

Affective learning:

socio- affective competences
to enable foreign
languages learning¹



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Hernando Prada
Elba Consuelo León Mora

ABSTRACT

This article describes an action research carried out by analyzing the affective learning and how it influences the learning process of English foreign language in a group of tenth grade students at a public school in Bogotá, while helping them to improve their oral production in English. The research study follows Cohen and Manion model (2011) which contains the identification of the problem in a real context, planning, action, observation, and reflection in a continuous and cyclical process that allows the transformation of the reality as well as the context where the research took place.

The research focused on the role that socio-affective competences play when learning a foreign language: feelings, emotions, and attitudes were observed in detailed. According to different authors: Brown (2000), Yashima (2004), among others, the way we deal emotionally with different situations shows our self-confidence, which is considered one of the most influential variables that positively affect foreign language learning, and is especially related to the lack (or not) of fluency, freedom, and willingness to participate in oral activities in students of EFL. In this study, the legitimacy of these statements was proven to be right since an increase in the oral production of the participants was observed after the research was applied.

KEY WORDS

Socio-affective competences – English foreign language learning (EFL), self-confidence, and oral production.

APPRENTISSAGE AFFECTIF : COMPÉTENCES SOCIO-AFFECTIVES POUR FACILITER L'APPRENTISSAGE DES LANGUES ÉTRANGÈRES

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article décrit une recherche-action autour de l'apprentissage affectif pour l'apprentissage des

langues étrangères dans un groupe de dixième degré d'un lycée public à Bogotá, où son influence s'est avérée utile pour améliorer l'expression orale des étudiants en anglais. La recherche a suivi le modèle de Cohen et Manion (2011), qui propose des étapes telles que : l'identification d'une problématique dans un contexte réel, suivie de la planification, l'observation et la réflexion, dans un processus cyclique et continu permettant la transformation de la réalité et son contexte, où la recherche a lieu.

L'étude s'est centrée spécialement sur le rôle joué par les compétences socio-affectives impliquant des sentiments, des émotions et des attitudes, dans l'apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère. Selon des auteurs tels que Brown (2000), Yashima (2004), entre autres, la façon dont on gère émotionnellement les différentes situations fait preuve de confiance en soi, celle-ci étant considérée comme l'une des variables les plus influentes qui touchent positivement l'apprentissage des langues ; est aussi associée au manque d'aisance, à la liberté et la volonté pour participer à des activités d'expression orale. Comme résultat de cette étude, on a constaté une augmentation de l'expression orale des étudiants après l'intervention.

MOTS CLÉ :

Compétences socio-affectives, apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère, confiance en soi, expression orale.

APRENDIZAJE AFECTIVO: LAS COMPETENCIAS SOCIO AFECTIVAS PARA FACILITAR EL APRENDIZAJE DE IDIOMAS EXTRANJEROS

RESUMEN

Este artículo describe una investigación acción que giró en torno al aprendizaje afectivo y su influencia en el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera en un grupo de alumnos de décimo grado de un colegio Distrital de Bogotá ayudándoles así a mejorar su producción oral en inglés. La investigación siguió el

¹ Hernando Prada M.A. in Education with Emphasis in Didactic of the Foreign Languages, Universidad Libre, Bogotá (Colombia) - B.A. in Spanish English, Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Bogotá (Colombia). English Teacher at SED Bogotá. English Instructor at Cleul- Universidad Libre, Bogotá. Correo electrónico: hernando.pradaa@unilibre.edu.co

² Elba Consuelo León Mora M.A. in Applied Linguistics Universidad Distrital- B.A. in Philology and Languages, Universidad INCCA. Professor at Universidad Libre, Faculty of Education, Bogotá, Colombia. Orcid: 0000-0003-0361-1053 Correo electrónico: elba.leon@unilibre.edu.co
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modelo de Cohen y Manion (2011) el cual desarrolla los pasos de: identificación de un problema en un contexto real, planeamiento, acción, observación, reflexión en un proceso cíclico y continuo que permite la transformación de la realidad y su contexto en el que tiene lugar la investigación.

El estudio se centró especialmente en el papel que desempeñan las competencias socioafectivas en el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera, competencias que involucran sentimientos, emociones y actitudes. De acuerdo con diversos autores: Brown (2000), Yashima (2004) entre otros; la forma en que lidiamos emocionalmente con las diferentes situaciones muestra nuestra autoconfianza, la cual se considera una de las variables más influyentes que afectan de forma positiva el aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros, así como también está relacionada con la falta de fluidez, libertad y voluntad para participar en actividades orales por parte de los estudiantes. Como resultado de este estudio, se evidenció que después de aplicada la propuesta se observó un incremento en la producción oral de dichos estudiantes.

PALABRAS CLAVES:

Competencias socioafectivas, aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL), autoconfianza y producción oral.

