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Self-directedness in EFL learners at Altos del Rosario School and Liceo Frances de Pereira.

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Declaration

We hereby declare that our research report entitled:

Videotaping Collaborative Reasoning Discussions to Develop Oral Fluency in English and Foster

Self-directedness in EFL learners at Altos del Rosario School and Liceo Frances de Pereira.

- is the result of our 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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Date: October 20, 2013

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

This study examines the implementation of videotaping collaborative reasoning (CR) discussions to develop oral fluency and self-directed skills in nine ninth grade students from a public high school and sixteen tenth grade students from a private French-speaking school in Colombia. The researchers gathered data from pre- and post-questionnaires regarding the participant's beliefs about self-directedness and oral fluency, post-discussion rubrics to assess students' oral performance after participating in CR discussions, which were videotaped for further recall, students' journals with reflections about their participation in the research project, and classroom observation conducted by the practitioner researchers. The outcomes of the study differed for each context; the students from the public school showed more improvement in their oral fluency than the participants from the private school. Aspects such as pacing, smoothness, confidence and naturalness were monitored in every CR discussion indicating positive outcomes at the end of the. The researchers concluded that one of the reasons for such improvement was the priority students give to learning English. Additionally, videotaping discussions was a very useful tool for students to enhance the development of self-directedness, since they were able to reflect on their own oral performance and to set goals for working on their limitations. Collaborative reasoning discussions also promoted peer support and peer motivation.

Key words: collaborative reasoning discussions, oral fluency, self-directedness, video-taping.

Resumen

Este estudio examina la implementación de discusiones de razonamiento colaborativo (RC) grabadas en video para desarrollar fluidez oral y habilidades de auto–dirección en nueve estudiantes de noveno grado de una escuela secundaria pública y dieciséis estudiantes de decimo de un Colegio Francés privado en Colombia. Los investigadores recogieron datos de pre-y post-cuestionarios sobre las creencias de los participantes acerca de la autodirección y la fluidez, de rúbricas post-debate oral para evaluar el desempeño oral de los estudiantes después de participar en las discusiones de RC, que fueron grabadas en video para su posterior recuperación, y de diarios de los estudiantes con reflexiones acerca de su participación en el proyecto de investigación. El estudio muestra resultados diferentes en ambos colegios, los estudiantes del colegio público mostraron un progreso más alto en su fluidez oral que los estudiantes del colegio privado. Aspectos como el ritmo, la suavidad, la confianza y la naturalidad fueron monitoreados en todas las discusiones RC, indicando resultados positivos al final del proyecto. Los investigadores encontraron que una de las razones de esta mejoría es la prioridad que los estudiantes le dan a la materia de inglés. Además, las grabaciones de las discusiones constituyeron una herramienta muy útil para los estudiantes para mejorar el desarrollo de la autodirección, ya que fueron capaces de reflexionar sobre su propio desempeño oral y establecer metas para trabajar en sus limitaciones. Las discusiones de razonamiento colaborativo también promovieron el apoyo mutuo y la motivación entre pares.

Palabras clave: discusiones de razonamiento colaborativo, fluidez oral, la autodirección, la grabación de vídeo.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In accordance with Article 67 of the National and Political Constitution of Colombia, thirteen purposes of education were established in a legal document entitled *Ley General de Educación* (1994), and the ninth purpose was stated in Article 5 as follows: *The development of critical, reflective and analytical capacity to strengthen the national scientific and technological progress, oriented with priority to the improvement of the quality of life of the population, to the participation in the pursue of alternative solutions to the problems and in the pursue of social progress and economic development*"[1]. This guideline demands that educators help their learners to develop not only their academic but also their personal growth.

The Colombian central government has also approved a number of education and language reforms, including the "Educational Revolution" 2002-2006 & 2006-2010 and "National Program of Bilingualism" 2004-2019. Through these policies, the government has determined to shape the national school system according to international expectations and models. Students are not only taught English as a foreign or second language during their studies but also evaluated according to the Common European Framework as a prerequisite for graduation.

As a consequence, in some educational sectors a high percentage of Colombian learners are not learning English for international communication but for passing the exams - testing. In

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[1] "El desarrollo de la capacidad crítica, reflexiva y analítica que fortalezca el avance científico y tecnológico nacional, orientado con prioridad al mejoramiento cultural y de la calidad de la vida de la población, a la participación en la búsqueda de alternativas de solución a los problemas y al progreso social y económico del país" (Balbin, Pérez).

fact, one of the students' main concerns is having a high score in the "Pruebas Saber 11°" test which, in the case of English, only evaluates grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension. That is why some students assume that developing oral fluency is not as relevant as developing reading or grammar.

Nevertheless, some authors contend that speaking is the most important skill because since the last two decades speaking has been placed in a privileged position in the field of language teaching (Carter and Nunan 2001). Moreover, Richards (2008) claims that improving speaking is the main concern of most ESL and EFL learners, arguing that for them, being able to communicate their feelings and thoughts orally in a fluent and accurate way is a sign of being a successful language learner. Richard's thought makes a lot of sense in our Colombian context since, carrying out oral tasks allows students not only to learn enough authentic language, but also to know how to use it in the appropriate context, which, is one of the competences evaluated in the Pruebas Saber 11° test. Therefore, teachers must implement methods, techniques and tools that not only motivate students to speak English in - and beyond - the classroom, but also help them to develop strategies for self-awareness, monitoring and control of their own performance.

Statement of the problem

This study was conducted in two different contexts. One group of participants (Group A) studied in a public school, Institución Educativa Altos del Rosario, and had an English level of A1-A2. The other group of participants (Group B) studied in a private school, Liceo Francés de

Pereira, and had an English level of B1-B2. Both groups showed little interest in participating in oral activities in the English class.

A needs analysis was administered to Group A and B. While the former group expressed their preference for carrying out writing and reading tasks because these kinds of activities made them feel more comfortable and confident; the latter expressed the need to have better fluency in English because they have to present not only the Pruebas Saber 11° test, but also the Baccalaureate exam in English, which evaluates all four skills. In the needs analysis (see Appendix A) implemented to both groups, students from Group B indicated that speaking was the most difficult part of this exam since they have to interact and express their ideas with the examiner in English. Students from group A indicated they did not feel comfortable when they interacted with others due to their lack of fluency, the time they had to spend preparing what they wanted to say, and that when they said it wrong, others sometimes laugh at them.

Consequently, according to Simpson and Ure (1994),"It is not possible... to meet all pupils' needs ...but it ought to be possible to respond to those needs which are substantially common"(p.85). In addition, these authors also pointed out that if teachers acknowledged learners' needs and found ways of meeting them that they and their pupils are comfortable with, success would likely follow. Thus, we decided to implement a strategy that responds to students' needs and interests that were indicated in the needs analysis, by focusing on developing oral fluency, working collaboratively, integrating technology to the English class and becoming more self-directed learners.

Firstly, to concentrate on the students' need to develop oral fluency, the researchers implemented lessons that include collaborative reasoning discussions (CR) to "promote growth in student's abilities to engage in reasoned argumentation" (Clark, Anderson, Kuo, Kim, Archodidou, and Nguyen, 2003, p. 6) and provided a learning environment in which students could talk freely among peers in small groups and support each other in the process of collaboration. Secondly, to attend students' interest in technology, this study integrated the use of video cameras, cell phones and webcams to videotape the students while participating in CR discussions as a tool for monitoring and self-regulation to develop oral fluency and self-directed skills.

Research question

To help English teachers and students from Altos del Rosario School and Liceo Frances de Pereira face the challenge of developing oral fluency, the present study was designed to answer the following question:

- *Does the implementation of videotaped collaborative reasoning discussions develop oral fluency and foster self-directedness in ninth graders at Altos del Rosario School and tenth graders at Liceo Francés de Pereira?*

Hypothesis

This question is supported by the following hypotheses:

1. Videotaping CR discussions develops oral fluency.

2. CR discussions provide learners with opportunities to use the target language for meaningful purposes and for developing self-directed skills such as self-confidence.

3. Using technology in the classroom to videotape CR discussions develops collaborative and self-directed skills.

Objectives

According to Richards (2006), fluency is "natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence and it is developed through activities that promote meaning negotiation" (p. 13). Therefore, the objectives of this study are:

- To help students to become fluent English speakers

- To foster collaborative skills such as teamwork by participating in Collaborative Reasoning discussions.

- To help students to learn how to set their own goals, monitor their own learning process, and self-evaluate their results through videotaping them while participating in Collaborative Reasoning discussions.

In addition, the use of technology in the classroom to record discussions could be constructive for these schools, as well as for the global ELT community, since it helps to break the teacher-centered pattern found in many classes, especially those with large groups. Students' interaction becomes the "authentic material" in the classroom, and it results in benefits such as:

- Promoting teamwork

- Encouraging students to determine their own learning goals

- Providing the learners opportunities to use the target language for meaningful purposes (pragmatic use of language)

- Fostering a positive environment in which the learners enjoy participating in the classroom activities

- Encouraging self-awareness and reflection through videotaping.

Chapter Two: Theoretical framework

The literature review of this study is based in four constructs (Collaborative Reasoning Discussions, Oral Fluency, Self-directed Skills and Technology in Language Learning) which will be summed up in three main topics: 1) Implementing collaborative reasoning discussions in the EFL classroom for improving oral fluency, 2) integrating technology and language learning, and 3) the correlation between collaborative work and self-directedness.

Collaborative Reasoning Discussions to Improve Oral Fluency and Self Directed Skills

There are different approaches to implementing discussions in a language classroom. One of the most frequently employed is the "Recitation" format in which students are asked to answer questions by giving the right response to verify information from a source (Chinn, Anderson &

Waggoner 2001). This pattern limits spontaneous and open communication among students interaction in the classroom since is more controlled by the teacher. A second type of discussion is called "Collaborative Reasoning Discussions **(CR)",** which encourages students to develop their "argument schema" (Reznitskaya and Anderson, cited in Reznitskaya, Kuo, Clark, Miller, Jadallah, Anderson, & Nguyen 2009).This schema provides students with tools to state their beliefs, take a position, defend that position with evidence, listen to and approve or rebut others' arguments, and respond to counterarguments. This schema demonstrates that CR discussions promote more independent student's performance.

CR discussions also foster critical thinking since they encourage students to evaluate an object or event, develop an argument, think critically about themselves, think critically about a situation, evaluate others' arguments, and give responses to those arguments (Moon 2008). Chinn, Anderson and Waggoner (2001), conducted a 3-year study on CR discussions with fourth graders in 12 rural, urban and suburban native language classrooms. Findings of this study showed that in four of the twelve classrooms, the rate of students talk increased from 66 words per minute in recitation discussions to 111 per minute in CR discussions. In addition, students were better able to give reasons, consider alternatives, and reconcile opposing views, which suggests that their ways of thinking were also transformed after carrying out these discussions.

In another study of CR discussions, Kidder (2008) described the experiences of eight students with different levels of performance in French, the target language, in a FFL literature class. The study was aimed to develop both appreciation for the language and the literature.

Although initially the students complained about missing the methodology focused on grammar, as the CR discussions continued, the researcher's data showed evidence of language improvement among the lower level participants. Additionally, the students built teamwork skills, such as being supportive to the higher level participants.

