-reflection and goal-setting when they need English to enter the workforce.

The current study results are transferable to local ESP contexts in Colombia, where English is needed to enter the company's workforce. This study is applicable in similar contexts, where learners' language level have a direct bond with their labor -as flight attendants in the

private airline company- along with other variables such as age and learner's poor initial

reflection strategies. Consequently, the results of this study can be transferrable to young adult

learners in Colombian ESP contexts (not necessarily airlines). Furthermore, this study can be

transferrable to airlines worldwide, where English is learned as a foreign language (EFL), and

learners have similar characteristics such as age and target language level.

6.1   Pedagogical implications

This study has shown useful insights into the use of goal-setting and reflection by A2

young adult learners while carrying out communicative ESP tasks. A self-reflection strategy

along with learner-centered communicative ESP tasks provided benefits to learner's language

development. Goal-setting, as part of the learners' self-reflection strategy, helped learners to self-

set their goals and stay focused on them. Something that slightly deviated the study from the

point of view of 'expected' outcomes (related to learner speaking, interaction or fluency) was

that many of the learners' goals were focused on learning technical vocabulary, rather than

'improving fluency' or 'learning new expressions' for example. Related to these findings,

Sanchez(2013) conducted research in a local Colombian context with eight graders from a public

school. In this study it was found that self-monitoring had a positive influence on self-efficacy

(self-concept). In addition, the conclusions pointed out that self-monitoring might promote

vocabulary learning, but the analysis did not provide sufficient evidence, because findings were

focused on learners' self- concept. As a matter of fact, at the end of the current study learners

did evidence (in the final exam audio recordings) significant gains in technical vocabulary and

aviation terminology, which they incorporated in their speech, resulting in better interaction in

terms of faster pace and better accuracy. This suggests that in this ESP context, learners' became

aware that vocabulary learning and technical terminology were crucial for them to improve the quality of their interactions.

As a result of presenting the outcomes, findings, advantages and limitations of this study, an expected pedagogical implication is that the airline's language learning curriculum and syllabus be revised, in order to adopt self-monitoring strategies regularly in the future flight attendant trainees, to favor ESP development. Nevertheless, it is clear that as teacher-researcher I need to expand my knowledge and understanding of self-monitoring strategies and goal-setting in order to improve the training and implementation processes. In the Colombian context, this study expects to provide new insights for researchers about ESP and self-monitoring, as well as the curiosity to explore different strategies for learners to become more autonomous and achievement-motivated.

The experience of researching about topics regarding self-regulation has been truly enriching. It is important for future teacher-researchers interested in the field to plan a piloting and training stage based on the main strategies to be implemented, in order for findings and results to have as much rich data as possible. It is important to be considerate when allotting training time, in order for learners to understand and internalize the strategies and make the best of their experiences.

6.2   Limitations of the present study

As a limitation, it was found that learners required extra training and sensitizing on the use of the reflection sheet (Appendix A) as well as their own goal-setting to ensure they followed the criteria of specificity, proximity and difficulty in their goals (Schunk, 2002). This limitation suggests that results may vary if there is more time allotted for systematic training on the

strategy, which might result in new insights related to learners' motivation and higher goal commitment as a result of effective goal-setting (Schunk, 2002), not to mention their language development in technical vocabulary and language functions. A second limitation present in this study is the fact that a technical vocabulary and language functions corpus was not included for the researcher to keep track of learners' language development (technical vocabulary, language functions, mainly) more accurately.

6.3   Further research

The current research study was focused on exploring the possible influence of a self-reflection strategy on ESP learners' spoken interaction during communicative tasks. As most of research studies, there are aspects that the teacher-researcher wished to have examined, but were not studied in-depth. For instance, in-depth study of self-assessment and peer-assessment checklists and rubrics was done after the having collected most of the data. It would have been great to use such knowledge to enrich the study and learners' experience.

The fact that learners found relevant technical vocabulary learning for their spoken language development, lets me suggest a study on exploring goal-setting and self-monitoring strategies in an ESP context, having a vocabulary corpus to track learners' vocabulary learning. Then, 'measuring' learners possible achievements related to their own self-efficacy concept (Bandura, 1995) and motivation indicators will be possible.