Even though CR discussions have been primarily directed at elementary level students, such as the studies mentioned in this paper, the researchers adapted them to ninth and tenth graders by allowing the participants to choose topics related to situations taken from their own context to suggest possible solutions such as the case of students from School 1, and topics of their interest such as the case of students from School 2. To lead CR discussions among the participants of this study required the teacher researchers to implement the following pedagogical strategies:

1. Prompting students for their positions and justification of reasons,

 2. Explicitly drawing attention to the use of effective argument stratagems,

3. Modeling reasoning processes by thinking aloud,

4. Challenging students with countering ideas,

5. Keeping track of proposed arguments by summing up students' contributions,

6. Using the vocabulary of critical and reflective thinking. (Waggoner 1995, cited in Reznitskaya et al., 2009)

Richards, Platt, and Weber (1985) defined fluency as "the features which give speech the qualities of being natural and normal, including native-like use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, and use of interjections and interruptions"(p. 108). They also claimed that speaking fluently does not necessarily imply precision in aspects like vocabulary or grammar but communicating ideas effectively. In fact, according to Aljumah (2011) developing students' oral skills requires attention to several areas: comprehension, teamwork, motivation, familiarity, integration, writing the task, presenting the task, and learner-centered teaching. The researchers of this study viewed the implementation of CR discussions as an appropriate strategy for improving speaking skills because they allow learners to team up with their peers, to be familiar with the topic of discussion and to present it to others.

In his paper Kellem (2009) mentions seven principles to consider when doing fluency building activities: repetition, increasing speaking time, preparation before speaking, familiar and motivating topics, appropriate level, time limits, and formulaic sequences. CR discussions based on the learners´ interests accomplish most of these principles since students are already motivated to obtain information about the topic to be discussed, are able to prepare their speech at their own pace and level, and once they build confidence, they voluntarily increase their participation in the discussion.

Carrying out oral tasks in the classroom motivates students to communicate their knowledge, feelings, and thoughts; however, it can be a stressful event for them if they are not provided with a safe environment to practice this essential communication skill. According to

Bluestein (2001), students are constantly facing challenges and taking risks, so the classroom environment should facilitate fun and pleasure, and should minimize stressors. From this view, working in small groups carrying out CR discussions encourages students to share their ideas more freely in a supportive environment.

Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis states that motivated, self-confident and unstressed learners are able to learn and produce more language. A study conducted by Chin (2008) consisted of creating a motivating class environment to ninety-eight freshmen at MingDao University in Taiwan by implementing a series of collaborative activities, such as games to learn vocabulary in a meaningful context and to develop fluency. The researcher designed activities to test the Affective Filter Hypothesis, and the results showed that more than 80% of the students noticed that their relaxed and positive attitudes towards the language allowed them to become more successful language learners.

This current study is motivated by the assumption that when planning oral activities, teachers should consider the linguistic (language as a system), pragmatic (functional use of language), and sociolinguistic (sociocultural conditions of language use) components of the target language (CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001). But additionally, teachers should strive to develop social skills, self-directed skills, and critical thinking with their lessons and activities.

Integrating technology and language learning

Nowadays, many teachers are concerned about the evolving nature of education. Before the 19th century, students in classrooms in general were not the center of the classroom; they were

dependent on their teachers, which limited their exposure to L2. Due to the influence of theorists like John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Howard Gardner and Lev Vygotsky, on second language acquisition and teaching, it has changed significantly. Today in some language classrooms, learners are the center of education, so teaching practices must be focused on helping learners to be responsible for their own learning process and, in the language classroom, to have more contact with the target language. Therefore, teachers now need to look for ways to create a meaningful environment for the students that provides them with opportunities to express their ideas, opinions, arguments and comments in the L2 and to be self-directed learners. One way of promoting such a change is to incorporate Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the classroom to create an atmosphere in which collaborative work can foster self-directed learning and help the students to improve their skills in language learning.

Shyamlee's (2012) study describes an analysis of the need to apply multimedia technology to English. According to this author, using technology in an ESL classroom is beneficial because it cultivates students' interest in study, promotes students' positive thinking and communication skills, improves interaction between teachers and students, and creates a context for language teaching.

Consequently, the use of technology in this current study aims to motivate the students to have a positive perception towards learning and especially towards CR discussion. It will also encourage them to interact with others in order to self-assess their own performance on the discussions.

The use of video cameras, cell phones and web cams to videotape events of the class as a tool for learning a foreign language is not an innovative practice; it was introduced in the early 1980s when the technology was brought into the classroom. There is extensive research on the implementation of video-based methods to improve listening and writing skills, but research on using this tool to develop oral fluency as well as involving the learners in the video production has not been sufficiently documented. Vanderplank (2010), for instance, designed a questionnaire to gather data about the usefulness of digital technology (Multimedia, Smart boards, Broadband, television, and video) in language learning. The survey was administered to language teachers from 36 universities in the United Kingdom (UK). The findings showed that listening comprehension was ranked as the most common purpose stated by teachers when using such technological tools. However, the participants in Vanderplank's study also recognized the utility of using technology to promote pair/group conversation work and speaking practice in the classroom.

In her paper, Stempleski (1987) stated the relevance of using videos as authentic materials for EFL/ESL classes. She points out that students feel very motivated with the real language presented in the videos, and that teachers find them useful to promote cross-cultural discussions based on their content.

In a more recent article, Emily Crude (2009) stated the positive effects that educational videos and television programs have on the students. Some of them were reinforcing reading and lecture material, which provides students with the vocabulary they need to feel confident when

speaking; enhancing student discussion, which would be the main collaborative technique implemented in this project; providing greater accommodation of diverse learning styles, which allows students to choose a role that makes them feel more comfortable and confident; increasing student motivation and enthusiasm, which is indispensable for the successful performance of a task; and promoting teacher effectiveness, since the teacher has an objective tool to assess the teaching practice and the students' production.

Although the use of professional videos has been proven as useful in language learning, encouraging learners to use cell phones, video cameras and computer software might result in a more interesting and effective practice to increase oral production in the classroom and hence develop oral fluency. Brooke (2003), whose students were involved in recording role-plays, interviews, mini-documentaries and advertisements, supported the Affective Filter Hypothesis proposed by Krashen (et. al. 1985). He stated that "the production of video relieves the students of some of the anxiety they may feel when giving live performances and accordingly they appear more relaxed and confident in their language production on video" (p.1).

Along the same line, Bufe and Viallon (2001) carried out two separate studies. One study took place in Germany with German learners of French, and the other was held in France with foreign learners of French. The authors claimed that beyond the utility of professional videos for linguistic and socio-cultural purposes, the benefits of students producing their own videos are wider in oral skill development. Findings in this paper showed that recording and editing their own videos moved learners from passive receivers to active producers of language. Evidence of

this changing role is given by the authors when referring to foreign learners of French stopping native speakers in the street and interviewing them.

Furthermore, McNulty and Lazarevic (2012) affirmed in their article that recording videos has become a valuable resource for both self-assessing and peer-assessing second language progress in students' speaking skill, since learners can monitor their pronunciation and provide constructive feedback. This supports Gardner's (1994) view that videos can be used as a self-access resource to foster autonomy, responsibility and confidence.

Collaborative work and self-directedness

"Self-directed learning" can be defined as learning that takes places as a result of a person's internal motivation and acceptance of an increased responsibility for decisions related to that learning process (Brockett and Hiemstra, 1991). "Collaborative learning" is described as the process in which learners are encouraged to use their individual skills in the achievement of a common goal, by working together, supporting each other, and trusting each other's pursuit (Klemm, 1994). Although these two ideas may seem in opposition, Tan, S.C., Divaharan, S., Tan, L., and Cheah, H.M. (2011) showed how in a collaborative learning environment, learners are provided with external factors such as teacher and peer feedback to enhance positive internal processes (self-directedness) such as creativity, confidence, responsibility and self-regulation. Moreover, teachers have the major responsibility of designing collaborative tasks that not only demand from students the development of teamwork and language skills, but also require them to reflect on their own intrinsic motivation, attitudes, and performance. Such tasks must promote

interdependence and ensure individual accountability at the same time. Good examples of tasks that fulfill these requirements are CR discussions, which generate controversy, are directed toward a learning goal, are driven by a common goal, and help the learner to internalize both external knowledge and critical thinking skills.

Sachs, Candlin and Rose (2003) conducted a study with eight ESL teachers and approximately 520 students from three secondary schools in China. Some of the students had a basic level of English, low motivation and poor self-discipline while others presented the opposite conditions. The cooperative tasks carried out during the study were focused on fluency, accuracy and complexity, and the purpose of the project was to compare the oral proficiency of students in a traditional setting and in a setting based on cooperative work. Students were asked to reflect on their learning process after every task, and teachers were asked to give appropriate feedback to the students. The findings showed that all the participants in the study were more motivated to speak English in class and the lower level learners improved their language performance.

In addition to language improvement and motivation, Bean (2001) points out that working collaboratively in small groups is an effective strategy that enables learners to develop social skills and team work skills, such as interacting, working on different views, and solving problems. It also fosters in students a good sense of precision, organization, effective reasoning and critical reflecting.

Osman, Nayan, Mansor, Maesin, and Shafie (2010) studied the effects of implementing collaborative learning tasks in two groups of UITM Perlis diploma students who were divided into control and experimental groups. The participants took a pre-test and a post-test to evaluate their speaking skills. At the end of the study, the researchers reported that the participants were more willing to participate in group discussions and seemed more confident (a sign of self-directedness) after the interventions. They concluded that "the use of collaborative learning activities in the classroom can help students generate more ideas and have less stress to express themselves in the class"(p. 124).

In the 21st century, ICT facilitates developing students' skills to integrate individual knowledge in different kinds of communities within a globalized world. Dawson, Macfadyen, Risko, Foulsham, and Kingstone (2012), studied how integrating technology into collaborative work can encourage self-directed learning. They created the Collaborative Lecture Annotation System (CLAS), a web-based video annotation tool, to provide learners with a mechanism to record live lecture presentations for further analysis and review of important highlighted annotations. Students were able to work collaboratively by sharing and reviewing annotations, and they also worked independently by assessing their different views of relevant points in the lectures to identify areas of convergence and divergence. Based on this, the researchers concluded that using CLAS fostered self-directed skills, such as motivation, self-management and self-monitoring in learners.

In brief, based on the literature gathered about our three constructs *Collaborative reasoning discussions (CR) to improve oral fluency, integrating technology and language learning and Collaborative work and self-directedness,* the goal of this study is to know the impact that the implementation of CR discussions using technology have on EFL learners' fluency and self-directedness. The role of the teacher researchers is to encourage students to participate and make suggestions about how they may carry out an activity. The researchers will be also assessing how well the students perform in the CR discussion in order to provide feedback.

Chapter Three: Research Design

Type of study

This study follows a quantitative action research approach. By definition quantitative research relies primarily on the collection of quantitative data using questionnaires, videotaped discussions, rubrics, journals and classroom observation to converge statistical data. According to Aliaga and Gunderson (2000), Quantitative research refers to the explanation of phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics). Thus, this research study uses a quantitative research designed with the aim of having numerical data to be analyzed. Some of the data was collected through journals and observations, instruments which are often considered appropriate for qualitative research; however, the information from these instruments was analyzed using numerical scales.

The analysis of the data consists of statistical analysis based on frequency and percentage of Likert-Scale items from the questionnaires, a time series design to compare students' scores registered in the post discussion rubrics from the initial to the final CR discussions (Nunan and Baily 2009), and the analysis of axial coding, (Strauss and Corbin 1998) in which codes and categories taken from journals and classroom observation will be sorted, counted, compared, and visually represented in a graph for further analysis.

Action Research has been considered the most suitable approach for this study since it affords the practitioner-researcher systematic observations and data collection to be used in reflection, decision-making and the development of more effective classroom strategies (Parsons and Brown 2002). The researchers in the study served as active observers as they were also teachers of the classes in which the study was implemented; thus, they were able to notice the difficulties and problems of the students. Action Research is also defined by Hobson (2001) as "investigations conceived, implemented, and evaluated by actual teachers in real classrooms" (p. 3). Sagor (2004) broadens this definition by suggesting four stages in the implementation of any Action Research study:

a) Clarifying vision and targets.

b) Articulating theories of action.

c) Implementing action and collecting data.

d) Reflecting on data and planning informed action.

In this specific study, the purpose is to develop oral fluency and collaborative and self-directed skills in ninth graders with A1 English level and tenth graders with B1 English level from two schools. The study focuses on collaborative reasoning discussions, integrated technology, and self-directedness. Based on the premise of CR discussions, eight interventions were implemented during which the researchers gathered objective data regarding to students' oral fluency and self-directedness from different instruments such as pre and post questionnaires, videotaped discussions, post discussion rubrics and participants' journals with reflections.

Mills (2000) defines Action Research as a "systemic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers… to gather information about the ways that their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn" (p. 6). Accordingly, the first and second stages of this study were focused on investigating and interpreting classroom events in the teacher researchers' classes to find the gaps between the planned curriculum goals and the outcomes the students achieve every end of school term. This interpretation of events was supported with theory about *oral fluency development* (Aljumah, 2011; Kellem, 2009; Osman, Nayan, Mansor, Maesin, and Shafie, 2010, Richards, 2008), *CR discussions* (Kidder, 2008; McCann, & et al, F, 2006; Mercier, 2010; Oradee, 2012; Reznitskaya, Kuo, Clark, Miller, Jadallah, Anderson, and Nguyen, 2009), and *self- directed learning* (Dawson, Macfadyen, Risko, Foulsham, and Kingstone, 2012; Tan, Divaharan, Tan, L. & Cheah, 2011).

Context

This study was carried out in two different Colombian schools. Institución Educativa Altos del Rosario (School 1), a public school in Sincelejo, Sucre, which has a student population of about 2000 students from preschool through high school with an average of 40 students of both genders in all grades. The students currently attend English classes three hours per week.

Liceo Francés of Pereira (School 2), a private Institution in Pereira, Risaralda, which has a student population of about 750 students frompreschool through high school with an average of 20 students of both genders in each grade. Both schools follow a notional-functional syllabus in their English curriculum.

Participants

Nine students from School 1, ages 14 to 17, volunteered to participate in this study. These ninth grade students have an Upper Elementary level of English proficiency and are classified as A1 according to the Common European Framework. None of these students have ever taken an outside (private) English course. Most of these students have been displaced by violence from different towns along Colombia´s Caribbean coast and their families have populated a small neighborhood in Sincelejo where crime, including vandalism, drug sales and abuse, is an everyday occurrence. They attend three hours of English per week at school and due to their low economic status, they cannot afford to buy any textbooks, so they work with worksheets designed by the teacher and photocopied at school. The worksheets mostly include grammar, vocabulary

and reading comprehension tasks with instructions written in both languages English and Spanish.

Sixteen students from School 2, ages 15 to 16, were chosen to participate after analysing their needs. These tenth grade students have an Intermediate level of English proficiency and are classified as Independent Users B1, according to the Common European Framework. Four students from this group have completed English courses or have lived in English speaking countries, so their English level is B2. The participants attend two or three hours of English per week in which the four skills are practiced. The English textbooks have mainly written exercises, and the instructions for the students are written in French. The teacher relies on other textbooks for listening and speaking activities. Outside the classroom, students speak in Spanish and French, but it is not common to hear them practicing English. The participants from this school do not have to struggle against drugs or vandalism; but they struggle to get high scores in the BAC examination to study abroad.

Data Collection Instruments

Teachers play a crucial role in promoting collaborative self-directed learning environments. Barkley, Cross, and Major (2004) envision the teacher's role in collaborative learning as a facilitator rather than a transmitter of knowledge. To them, being a good teacher involves encouraging contact between students and faculty, promoting reciprocity and cooperation among peers, encouraging active learning, giving punctual feedback, stressing time on developing tasks, communicating expectations, and considering different ways of learning

(Barkley, Cross, and Major *et al*., 2004). Subsequently, the teacher researchers motivated the students to practice language and self-directed skills in the context of collaborative reasoning discussions. To achieve this, the researchers made use of readings, videos, images, power point presentations and real life situations and topics to promote self-reflection, face to face interaction, students' support and assistance and individual accountability while achieving group goals. By keeping both subjective (journal and students' journals) and objective (videotaped discussions) records daily throughout the study, the researchers were able to continually reflect on their own teaching practice to achieve professional goals in and beyond the classroom.

Inspired by Dörney's (2003) ethical principles of data collection, being honest and fair-minded with the participants were conceived as the main concern when doing this research study. Prior to the implementation, the participants were informed about the objectives, stages, methodology, and strategies to be implemented in the project through a power point presentation. The participants were also notified that they would be videotaped for objective data collection purposes, and not for grading purposes. Along with this, the researchers gave the participants a formal consent letter written in their native language in order to assure fully understanding before agreeing to participate (see Appendix B).To assure that the data was truthful and to protect the identity of the participants, the questionnaires were answered anonymously.

For data collection this study has considered two approaches that Barcelos (2000) mentions in his paper about Language Learners' Beliefs (LLB):

a) ***The normative approach*** uses Likert-Scale questionnaires that include different kinds of questions such as ranking questions, multiple choice and open-ended questions to find out about LLB. The students' responses are indicators of their behavior as self-directed learners.

b) ***The contextual approach*** uses different tools such as journals, diaries, metaphors and ethnography to understand students' beliefs not in isolated or hypothetical situations but in their real contexts.

Accordingly, the data collection process was carried out through the following instruments:

- Pre-and post- intervention questionnaires.

- Videotaped small group discussions.

- Transcription of the CR discussions

- Post-discussion rubrics for evaluating oral fluency.

- Student's journals.

- Researchers´ notes from observation.

Brown (2001) defines questionnaires as written instruments whose main purpose is to discover students' insights from their responses to questions or multiple choice answers. As a result, the two groups involved in this study were asked to answer a questionnaire with some questions about their demographic information and 40 Likert-type items to identify their readiness for self-directedness; their habits, feelings and attitudes when speaking English; and their challenges and interests when learning the target language. This procedure was implemented

before the interventions to determine how well the planned strategy would align with students' needs and interests, and after the interventions to compare results from the experience in Action both groups and draw conclusions.

Eight lesson plans were used during the interventions. Students were encouraged to participate in CR discussions that were videotaped to provide objective data for scoring students' oral fluency by using the post-discussion rubrics, and to afford students an effective tool for self-assessing their own attitude and performance. At the end of every intervention students were asked to write in a journal, either in their native language or in English. Their entries were to include reflections about the ongoing process, their perceptions, their development of fluency, their collaborative and self-directed skills, and their expectations for coming interventions. In addition, the researchers took notes based on classroom observation to focus on the attitudes and performance of the students during the implementation of the project.

To summarize, this research study was carried out in two different Colombian schools. Nine students from School 1 and sixteen students from School 2 participated in this project. The aim of this research is to develop oral fluency and collaborative and Self-directed skills in students of English as a foreign language. The strategy chosen was CR discussions applied integrating technology and self-directedness. The teacher researchers decided to use Action Research because the students' lack of fluency problem emerged in their classes, so they want to find the solution. This study follows a quantitative approach to collect data in which different

instruments such as pre and post questionnaires, videotaped discussions, post discussion rubrics and participants' journals with reflections were used during eight interventions.

Chapter Four: Pedagogical Intervention and Implementation

Because of the difference in the two groups of participants, the implementation process had some differences related to the topics used for discussions. The initial stage of this study consisted of administering a diagnostic questionnaire (See Appendix C) to the participants in order to collect factual and attitudinal data concerning their demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, years of study, L2 environment…); their beliefs regarding self-directed skills, English oral fluency, challenges when speaking; and their interests (Dörney *et al.,*2003). Such data was essential to set the constructs of the present study, as well as to design the lesson plans for implementing a pedagogical strategy that fulfil the participants' needs and interests.

As the foundation of the pedagogical strategy was to integrate technology into the collaborative reasoning discussion approach to develop oral fluency in a self-directed way, the action plan for every intervention was based on Brooke's (et al., 2003) theory that videotaping oral activities in the classroom can be very useful to enhance the learning experience.

Eight Collaborative Reasoning Discussions were planned and carried out at two different periods of time from August 2012 to February 2013 in School 1, and from November 2012 to February 2013 in School 2. Each intervention consisted of two 45-minute class periods (see Appendices C and D). The lesson plans used in each intervention in both schools were designed using the same strategy (CR discussions) and instruments to collect data (see Appendix E and F).

The topics used for promoting discussion, however, were different due to differences in the schools syllabi. The researcher from School 1 used topics related to the students' real life situations to call students attention and encourage them to participate while the researcher in School 2used the notions and topics of the book such as myths and heroes, spaces and exchanges and forms of power (see Table 1.1 and 1.2).

Stages

The interventions in both contexts followed the same sequence:

Pre-Intervention Stage

During the first two weeks, the participants were notified about the purpose of the project. They received a consent letter in which they agreed or not to participate in the research project. Similarly, the researchers explained to the participants the reasons they were going to be videotaped as part of the process. Then, the first data collection tool was implemented. The diagnostic questionnaire was applied as a pretest in order to gather relevant data related to students' interests, likes and self-directed skills.

The researchers motivated and sensitized the students to participate actively in the project. Some of Kellem's (2009) principles to develop oral fluency in a classroom involve preparing students before speaking, incorporating repetition, and ensuring appropriate level. These principles are the oral aspects used to measure students' improvement. Thus, the participants received a list of useful expressions for giving opinions, agreeing, disagreeing, asking for

opinions, reacting to suggestions and politely interrupting (see Appendix H) to prepare them to take part of the CR discussions. In addition, The "Think-Pair-Share" strategy was implemented to motivate students to discuss their answers to some questions regarding a story.

Students 'roles in CR discussions were explained. They included: a) a reader, who read facts, data and information about the tasks, projects and other assignments; b) an encourager, who motivated all members to have an active participation; c) a summarizer, who recapitulated findings, improvements and results; and d) a checker, who was in charge of the general understanding, checking instructions, providing and updating resources (Klemm, 1994) (see Appendix I). After this explanation, students adopted and put these roles into practice in the remaining interventions.

Implementation Stage

In the third session, the researchers started to implement the videotaped CR discussion strategy in order to see the effect on the participants. Eight CR discussions sessions were planned to assess students' oral fluency after each intervention using a fluency rubric (see Appendix J). The researchers scored students in order to see the effect of CR discussions in their fluency. This rubric had four categories: pacing, smoothness, confidence and speech naturalness. For each category there are three descriptors to score students' fluency: 1) very little fluent (not fluent at all); 2) quite fluent (fairly fluent) and 3) fluent (the most fluent). The researchers expected students to put into practice the strategies, expressions and roles given in the first stage.