Additionally, another interesting topic for further research, which appears to meet today's educational trends, would be to explore vocabulary learning in ESP in blended learning courses, using web tools for instructional and data collection purposes, with students' carrying out self-monitoring. One of the aspects to analyze in this area could be learners' attitudes and motivation

indicators towards the blended learning environment and their self-assessment/monitoring processes. This would be a great study that could produce state-of-the-art findings on current EFL trends.

Finally, the idea of researching into the differences and similarities of the self-monitoring process when learners study the target language as a school subject (high-school learners or university learners) in contrast with learners who study English because it is an essential aspect to enter the workforce is appealing.

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Appendix A: Sample Needs Analysis Questionnaire

Needs Analysis Survey				
QUESTION	ST	EXCERPT	CONCEPT	CATEGORY
Question 1 Why are you studying English at the operations school?	A	"porque en la entrevista de ingreso tuve compromiso"	English 'commitment'	I am studying English for my job
	B	"because I need to improve my pronunciation, fluency. And is very important to learn the technical vocabulary of aviation"	English for Aviation	
	C	"porque quede en nivel 3 y tengo compromiso de ver inglés"	English 'commitment'	
	D	"porque no tengo el nivel de inglés que exige Avianca (…)"	English for work	
	E	"(…) no poseo el nivel adecuado para desempeñar una excelente labor en cuanto a idioma"		
	F	"(…) at this moment I'm level 3 and I need to be on level 4 to get certificate and start to work"		
Question 2 What is the connection between learning English and your job as flight attendant?	A	"Necesidad de comunicación con pax internacionales"	English to communicate with passengers	I need English to communicate with passengers
	B	"(…) is the way that I'm going to deal with passengers and the information I'll give them"		
	C	"el idioma común es el inglés y lo necesitamos para comunicarnos con los clientes que no hablen español"		
	D	"porque va directamente relacionado con la labor como auxiliares de vuelo"	English for flight attendants	
	E	"es muy importante poder comunicarme y así mismo entender el idioma extranjero (…)"	English to communicate with passengers	
	F	"it's important because is need it to communicate with passengers who doesn't speak Spanish and for you understand what they asking for"		

Appendix B: Consent Form (1/2)

CARTA DE CONSENTIMIENTO PARA ESTUDIANTES
ESCUELA DE OPERACIONES DE AVIANCA

Investigación conducida por: Sergio Andrés Lozano Velandia

Estudiante de 'Master in English Language Teaching

Autonomous Learning Environments'

Universidad de la Sabana

Título del Proyecto: Enhancing A2 Learners' Interaction through a

Self-Reflection Strategy in an ESP Context

Respetados estudiantes,

Los estudiantes de básico cuatro, futuros auxiliares de vuelo, están invitados a participar en un proyecto de investigación que se realizará con el fin de mejorar su interacción en inglés con los pasajeros, a partir del uso de actividades comunicativas enfocadas en su contexto laboral, la formulación de metas y la reflexión sobre su proceso. Las actividades realizadas durante el proyecto no afectarán las temáticas de la clase ni las notas de los estudiantes. Finalmente, es importante aclarar que los datos personales de los estudiantes serán mantenidos en confidencialidad y la información recogida durante el proyecto será usada única y exclusivamente con fines académicos.