Students were involved when choosing the topics to be discussed. The students from School 1 were encouraged to identify social problems they considered were affecting their environment, such as drugs, early pregnancy and guns at school, and to exchange views on possible causes, consequences, and solutions. The participants planned their own collaborative self-directed projects regarding one of the problems they discussed, and the teacher researcher lead them in the process of videotaping themselves as a way to self-monitor their fluency, as well as their collaborative and self-directed skills. Students from School 2 were asked to look for information about social problems related to the role of advertising, the power of the media, fast food, forms of power (political, cultural, racial, economical), and to think critically about the effects that these topics have brought to our society (Table 1.2).

During this implementation stage, the third tool to collect data was applied. Four journals were implemented to encourage the participants to reflect and give their opinions on the topic used in the first intervention (see Appendix K), fluency performance after watching themselves in the videotaped discussions (see Appendix L), self-directed skills, collaborative work and learning strategies (see Appendix M), and strengths and weaknesses when working in teams (see Appendix N). The teacher researchers also recorded observations and reflections in their journals after each of discussions implemented.

Final stage

The last stage consisted of guiding the participants to make their final collaborative project. Students chose the topics for making their videotaped collaborative project. The participants from

school 1 chose drugs and bullying as the content of their videotaped collaborative project. Through the discussions they agreed on some possible solutions for the social problem they chose, generated ideas about the strategies they wanted to implement in their project, and gave their opinions about the content of a power point presentation "Thinking about Social Problems Within School", as well as the videos "McGruff Anti-Bullying Film" and "Behind the Screams Anti-Drug Campaign" (Table 1.1). On the other hand, the students from school 2 chose advertisements as the topics for making their final collaborative project. They were encouraged to use an advertising chart and action plan in order to set responsibilities on the team's members (see Appendix N and O). They worked collaboratively and supported each other suggesting ways for improving their pronunciation. The teacher researcher monitored and guided the students in this process. Additionally, a Movie maker and You-tube tutorial (see Appendix P) was given to participants in both schools since they agreed on making and editing their own videos. Students also had the opportunity to objectively assess their own fluency performance and their peers' performance by reviewing the discussions that were videotaped and watching their final collaborative task.

In the final session of the process, the researchers administered the same diagnostic questionnaire that students answered at the outset of the project. Students were asked to compare their answers in the pre- and post-questionnaire, and they shared their findings in pairs. The participants wrote their final reflections in their journals by summarizing what they had learned during the implementation of this project.

Chapter Five: Results and Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was focused on testing the hypotheses derived from the research question: *Does the implementation of videotaped collaborative reasoning discussions develop oral fluency and foster self-directedness in ninth graders at Institución Educativa Altos del Rosario and tenth graders at Liceo Francés de Pereira?*

Videotaping CR discussions develops oral fluency

To analyze information from the pre- and post-questionnaires, the *ordinal data* from the Likert-type items was organized in four tables based on the four categories of the questionnaire (self-directed skills, English oral fluency, challenges and interests) to register frequency and percentages. The purpose of this analysis is to measure changes in the students' beliefs, attitudes, and/or behavior regarding the development of their language and self-directed skills after the implementation of videotaped CR discussions. The results obtained from this analysis will be explained based on the four categories mentioned previously.

I. SELF-DIRECTED SKILLS		Time	NEVER		RARELY		SOMETIME		ALM ALW		ALW	
			Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1. I set my own goals for learning		Pre	0	0%	4	44.4%	3	33.3%	2	22.2%	0	0%
	School 1	Post	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	55.5%	4	44.4%
		Pre	0	0%	1	6.25%	2	12.50%	11	68.75%	2	12.50%
	School 2	Post	1	6,25%	1	6,25%	6	37,50%	6	37,50%	2	12,50%
2. I accept responsibility for doing the work of learning		Pre	0	0%	0	0%	3	33.3%	4	44.4%	2	22.2%
	School 1	Post	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	33.3%	6	66.6%
		Pre	0	0%	0	0%	3	18,75%	10	62,50%	3	18,75%
	School 2	Post	0	0%	0	0%	3	18,75%	10	62,50%	3	18,75%
3. I am comfortable about acting independently		Pre	0	0%	4	44.4%	3	33.3%	2	22.2%	0	0%
	School 1	Post	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	6	66.6%	3	33.3%
		Pre	0	0%	1	6,25%	3	18,75%	7	43,75%	5	31,25%
	School 2	Post	2	12,50%	0	0%	2	12,50%	9	56,25%	3	18,75%
4. I frequently ask "why" and lots of other questions		Pre	2	22.2%	3	33.3%	3	33.3%	0	0%	0	0%
	School 1	Post	0	0%	0	0%	1	11.1%	5	55.5%	3	33.3%
		Pre	0	0%	3	18,75%	5	31,25%	8	50,00%	0	0%
	School 2	Post	0	0%	3	18,75%	7	43,75%	2	12,50%	3	18,75%
5. I understand that learning requires discipline		Pre	0	0%	0	0%	1	22.2%	5	55.5%	3	33.3%
	School 1	Post	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	22.2%	7	77.7%
		Pre	0	0%	0	0%	2	12,50%	9	56,25%	5	31,25%
	School 2	Post	0	0%	0	0%	1	6,25%	7	43,75%	8	50,00%
6. I organize my time effectively		Pre	4	44.4%	3	33.3%	0	0%	2	22.2%	0	0%
	School 1	Post	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	44.4%	5	55.5%
		Pre	0	0%	2	12,50%	8	50,00%	4	25,00%	2	12,50%
	School 2	Post	0	0%	1	6,25%	5	31,25%	8	50,00%	2	12,50%
7. I set a plan to do my assignments		Pre	4	44.4%	2	22.2%	1	22.2%	2	22.2%	0	0%
	School 1	Post	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	44.4%	5	55.5%
		Pre	0	0%		25,00%	6	37,50%	4	25,00%	2	12,50%
	School 2	Post	0	0%		31,25%	5	31,25%	4	25,00%	2	12,50%
8. I enjoy learning		Pre	0	0%	0	0%	2	22.2%	3	33.3%	3	33.3%
	School 1	Post	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	22.2%	6	66.6%
		Pre	0	0%	0	0%		37,50%		31,25%		31,25%
	School 2	Post	0	0%	0	0%		12,50%		6,25%		25,00%

Table 3.1.*Self-directed Skills Frequency and Percentage of Likert – Scale Items in Pre- and Post-Questionnaires.*

This analysis considers some relevant items from each of the four tables of frequency and percentage of Likert-Scale items, to support the finding related to the first hypothesis. Firstly, by looking at the ranking of the statements about the first category students' *self-directed skills* (see Table 3.1); the researchers will explain the results in each group of participants respectively. In School 1, we can see a significant positive change of perspective towards goal-setting. In the pre-questionnaire no participants responded "always" to the statement *I set my own goals for learning,* while at the end of the project, most participants reported improvement of this skill. In addition, percentages of the sixth item in the self-directed skills category show that initially only two students reported that they organized their time effectively with a high frequency, and after the implementation of the strategy, all participants declared in their ranking they had acquired this habit. In their journals, students provided some organization techniques such as writing schedules, identifying priorities, and taking some time at the beginning of the day to check their duties.

Additional evidence of School 1 students developing self-directed skills is shown in the quantitative data regarding to the seventh item in the table, in which the number of participants who reported constantly setting plans to do their assignments increased from zero in the pre-questionnaire to five in the post-questionnaire. This finding could mean that the "video project action plan template" completed in the final discussions helped students to design and follow their own action plans to accomplish their responsibilities.

Similarly, comparing the same skill on the pre and post-test results in School 2, the researchers found that some aspects of self-directed skills such as ***responsibility, acting***

independently and discipline presented on the second, third and fifth items respectively, showed positive improvements by the end of the study. The main evidence is shown on the fifth item where the percentage of participants who strongly agreed that learning requires discipline, increased from 31.25% in the pre-questionnaire to 50% in the post- questionnaire. In their journals, students also wrote that they had a routine for learning and they set schedules for making different activities after school classes.

In conclusion, these findings might be the product of the **Lead in** stage in every intervention which consisted of students working in groups of four to discuss the lesson goals and proposing a revised version of them based on their own needs and interests. It also agrees with the previous analysis of data from journals in which a considerable number of students' comments referred to the importance of being responsible for establishing their own learning goals.

The second category of the questionnaire *English oral fluency* pre-and posttest were analyzed in order to see the impact of videotaping discussions to develop oral fluency. The difference in frequency and percentages of ranking shown in the following table indicates that at the beginning a third of the students in School 1 reported they avoided participating in conversations (twelfth item), and after taking part of the CR discussions, eight students disagreed with the statement and only one student remained neutral.

II. ENGLISH ORAL FLUENCY		Time	SD		DISAG		NEUTRAL		AGREE		SA	
			Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
9. I can adopt a foreign accent, assuming a regional dialect, or imitating another person's speech	School 1	Pre	2	22.2%	4	44.4%	3	33.3%	0	0%	0	0%
		Post	0	0%	0	0%	3	33.3%	6	66.6%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	2	12,50%	7	43,75%	6	37,50%	1	6,25%	0	0%
		Post	2	12,50%	8	50,00%	4	25,00%	0	0%	2	12,50%
10. I whisper words to myself before saying them or practicing what I am planning to say long before I speak	School 1	Pre	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	33.3%	6	66.6%
		Post	0	0%	2	22.2%	6	66.6%	1	11.1%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	3	18,75%	3	18,75%	4	25,00%	4	25,00%	2	12,50%
		Post	4	25,00%	4	25,00%	4	25,00%	4	25,00%	0	0%
11. I prolong a sound or word (e.g. mm) while trying to say it.	School 1	Pre	0	0%	5	55.5%	4	44.4%	0	0%	0	0%
		Post	0	0%	6	66.6%	3	33.3%	0	0%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	3	18,75%	4	25,00%	6	37,50%	3	18,75%	0	0%
		Post	1	6,25%	5	31,25%	5	31,25%	5	31,25%	0	0%
12. I act in a manner intended to keep me out of a conversation or discussion.	School 1	Pre	0	0%	2	22.2%	4	44.41%	3	33.3%	0	0%
		Post	3	33.3%	5	55.5%	1	11.1%	0	0%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	7	43,75%	5	31,25%	4	25,00%	0	0%	0	0%
		Post	3	18,75%	6	37,50%	6	37,50%	1	6,25%	0	0%
13. I have general body tension during speech attempts	School 1	Pre	0	0%	2	22.2%	2	22.2%	3	33.3%	2	22.2%
		Post	2	22.2%	2	22.2%	4	44.4%	1	11.1%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	5	31,25%	5	31,25%	2	12,50%	1	6,25%	3	18,75%
		Post	2	12,50%	4	25,00%	5	31,25%	3	18,75%	2	12,50%
14. I help myself to get started talking by laughing, coughing, clearing my throat.	School 1	Pre	0	0%	2	22.2%	2	22.2%	0	0%	0	0%
		Post	3	33.3%	2	22.2%	4	44.4%	0	0%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	4	25,00%	4	25,00%	7	43,75%	1	6,25%	0	0%
		Post	4	25,00%	4	25,00%	7	43,75%	0	0%	1	6,25%
15. I avoid speaking before an audience	School 1	Pre	0	0%	0	0%	2	22.2%	5	55.5%	2	22.2%
		Post	0	0%	4	44.4%	2	22.2%	3	33.3%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	1	6,25%	6	37,50%	7	43,75%	1	6,25%	1	6,25%
		Post	3	18,75%	2	12,50%	9	56,25%	1	6,25%	0	0%
16. I pay particular attention to what I am going to say (e.g., the length of a word or the position of a word in a sentence)	School 1	Pre	0	0%	2	22.2%	1	11.1%	4	44.4%	2	22.2%
		Post	0	0%	4	44.4%	5	55.5%	0	0%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	2	12,50%	4	25,00%	3	18,75%	7	43,75%	0	0%
		Post	1	6,25%	3	18,75%	4	25,00%	8	50,00%	0	0%
17. I replace a word or phrase for the one I had intended to say	School 1	Pre	0	0%	0	0%	4	44.4%	5	55.5%	0	0%
		Post	0	0%	2	22.2%	7	77.7%	0	0%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	2	12,50%	4	25,00%	8	50,00%	2	12,50%	0	0%
		Post	2	12,50%	1	6,25%	7	43,75%	5	31,25%	1	6,25%
18. I repeat words in order to correct them	School 1	Pre	0	0%	0	0%	3	33.3%	5	55.5%	1	11.1%
		Post	0	0%	2	22.2%	6	66.6%	1	11.1.%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	4	25,00%	5	31,25%	3	18,75%	4	25,00%	0	0%
		Post	1	6,25%	4	25,00%	3	18,75%	6	37,50%	2	12,50%
19. I "put on an act" when speaking (e.g., adopting an attitude of confidence)	School 1	Pre	0	0%	3	33.3%	3	33.3%	3	33.3%	0	0%
		Post	0	0%	0	0%	4	44.4%	4	44.4%	1	11.1%
	School 2	Pre	3	18,75%	9	56,25%	1	6,25%	1	6,25%	1	6,25%
		Post	2	12,50%	4	25,00%	6	37,50%	1	6,25%	0	0%
20. I use gestures as a substitute for speaking (e.g., nodding my head instead of saying "yes")	School 1	Pre	0	0%	2	22.2%	5	55.5%	2	22.2%	0	0%
		Post	4	44.4%	4	44.4%	1	11.1%	0	0%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	3	18,75%	3	18,75%	5	31,25%	3	18,75%	1	6,25%
		Post	2	12,50%	1	6,25%	7	43,75%	4	25,00%	2	12,50%
21. I expect that certain sounds, letters or words are going to be particularly "hard" to say	School 1	Pre	0	0%	6	66.6%	3	33.3%	0	0%	0	0%
		Post	0	0%	5	55.5%	4	44.4%	0	0%	0	0%
	School 2	Pre	6	37,50%	3	18,75%	3	18,75%	3	18,75%	1	6,25%
		Post	3	18,75%	3	18,75%	6	37,50%	2	12,50%	2	12,50%

Table 3.2 *English Oral FluencyFrequency and Percentage of Likert – Scale Items in Pre-and Post-Questionnaires*

Based on Table 3.2, we can conclude that after the implementation of the CR discussion strategy, the eleventh item of oral fluency had more positive effect on the participants from School 2 than in School 1. In the pre-test, 56.25% of the participants rarely "put on acting" when participating in oral tasks. However, the percentages changed by the end of the study, and 37.50 % of students were sometimes able to adopt an attitude of confidence or to pretend to be angry. Some aspects of the fluency category did not have major changes such as prolonging a sound, avoiding speaking before an audience, repeating words in order to correct them and using gestures as a substitute for speaking.

In the third category called Challenges of the Likert-Scale items in pre- and post-questionnaires, there were also some changes (see Table 3.3). In terms of difficulty in School 1, there is also evidence of change of attitude about speaking spontaneously. The percentages in the twenty-third item reveal that after the implementation of the strategy, only a minority still considered participating in spontaneous discussions or debates a difficult challenge. This finding is consistent with the scores the students were given in the post-discussion rubrics in regard to "smoothness" in oral fluency. Those scores suggested that although more than half of students had improved this aspect of fluency (see Table 3.3).

III. CHALLENGES		Time	VERY DIFF		LITTLE DIFF		NOT DIFF	
			Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
22. Communicating oral ideas in English with previous preparation	School 1	Pre	0	0%	6	66.6%	3	33.3%
		Post	0	0%	3	33.3%	6	66.6%
	School 2	Pre	0	0%	9	56,25%	7	43,75%
		Post	1	6,25%	6	37,50%	9	56,25%
23. Participating in spontaneous discussions or debates	School 1	Pre	7	77.7%	2	22.2%	0	0%
		Post	2	22.2%	5	55.5%	2	22.2%
	School 2	Pre	3	18,75%	8	50,00%	5	31,25%
		Post	4	25,00%	7	43,75%	5	31,25%
24. Speaking without thinking in your native language	School 1	Pre	6	66.6%	3	33.3%	0	0%
		Post	1	11.1%	6	66.6%	2	22.2%
	School 2	Pre	7	43,75%	5	31,25%	4	25,00%
		Post	3	18,75%	6	37,50%	7	43,75%
25. Answering roll call in class	School 1	Pre	0	0%	5	55.5%	4	44.4%
		Post	0	0%	3	33.3%	6	66.6%
	School 2	Pre	1	6,25%	9	56,25%	6	37,50%
		Post	0	0%	9	56,25%	7	43,75%
26. Reading aloud to friends	School 1	Pre	3	33.3%	5	55.5%	1	11.1%
		Post	0	0%	5	55.5%	4	44.4%
	School 2	Pre	3	18,75%	4	25,00%	9	56,25%
		Post	0	0%	5	31,25%	11	68,75%
27. Asking questions in class	School 1	Pre	4	44.4%	5	55.5%	0	0%
		Post	0	0%	4	44.4%	5	55.5%
	School 2	Pre	1	6,25%	2	12,50%	13	81,25%
		Post	1	6,25%	2	12,50%	13	81,25%
28. Talking with other players in the target language during a game	School 1	Pre	5	55.5%	3	33.3%	1	11.1%
		Post	2	22.2%	5	55.5%	2	22.2%
	School 2	Pre	4	25,00%	10	62,50%	2	12,50%
		Post	4	25,00%	6	37,50%	6	37,50%
29. Having good pronunciation	School 1	Pre	5	55.5%	4	44.4%	0	0%
		Post	1	11.1%	5	55.5%	3	33.3%
	School 2	Pre	6	37,50%	6	37,50%	4	25,00%
		Post	3	18,75%	6	37,50%	7	43,75%
30. Making a one or two minute speech	School 1	Pre	3	33.3%	6	66.6%	0	0%
		Post	0	0%	4	44.4%	5	55.5%
	School 2	Pre	4	25,00%	7	43,75%	4	25,00%
		Post	3	18,75%	9	56,25%	4	25,00%
31. Being the spokesperson in a group task	School 1	Pre	4	44.4%	4	44.4%	1	11.1%
		Post	1	11.1%	3	33.3%	5	55.5%
	School 2	Pre	4	25,00%	9	56,25%	3	18,75%
		Post	5	31,25%	7	43,75%	4	25,00%

Table 3.3 *Challenges Frequency and Percentage of Likert – Scale Items in Pre- and Post-*

Questionnaires

The highest difficulty in the Challenges category pointed out by the participants from School 2 before the implementation of the strategy was on the twenty-fourth item. In the pre-test, 43.75% of the participants considered speaking without thinking about our native language very difficult while 25% argued that it was not difficult at all. However, after implementing the strategy, the percentages changed and just 18.75% of the population considered this natural process as difficult and 43.75% as not difficult at all. In other words, CR discussions helped the students from School 2 to overcome this challenge.

The last category of the questionnaire was Interests. The results obtained from this tool to collect data allow us to prove our third hypothesis; CR discussions develop self-directed skills. One of the most relevant outcomes in this study was that 100% of participants from School 1 expressed in the post-questionnaire that they "really liked" making their own videos (see Table 3.4), and a significant majority expressed they really liked participating in group discussions. These results give evidence that media literacy has a constructive influential role in second language learning (Thoman, 2003). It was also supported by some of the comments students wrote in their journals such as: *"I'm no longer that nervous when saying expressions in English"* and *"Now, when I speak, I feel more natural and with no tension"* (see Table 2.1).

IV. INTERESTS		Time	REALLY		LIKE		DON'T LIKE	
			Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
32. Doing oral presentations		Pre	1	11.1%	4	44.4%	4	44.4%
	School 1	Post	5	55.5%	4	44.4%	0	0%
		Pre	2	12,50%	9	56,25%	5	31,25%
	School 2	Post	4	25,00%	9	56,25%	2	12.50%
33. Asking and answering questions orally		Pre	2	22.2%	7	77.7%	0	0%
	School 1	Post	4	44.4%	5	55.5%	0	0%
		Pre	5	31,25%	9	56,25%	2	12,50%
	School 2	Post	2	12,50%	11	68,75%	2	12,50%
34. Participating in debates		Pre	2	22.2%	5	55.5%	2	22.2%
	School 1	Post	4	44.4%	5	55.5%	0	0%
		Pre	5	31,25%	10	62,50%	1	6,25%
	School 2	Post	6	37.50%	7	43,75%	2	12.50%
35. Participating in group discussions		Pre	2	22.2%	5	55.5%	2	22.2%
	School 1	Post	7	77.7%	2	22.2%	0	0%
		Pre	4	25,00%	11	68,75%	1	6,25%
	School 2	Post	7	43,75%	6	37.50%	2	12.50%
36. Performing a role-play		Pre	6	666%	3	33.3%	0	0%
	School 1	Post	7	77.7%	2	22.2%	0	0%
		Pre	4	25,00%	10	62,50%	2	12,50%
	School 2	Post	4	25,00%	8	50,00%	3	18,75%
37. Making and answering interviews		Pre	3	33.3%	6	66.6%	0	0%
	School 1	Post	4	44.4%	5	55.5%	0	0%
		Pre	3	18,75%	9	56,25%	4	25,00%
	School 2	Post	4	25,00%	8	50,00%	3	18,75%
38. Singing		Pre	4	44.4%	3	33.3%	2	22.2%
	School 1	Post	3	33.3%	4	44.4%	2	22.2%
		Pre	9	56,25%	3	18,75%	4	25,00%
	School 2	Post	8	50,00%	4	25,00%	3	18.75%
39. Participating in oral dynamics or games		Pre	4	44.4%	5	55.5%	0	0%
	School 1	Post	6	66.6%	3	33.3%	0	0%
		Pre	11	68,75%	5	31,25%	0	0%
	School 2	Post	8	50,00%	6	37,50%	1	6.25%
40. Making your own videos		Pre	5	55.5%	4	44.4%	0	0%
	School 1	Post	9	100%	0	0	0	0%
		Pre	6	37,50%	4	25,00%	6	37,50%
	School 2	Post	4	25,00%	6	37,50%	5	31,25%

Table 3.4 *Interests Frequency and Percentage of Likert – Scale Items in Pre- and Post-Questionnaires*

On the contrary, the use of technology in the classroom did not make significant changes on the participants' attitudes from School 2. There, only 25% of the participants in the post-questionnaire stated that they "really liked" making their own videos and a third part of the population expressed that they "don't like" it. Based on the teacher researchers' journal, one of the reasons for this result is that students use technological devices every day; thus, this activity just brings extra work for them.