**Sergio Andrés Lozano**
Instructor de Inglés
Avianca

Olga Elena Cano
Gerente de Entrenamiento de Auxiliares
de Vuelo. Avianca

Appendix B: Consent Form (2/2)

Yo, YULY PAULINA AGUILLÓN SANCHEZ estudiante del curso de auxiliares de vuelo "básico 4" de 2013 autorizo mi participación en el proyecto de investigación titulado "Enhancing A2 Learners' Interaction through a Self-Reflection Strategy in an ESP Context"

Firma del Estudiante:

Yo, Diana Paola Agudelo Cardona estudiante del curso de auxiliares de vuelo "básico 4" de 2013 autorizo mi participación en el proyecto de investigación titulado "Enhancing A2 Learners' Interaction through a Self-Reflection Strategy in an ESP Context"

Firma del Estudiante:
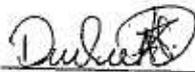
Appendix C: Field Notes Sample

Avianca

ESCUELA DE OPERACIONES DE AVIANCA
TEACHER'S FIELD NOTES

DATE: September 30
LESSON: Foods and drinks 4.
TIME: 1:30
TOPIC: Problems with food orders.
EQUIPMENT:

CLASS DEVELOPMENT

1:30:
Learners are working in groups and interacting

2:00:
→ Learners work collaborately to discover the different special meals offered in Avianca
→ Learners practice expressions with mini role plays. They seem to enjoy the activity. They sometimes exaggerate the expressions.

FINAL SPEAKING TASK

TIME: 3:00 pm (Role-play).

- Most of learners have pronunciation problems.
- Most of learners put the differen expressions into practice; they communicate using modals as well.
- They know vocabulary and expressions to interact with passengers.

TIME: 3:00 —

- Students peer-correct, but they seem to be scoring to high'.
- They don't want to make their peers feel bad
- Everyone has done a great job in this final class — very commited. Improved in speaking and fluency.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Appendix D: Questionnaire Sample

ESCUELA DE OPERACIONES DE AVIANCA
ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
QUESTIONNAIRE # 2

DATE 06/Nov/13.

Dear students,

I invite you to answer the following survey designed to collect information regarding your knowledge, feelings and thoughts towards goal setting and self-reflection. The information collected and participants' names will be treated confidentially and anonymously for research purposes. The time allotted for you to answer the questionnaire is fifteen (15) minutes. You may write down either in English or Spanish.

1. Describe something about your experience with goal setting

Yo creo que los objetivos son buenos. ya que con ellos logro marcar unas metas a corto plazo con mil estudio de ingles.

2. What happens when you formulate your own goals for the different language tasks?

Tengo una meta clara y me enfoco a cumplirla en cada clase, ya que de esta manera evito distraerme y así es mas facil aprender.

3. Do you thing setting your own goals has helped your learning process?

YES X NO _____
How? (if at all)
Si, por que evito distraerme de mis objetivos y así logro alcanzar mis objetivos más rapido y aprender de una manera más facil.

4. What happens when you reflect on your goals, achievements and difficulties after a lesson?

Me day cuenta que si marco mis objetivos los alcanzo más rapido y aprendo vocabulario ya que evito distraerme.

5. How much do you reflect on your learning process and goals achieved?

b. always   X many times   c. sometimes   d. rarely   e. never

Why Quiero seguir aprendiendo y me gusta saber mis debilidades para seguir creciendo profesionalmente.   Thank you very much!

Appendix E: Audio Recording Transcript

STUDENT J: Yes, sir?

PASSENGER: Excuse me, I am travelling with my girlfriend. She is row 19 and I am row 17: Could you please help us sit together?

J: Yes, let me see what can I do for you.

P: Ok

J: I'm so sorry for you but we can't change the seat because the flight is full, and it's impossible to change.

P: oh::: my God! I mean… you should be willing to help people in this situation. How long is the flight?

J: it's only 45 minutes

P: ok… umm… What can I do for the next time not to, , you know, to avoid this

J: Yes, eh, in the check in you can tell to the, umm… the ground staff that the seat stay together.

P: Yes! Because the problem was that she was a little bit late and I checked [first]

J: uh::: yes! You can do check in at the same time if you want to travel together. It's more easier

P: I understand! Thank you!

J: You're welco:::me!