CR discussions provide learners with opportunities to use the target language for meaningful purposes and for developing self-directed skills such as self-confidence

Transcriptions of the videotaped CR discussions were used to objectively assess students' performance by considering the criterion and descriptors in the post-discussion rubrics. By following the "time series design" described by Nunan and Baily (2009), the researchers were able to compare each group's average scores in terms of pacing, smoothness, confidence and naturalness in the initial discussion, with their average scores in the final discussion. An accurate conceptual tool for giving an informative visual representation of this comparison is in the following frequency polygons:
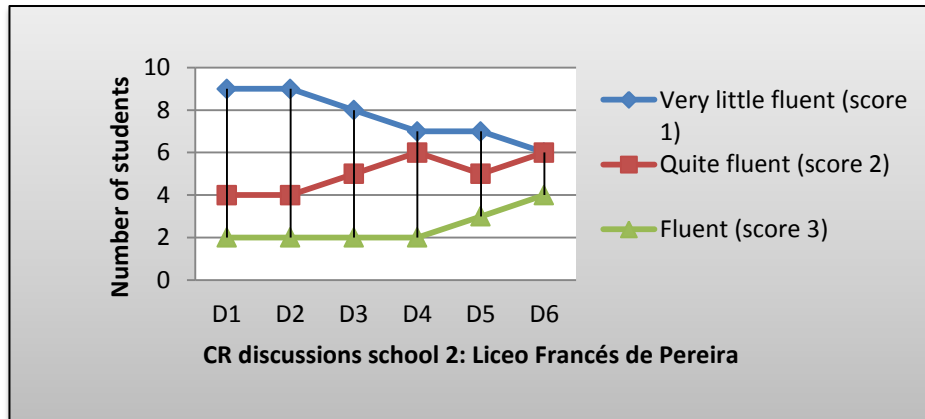

CR Discussions school 1: Institucion Educativa Altos del Rosario
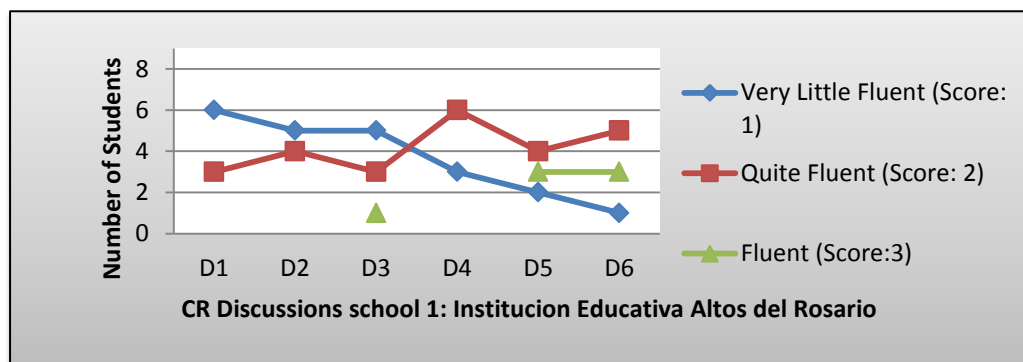
Figure 1.1 .*Frequency Polygons for Pacing.*

Regarding *pacing*, Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005) define fluency as 'the production of language in real time without undue pausing or hesitation' (p.139). In the first graph above, the School 1fluent line illustrates that there was some improvement of this aspect of oral fluency. 33% of participants got the highest scores when evaluating the goal referring to producing connected speech stated in the post-discussion rubric as a descriptor; similarly 25 % of students from School 2 were able to produce speech varying their speed to convey meaning. However, by observing the very little fluent line, we notice that the number of students from school 1 dropped from six in the first discussion to only one in the final discussion meanwhile in school 2 it dropped from 9 just to six. This indicates that in the second school, 40% of the students had

difficulties controlling long hesitations by the end of the study(see Figure 1.1).

CR Discussions School 1: Institucion Educativa Altos del Rosario

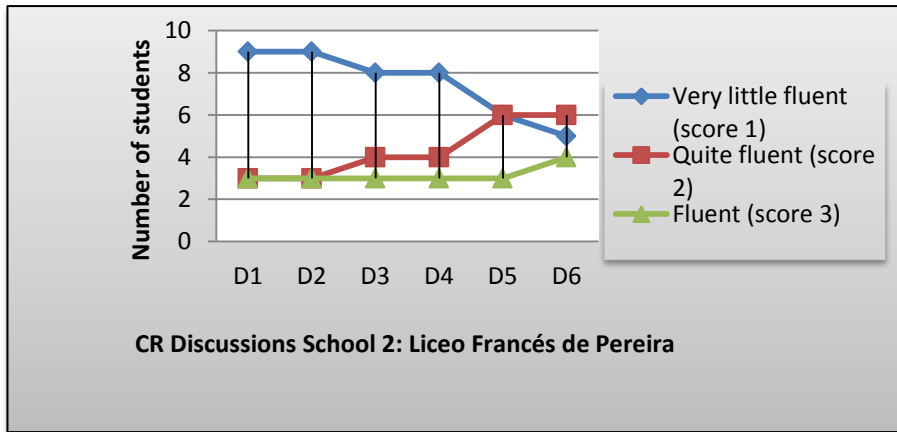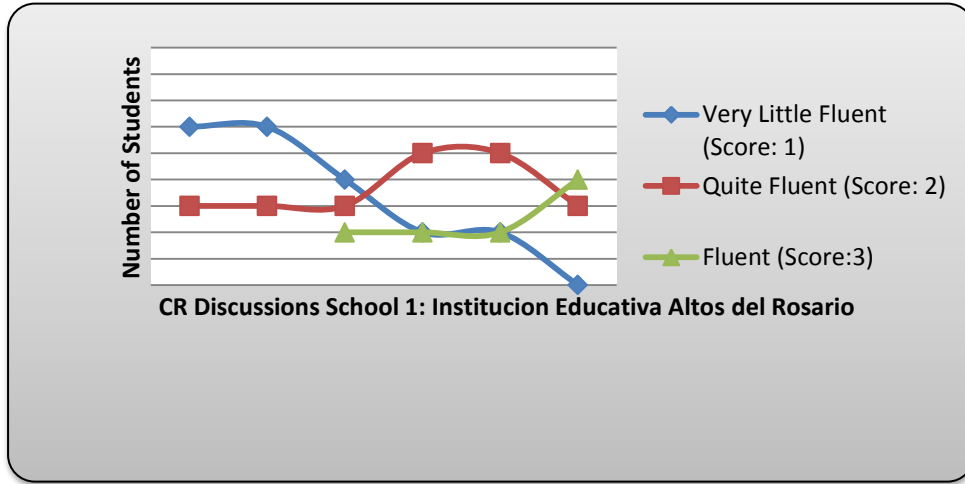CR Discussions School 2: Liceo Francés de Pereira

Figure 1.2 *Frequency Polygons for Smoothness*

The second graph shows that in School 1, 44% of the participants achieved the goal of speaking *smoothly,* similarly in School 2, 40% of the students were able to speak without repeating parts of words, words, or phrases. School 1 showed more improvement than School 2 because the quite fluent line of the first school gives evidence that 55% are in the process of

speaking with occasional breaks but self-correcting, and that only 1% of the population did not

improve in this aspect of fluency, and the results of the latter shows that 40% are progressing on

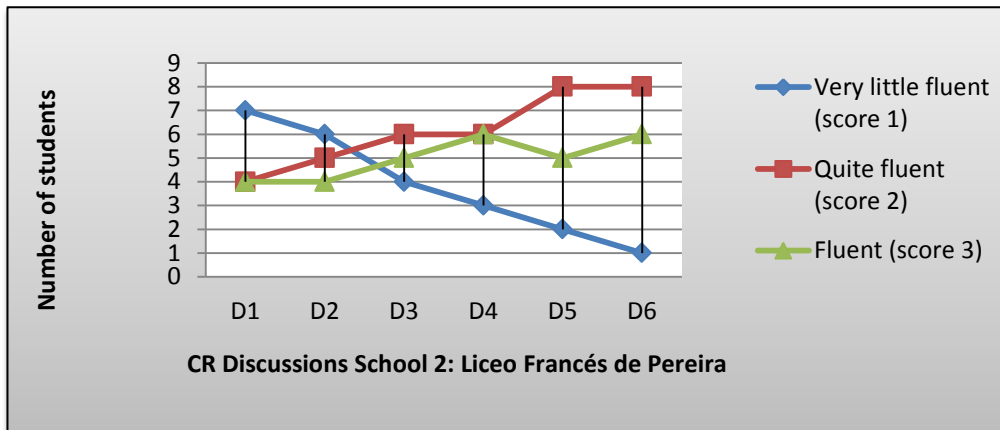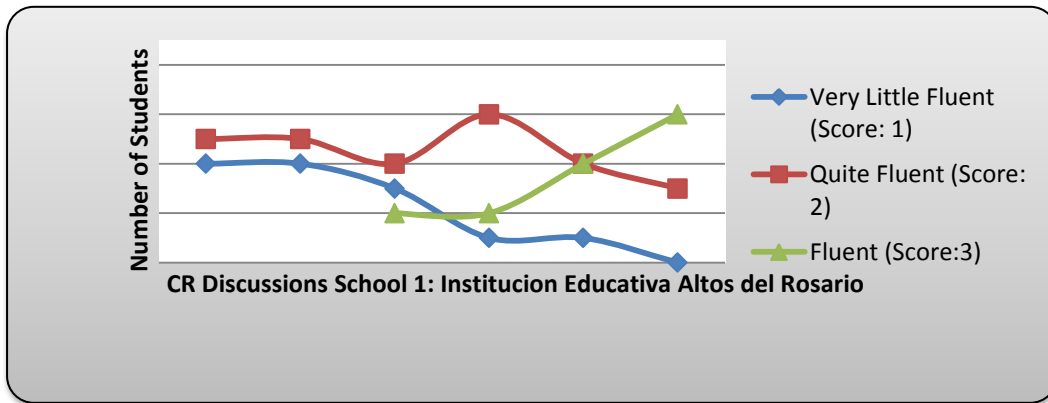this aspect and 33.3% did not advance at all (see Figure1.2).

CR Discussions School 1: Institucion Educativa Altos del Rosario

CR Discussions School 2: Liceo Francés de Pereira

Figure 1.3 *Frequency Polygons for Confidence*

The major positive outcomes correspond to the *confidence and naturalness.* In both

schools *confidence* when participating in oral tasks improved. In School 1, the "fluent" lines

show how the scores were higher after implementing the discussions (no student was scored as

fluent in the first discussion), which indicates that more than 50% of participants are now able to

speak more clearly and loudly, to make good use of body language to help express ideas and

feelings, and to vary tone to convey intended meanings or feelings. Moreover, the number of

participants in the "little" fluent category dropped to zero revealing that the initial limitation in

these two aspects of oral fluency was overcome at the end of the implementation of the strategy.

Similarly, the percentage of participants from School 2 who were considered little fluent on the

first discussion session decreased from 45.6 % to 6.6% indicating that at the end of the

interventions 95.4% of the students were more willing to speak up or perform in class (see

Figure1.3). This validates the hypothesis that carrying out CR discussions fosters a positive and

supportive atmosphere in the classroom, keep students' affective filter low and contribute to

effective learning. Learners feel that they are able to make mistakes and take risks, which benefits
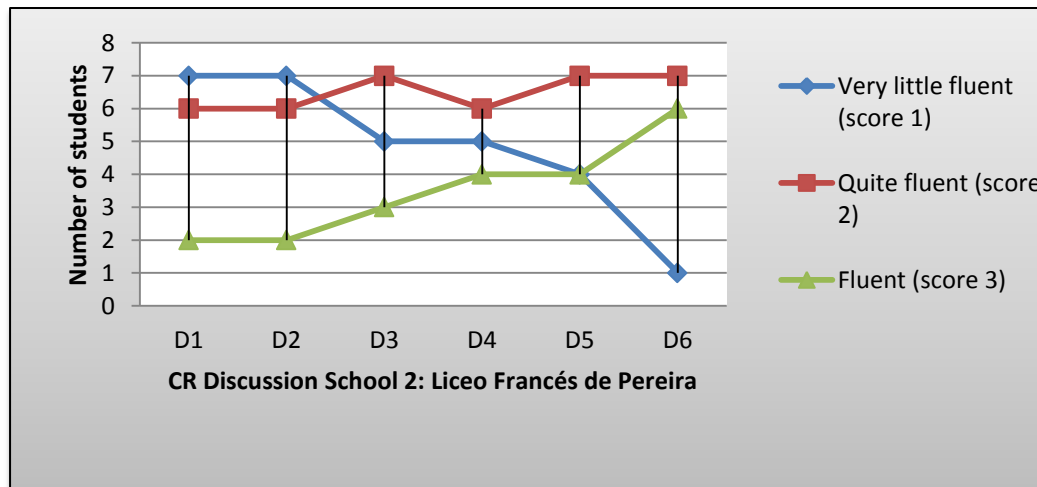
oral production.

CR Discussions School 1: Institucion Educativa Altos del Rosario
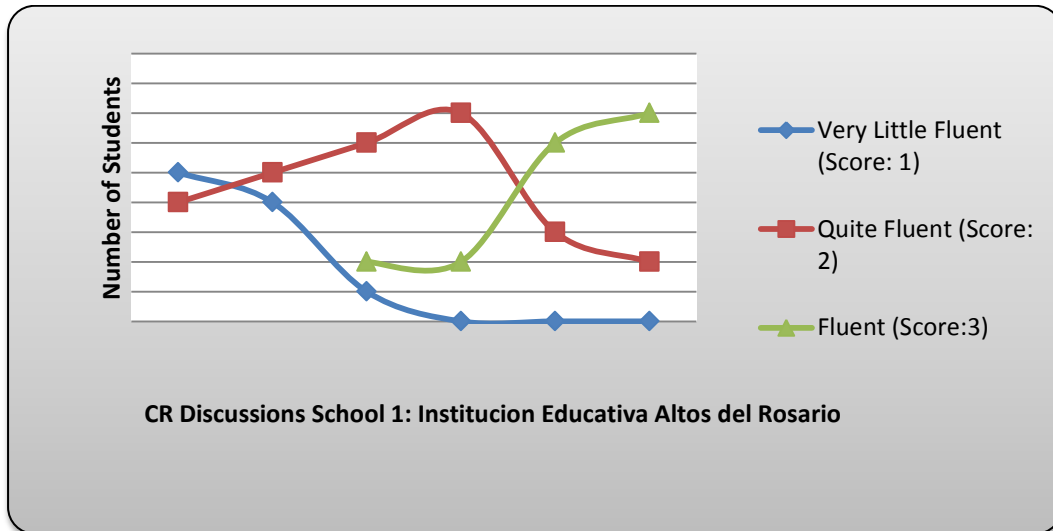
Figure 1.4 *Frequency Polygons for Naturalness*

The results of *naturalness (*see Figure 1.4) show that the implementation of CR discussions helped 55% and 46.6 % respectively of both schools' population to gain better use of gestures and facial expressions to convey meaning and intonation. This improvement can be seen by comparing the two "little fluent" lines which decreased completely from the first discussion to the last one.

These findings support the hypothesis that CR discussions help students to develop self-confidence. Providing students with useful expressions for participating in CR discussions, and allowing time for practice and acquisition was a useful strategy to reduce their initial anxiety and fear of making mistakes. Gregersen and Horwitz(2002) point out that those language students who experience anxiety "tend to sit passively in the classroom, withdraw from activities that could increase their language skills, and may even avoid class entirely" (pp. 562–563). Gaining

confidence motivates students to share and support their opinions when participating in discussions or in any other oral task. In fact, during the task, the researcher from School 1 noticed that the easiest expressions for the participants to say and recall were: *in my opinion*, *I agree* and *what do you think?* They used these expressions in all the subsequent discussions as seen in the transcripts. On the other hand, the most difficult expressions for them to say were: *let me suggest*, *what is your view?, a*nd *that's an exaggeration* (see Appendix Q).

Using technology in the classroom to videotape CR discussions develops collaborative and self-directed skills.

This section compiles the data gathered from the student's journals in both groups after participating in CR discussions, and watching themselves in the videos. Journals were analyzed following Strauss and Corbin's Axial Coding procedure (1998) to find and interpret categories and subcategories that emerged from the repeated patterns in their comments. The categories were chosen based on the constructs of this study: (1) self-directedness, (2) fluency, and (3) collaboration in language learning (see Tables 2.1 and 2.2). A total of thirty two codes were listed in a master list of codes, which were then grouped into sub-categories. This procedure was followed by a quantitative analysis which consisted of counting the occurrences of each code in students' journals and visually representing them in the following bar graph:
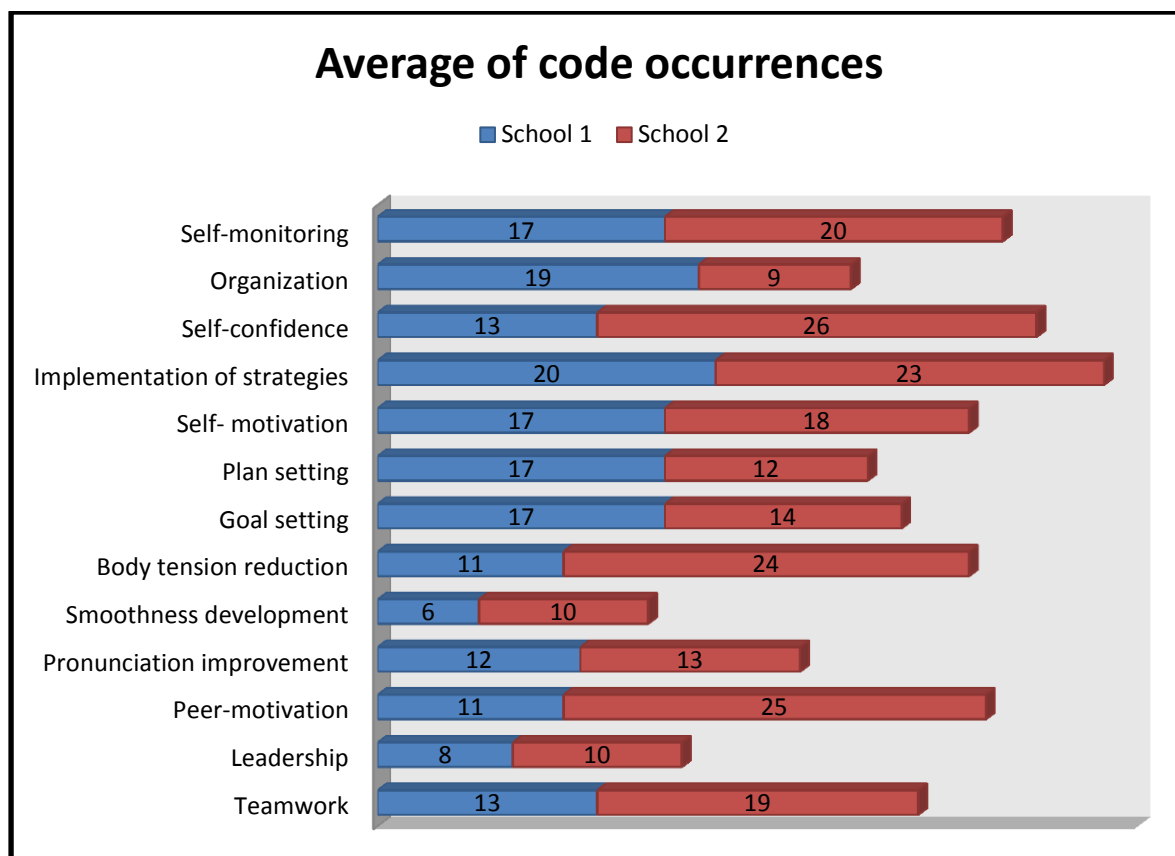
Average of code occurrences

Legend: School 1 ■ School 2

Category	School 1	School 2
Self-monitoring	17	20
Organization	19	9
Self-confidence	13	26
Implementation of strategies	20	23
Self- motivation	17	18
Plan setting	17	12
Goal setting	17	14
Body tension reduction	11	24
Smoothness development	6	10
Pronunciation improvement	12	13
Peer-motivation	11	25
Leadership	8	10
Teamwork	13	19

Figure 2.1.*Average Code occurrences in Journals' Reflections School 1and 2*

Students were deeply interested in writing reflections in their journals about their *self-directed skills*, which is the first category. Hence, seven subcategories resulted from this construct. Additionally, three subcategories emerged from the fluency category and three others from the collaborative work category (see Figure5).

After performing a descriptive analysis of the graph in terms of sub-categories, the results in both schools will be explained. The first category is **implementation of strategies** which was the highest score in School 1 (62.5%), and a relevant percentage (58%) in School 2. Some of the

strategies mentioned in the journals included listening to music, watching videos, using internet, looking words up in the dictionary, writing new words on a notebook and consulting video tutorials. The second subcategory is **organization** with 19 occurrences (54.3%) being the second most common in School 2 which arose from comments such as "*I distribute my activities placing my priorities on the top*" (see Table 2.1). In contrast, this subcategory had the lowest number of occurrences (9) in School 1. This can be evidenced in comments such as *"I study English less than the other subjects because it is not my priority"* (see Table 2.2).

Furthermore*, self-monitoring, self-motivation, plan-setting* and *goal-setting*, which belong to self-directed skills category, occurred 17 times in School 1.This category on School 2 had an irregular number of occurrences in the subcategories; for example, *self-monitoring* had 20 occurrences in students' journal while *plan-setting* had just 12. In their comments, students referred to their own goals for learning and even for their future projects such as becoming an English teacher or studying in the US, for instance. They also recognized the importance of motivating themselves in order to achieve those goals and monitoring their own strengths and weaknesses.

The subcategory *self-confidence* was evidenced 13 times (40.6%) in the participants' journals from School 1, and 26 times (68%) in the comments from the students in School 2 which was the highest percentage of occurrences in this context. Both results demonstrate that the strategy implemented had a positive impact in both groups of participants' oral confidence being higher in the private institution. This finding validates the data that was gathered in the post-

discussion rubric, in which a major number of participants got the highest score in speaking with confidence. The ***teamwork*** subcategory occurred 13 times (40.6%) in School 1 and 19 times (49%) in School 2 demonstrating that the participants enjoyed working collaboratively. Teamwork was also evidenced and noted in the researcher's journal:

"During today's discussion about bullying some students were assisting their weakest peers by helping them to say words they seemed to have forgotten. It positively allowed them to continue the ideas they were saying and encouraged them to be less afraid of making mistakes" (Researcher's Notes, Oct. 16th, 2012)

Alejandro:	I could act like the victim of the bully boys.
Fernanda:	yes, we can add some… closed… closed…
Valentina:	(supporting) captions?
Fernanda:	captions… mmm to the…
Veronica:	to the videos.
Fernanda:	to the videos. Exactly!