Appendix F: Self-Reflection Sheet

English Department
Self-Reflection Sheet
Session _____ Unit_____

My Goals

_____

_____

WHAT I CAN DO	WHAT I HAVE DIFFICULTIES WITH	WHAT I LEARNED/WHAT I CAN DO BETTER

Comments_____

_____

_____

English Department
Self-Reflection Sheet
Session _____ Unit_____

My Goals

_____

_____

WHAT I CAN DO	WHAT I HAVE DIFFICULTIES WITH	WHAT I LEARNED/WHAT I CAN DO BETTER

Comments_____
_____
_____

Appendix G: Lesson Plan Sample

LESSON PLAN (page 1/2)			
LE SSON # 4	DATE: Sep 17	LEARNER'S GROUP: Basic 4	CLA SS TIME 1:30 pm - 3:50 pm

LANGUAGE TASK MAIN GOAL
Learners will make safety requests to passengers before take-off/landing, providing reasons when necessary

LANGUAGE TASK SUB-GOALS
- Learners will make polite requests using imperatives and can, could and would - Learners will achieve the objectives in one lesson (two hours and twenty minutes) - Learnes will a) review vocabulary b) make safety requests (imperatives) c) make safety requests (modals) and finally d) provide reasons and explanations for those requests. They will present the a role-play to finish the task

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE		SUGGESTED TYPES OF DISTRACTORS
FO RM	Imperatives, can, could, would	N/A
FU NCTION	Making requests politely and firmly, provide explanations.	

ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS	PLANNED SOLUTIONS
Learners may use CAN, COULD or WOULD adding TO after the modal verb. E.G. Could you to turn ff your cellphone?	Extra practice speaking in pairs, extra practice writing.

MATERIALS
STUDENTS: . Ellis, S., Landsford, L. (2010). English for Cabin Crew. Oxford Universisty Press. Pages 26,27. One set for each student - Safety requests worksheet 1, 2 and 3 CLASS: Loudspeakers, laptop computer.

STAGES	(page 2/2) DESCRIPTION OF THE TASKS	TIME/ INTERACTION /DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT
WARM UP	Students are told about the class topic: Safety requests and are told they will act a real scenario. In pairs, students discuss and make note about the importance of safety requests. Then, they fill the SELF REFLECTION SHEET individually in the section "My Goals". Students are invited to set their own goals for the class.	20 minutes/ Pair work/ SELF REFLECTION SHEET (goals)
TASK 1	In groups of three, students develop the worksheet 'safety requests 1'. After that, they take turns to practice making the safety requests (playing passenger and flight attendants). The teacher monitors and solve doubts.	25 minutes Group work
TASK 2	In pairs, students develop the worksheet 'safety requests' 2 and 3. Apart from the safety request as such, this time students are required to think about reasons and explanations for that safety request. Students write down what they believe. After they finish, the teacher elicits the reasons to the groups, inviting them to correct any mistakes. The teacher paraphrases if necessary.	35 minutes pair work, whole class
TASK 3	In groups of three, students prepare a role play activity: One learner playing flight attendant and the other two passengers. Before they present the role play, all of the students must practice both roles. The teachers decides who plays who.	40 minutes Group Work TEACHER'S FIELD NOTES
CLOSING TASK	Learners are invited to reflect on their perfomance by completing the SELF REFLECTION FORM. The teacher solves any doubts if requested. Learners also fill out the QUESTIONNAIRE related to their experiences, feeling and thoughts about their language development process and their reflection and monitoring.	10 minutes Individual Work SELF REFLECTION SHEET, QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix I: Sample Activity

LESSON 7: UNACCOMPANIED MINORS TASK WORKSHEET

1. **Vocabulary**
    What vocabulary do you need in order to give an unaccompanied minor (UM) a good

briefing?

EXAMPLE: life vest

2. **Verbs**
    What verbs do you need in order to give clear information to a UM?

3. **Verb forms and expressions**
    What verb form do you use to give information to a UM?

    Simple present? Imperatives? Simple Past? Future? Present Perfect? Other?

    Write down examples of sentences using the vocabulary and verbs

Example: if you need help, please call me

Appendix J: Sample Activity

SAFETY REQUESTS ON BOARD

PART 1: Work in pairs/groups of three people. Work on the safety requests and give reasons to the passengers.

ITEM	ACTION	REASONS
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Appendix K: Axial Coding Paradigm