Figure 3.1. *Sample of researcher' journal*

The ***pronunciation improvement*** subcategory had12 occurrences (37.5%) in School 1 and 13 occurrences (28%) in School 2; these results emerged from students' comments after listening

to themselves in the videotaped discussions. The low percentage in School 1 might respond to the fact that the participants were classified in a basic level of English (A1), and it would not be realistic to expect dramatic improvement on pronunciation in such short time (8 interventions). On the contrary, the researcher of school 2 expected to have higher results on students' improvement taking into account that they had all the resources and material to learn. However, their comments on their journals highlight the fact that there are other subjects more important for them.

The results of **body tension reduction** and **peer-motivation** in School 1with 11 occurrences (34.3%) were lower than in School 2 where these two categories had some of the highest occurrences (25 and 24 respectively).These findings demonstrate that the participants from the French speaking school feel less fear to participate and give their opinions, and encourage their partners in this process. Some of their comments in the journals were: *"I don't feel fear to speak, I mean just in some cases" (S12) and "I tell my peers that making mistakes is normal" (S14)* (see Table 2.2).

Leadership with 8 occurrences (25%) and *smoothness development* with only 6 occurrences (18.7%) were the lowest subcategories in School 1. Similar results were found in School 2 where the number of occurrences (10) was equal in both aspects. This final result coincides with the one represented on Figure 1.1, which indicates that speaking smoothly is still a challenge for some participants in both schools.

The conclusions drawn after analyzing the data from students' journals support the hypothesis that the use of technology in the classroom to videotape CR Discussions develops some collaborative skills such as *teamwork* and *peer-motivation* and self-directed skills such as *implementation of strategies* and *organization* (see Figure 2.1).

Finally, in this research study, the researchers used two criteria from Herr and Anderson's (2005) five validity criteria for Action Research. *Outcome validity* is considered the extent to which action occurs that leads to a resolution of the problem in the study. It was found in the results since the participants moved towards a successful action outcome. *Catalytic validity* is the degree in which the researchers and stakeholders have moved towards a better understanding of the research setting. Thus, this validity was given to the analysis because both the researchers and the students learnt from each other and from reflecting on the problem domain.

In brief, this research employed a quantitative approach in order to analyze the data gather from the instruments. The pre-and post-questionnaires were analyzed using statistics; the axial-coding method emerged from the students' journals; and a quantitative analysis was drawn from the descriptive statistics of the post-discussion rubrics, using a triangulation method in which the researchers were constantly comparing the results from the different data collection instruments. Thus, there is sufficient evidence to substantiate the claims based on the results.

Chapter Six: Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

Conclusions

This study was conducted with two groups of learners of English as a Foreign Language who studied at different schools to find the effects of videotaped collaborative reasoning (CR) discussions to develop English fluency and self-directed skills. As described in Chapter 2, the research question of the study is *Does the implementation of videotaped collaborative reasoning discussions develop oral fluency and foster self-directedness in ninth graders at Altos del Rosario School and tenth graders at Liceo Francés de Pereira*

The first hypothesis, videotaping CR discussions develops oral fluency, was tested using a pre- and post- questionnaire. After comparing both tests, the researchers found that in both schools have improvements on different aspects of oral fluency. The difference in frequency and percentages shown in table 3.2 demonstrate that at the end of the interventions stage only one student from School 1 did not participate in CR discussions. Students were motivated to take part in the discussions. Similarly, the participants from School 2 had a major improvement on the eleventh item of oral fluency. At the end of the intervention stage 37.50 % of students acted in a manner intended to be out of the conversation or discussion. However, 62.50% of the students put on acting being able to adopt an attitude of confidence or to pretend to be angry.

Mercier (2010) stated in his paper, "reasoning cannot be expected to find the best arguments from the start… reasoning evolves to help us find and evaluate reasons in argumentative contexts… a failure at the first attempt is nearly costless" (p.181). Therefore,

students might need more than a few CR discussions to find and evaluate arguments that allow them to have active participation in the discussions and develop their oral fluency. Some students did not participate enough to show improvement in their fluency. Becoming fluent in a foreign language involves a process of motivation and self-confidence; some students may remain reluctant to speak until they feel comfortable with the group or with the topic of discussion even with the help provided by teachers. The teachers had decided to maintain a low-pressure atmosphere, so some students whose personalities were shy and introverted participated when they felt confident enough to do so.

CR discussions provide learners with opportunities to use the target language for meaningful purposes and for developing self-directed skills such as self-confidence. This hypothesis was confirmed with the results shown in Figure 1.3, in which both groups of participants demonstrated major positive outcomes corresponding to the *confidence and naturalness.* At the end of the implementation stage, more than 50% of participants from School 1 and 95.4% of participants from School 2 were able to speak more clearly and loudly, to make good use of body language to help express ideas and feelings, and to vary tone to convey intended meanings or feelings. Self-confidence was one aspect pointed out by students in their needs at the beginning of the study.

Moreover, the findings show that both groups of students enjoyed collaborative reasoning discussions, and that the strategy was useful to promote peer support and peer motivation. The researchers observed that as CR discussions were carried out, the students' motivation and

commitment to participate increased. Therefore, the implementation of CR discussions leads students to generate more ideas to express themselves in the class and have a more comfortable and relax environment in the classroom. This is similar to the outcome in Sachs, Candlin and Rose's (2003) study in which after implementing some collaborative tasks to promote oral proficiency, the low English level students showed a significant improvement in both their oral fluency and their level of motivation.

The study also indicates that videotaped discussions were very useful tools for students to self-assess their language performance. In addition, most of the students viewed videotaping CR discussions as a positive and interesting way to improve their language and self-directed skills because it allows them not only to interact with their peers, but also self-evaluate their progress and increase their self-confidence and motivation.

The results from the analysis of students' journals helped the researcher to confirm the last hypothesis: using technology in the classroom to videotape CR discussions develops collaborative and self-directed skills. The **implementation of strategies,** which is a self-directed skill, obtained high scores on both schools, (62.5%) in School 1, and (58%) in School 2 (see Figure 2.1). Some of the strategies mentioned in the journals included watching videos, using internet, looking words up in the dictionary, writing new words on a notebook and consulting video tutorials. These strategies were used during the implementation stage. In addition, videotaping CR discussions also develop some collaborative skills such as *teamwork* and *peer-*

motivation and self-directed skills such as *implementation of strategies* and *organization*(see Figure 2).

The implementation of projects using technology in the classroom had more positive impact on the public school students than in the private school ones. This might be attributed to the fact that in School 2 students are surrounded by technological devices and they do not prioritize English, so they may see these kinds of tasks as normal and time consuming.

On the contrary, because using a computer and video camera to record themselves is an innovative and enjoyable practice that they don't do often, 100% of the participants from the public school liked this activity by the end of the study. The participants became more confident after the pedagogical interventions, which is consistent with Brooke's (2003) notion that students working in video production to develop an oral task experience less anxiety and with Osman, Nayan, Mansor, Maesin, and Shafie's (2010) findings that students are more confident about participating in group discussions after completing collaborative learning activities in the classroom.

From these results, it can be concluded that the use of videotaped collaborative reasoning discussions is a more successful strategy to foster self-directedness as well as to improve oral fluency in A1 level EFL learners from public schools than in B1-B2 level EFL students from private institutions. Even though these participants had a very basic level of English, (A1), they were not only able to share and support their opinions, but also to monitor their own learning process and use strategies to improve each time they faced the challenge of speaking English.

This is in accordance with the outcome in Kidder's study (2009), where he stated: "This technique is useful because it encourages students to build on the ideas of their classmates and to explore ideas collectively."

Pedagogical implication

Providing students with the best opportunities to develop skills for success in life and become active global citizens has been the researchers' main goal as teachers. It is also the researchers' belief that students will reach their full potential in acquiring English as a Foreign Language by developing a variety of tasks aimed to promote values and critical thinking. This belief has been enriched by observing the participants, reading their reflections and gathering direct feedback from them.

In this study, reviewing videotaped discussions allowed the researchers not only to evaluate the students' oral performance in terms of fluency, but also to reflect on their own teaching practices, to meet students' needs, and to find ways to improve their role as facilitators.

An unexpected discovery was realizing that the researchers in their role of teachers used to control or take extended participation in oral tasks aimed to promote students' oral interaction, which did not have as positive effects as expected on students' speaking skills. Similarly, students' interests and likes were not taken into account when planning oral activities. Thus, teachers must plan effective oral tasks with minimum teacher participation, involve learners in the goal setting and development for such tasks, use media as a supportive tool in the classroom

with limited or extensive resources, and provide learners with elements that help them be confident enough to be engaged with the task.

Limitations

One limitation to the study is that the number of participants was low. For example, the nine students from School 1 constitute only 20% of the total population of ninth graders in a public school classroom. The researchers wondered if the strategy would have the same effect in an average group of 40 students or if it can only be implemented to small groups.

Additionally, the interventions were interrupted on several occasions because both researchers had to cope with other school requirements. For instance, in School 1 the sessions were interrupted in October, 2012 and taken up again in February, 2013 with the same participants. The participants voluntarily agreed on spending some time out of the school classes to carry out the planned tasks in a different calendar. Fortunately, this did not affect the results since the students were very motivated with the progress they realized they were experiencing. In the private school, the researcher had to postpone different interventions due to exams that tenth graders take during the school year as a preparation process for the Baccalaureate examination.

Another limitation was the length of class sessions. Because a good topic for discussion encourages students to participate, occasionally the time of the intervention was too short to finish with the discussion. Thus, some students who wanted to participate more times could not do it because of time limit. From this emerges another new hypothesis, CR discussions would

have a more positive impact on students fluency and self-directed skills if implemented during longer sessions.

Another limitation that researchers found was the topics to be discussed. The lack of oral fluency improvement in some results could be due to the limited participation from those who might have considered the topics boring. However, this problem could be addressed, if students are motivated to participate.

Finally, the restricted access to the computer lab or the technological resources such as video projector, laptops and webcams, existing at a public school could have been considered as a limitation. However, based on the results, the researchers shared the idea that to study in a private school with excellent tools, materials and resources do not assure English learning. A classroom with outstanding resources and conditions is not the most important element for success in L2 learning; there must be students' willingness and dedication to learn the language. It is the teacher responsibility to create the perfect atmosphere for learning, and the students' commitment to cope with the process.

Further research

Finally, further research is suggested to study the impact that CR discussions have on B1-B2learners who prioritize English or are learning English outside the school. Additional research could be also conducted to examine the effectiveness of videotaping other oral tasks such as presentations, games, to develop fluency as well as to examine the effect of videotaping and video production on improving the other language skills. Future research should be done to

determine if more implementations over a longer period of time and without interruptions increase fluency in a larger percentage of participants. Finally, the researchers suggest further research on the CR discussion on topics selected by students themselves in order to improve their oral fluency in English.

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