INTRODUCTION

A significant and common aspect in almost all English Colombian students at public schools is the great difficulty they have to express themselves, accomplish oral tasks, and interact with other students and the teacher in the class by using EFL. This can be seen, for example, in the public school in Bogotá where this research was carried out. In there, school regulations stated that tenth grade students had to participate in conversations where they could explain their opinions and ideas about general, personal, and abstract topics, and that their speeches when interacting with others had to be simple and coherent.

To demonstrate their competences, students must spontaneously participate in conversations about their interests, using previous knowledge and clear and simple language, and most importantly, doing oral presentations about the topics included in the school curriculum. Despite the requirements, those standards and competences had not been reached by the students.

When I started teaching teenagers at this school, I realized that some of my students were not really motivated to learn a foreign language, thus, they attended the class only for academic requirements. Besides that, some other students were not confident at the time to speak in English or develop an oral activity in class, others did not even dare to do it. At that point, it was clear the need to increase the socio-affective competences which seemed to be negatively affecting students when learning a foreign language.

As a consequence, and in order to know more about students' lack of confidence when trying to speak in English, a qualitative research study was developed with 10th grade students at this public school in Bogotá, Colombia, to promote students' English oral production through the increasing of their self-confidence. The aim of the research was to positively enhance the English classes by creating an environment which would instill confidence in the students.

Students at school generally have a good disposition and interest in learning different subjects, however, this is not the case when learning a foreign language. It can be because they do not realize about its importance for their future personal and professional life, or because they find it difficult to learn and use in their daily basis. During the English learning process at the school, while some tenth-grade students try to interact orally with other classmates and teachers, others have great difficulty while expressing themselves or simply cannot do it. Some of the students who took part in this research study, had great difficulties with grammar structures at the time to speak and most of their sentences were fractured and rendered by words rather than structures, as a result, they gave up not only because of their syntax issues but also due to their shyness, lack of motivation and low confidence, among other reasons.

In this regard, Horwitz (1986) states that "Anxious students may avoid studying and in some cases skip class entirely in an effort to alleviate their anxiety." (p. 127), such demotivation would probably make 10th grade students give up easily when, according to Horwitz, they have to: 1) face situations when they do not feel confident enough, or 2) solve tasks they find difficult in the English class. That "anxious student is also inhibited when attempting to utilize any second language fluency he or she has managed to acquire." (1986, p. 127). Communication makes the progress and development of the human being possible,

seeing it as an essential part of his/her nature. Hence, when communication is in the social and academic sphere, it has a great influence in the formation of the student's self-concept. As a consequence, when the EFL process is not properly developed, due to different reasons like the lack of interest or discipline, interruptions or disrespect, it may cause problems in the development of activities in the class making the students' learning more difficult.

In order to contextualize the reader, the tenth grade students group we refer to in this paper, belonged to a public school in Bogotá, Colombia, where the number of students per group range from 35 to 40 students, attending to 3 hour EFL class per week. Students' oral production, at the beginning of the research showed simple phrases and sentences use to briefly describe where they lived, their families and hobbies, placing them barely in an A1 proficiency level according to the Common European Framework for Foreign languages (CEFL). Furthermore, we noticed that students did not have EFL physical textbooks to use in class, but rather worksheets prepared (designed/adapted) by the teacher, as well as internet access and audiovisual resources to work with.

To learn more about the reason why of students' lack of oral performance and fluency, a Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM) (see appendix 1) and a "Speaking Rubric for fluency (see appendix 2) were used to evaluate and monitor the students' EFL oral proficiency. The SOLOM check list gave the researcher an insight in terms of oral production and the level of all the students in this competence, since it includes aspects like comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar.

The matrix was applied to the whole group of 35 students, but we chose a sample of seven random students (four girls and three boys) to analyze the data, focusing specially on their speaking fluency. Some of these students had studied in the school for more than 4 years and others came from other schools where they affirmed, did not have to participate in oral presentations (or oral projects) to the point they did not even use the English language to communicate or interact with others. In fact, they had just been attending classes where only grammar, writing, and reading aspects were considered.

The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 on the SOLOM determine the value of each scored checked. Based on the



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observation to the students, each category indicates: (A) comprehension, (B) fluency, (C) vocabulary, (D) pronunciation, and (E) grammar), thus describing the student's abilities. As an example, we can state that students who score a level 1 in all categories do not have proficiency in the language. The scores for individual domains can be considered, or they can be combined into a total score with a range of five through 25, where approximately 5 can represent Pre-Production - 6 to 10 is Early Production - 11 to 15 is Speech Emergence - 16 to 20 is Intermediate Fluency and 21 to 25 would be Advanced Fluency. Once the characteristics of SOLOM Matrix are understood, we would like to share some of our findings when analyzing the obtained data from our students' production:

Student 1. Fluency is usually hesitant and forced into silence by language limitations (2), It is difficult to comprehend what the speaker says, it is difficult to follow what it is said. He/she can comprehend only social conversations with frequent repetitions (2). The student makes frequent mistakes in grammar and word order (1) He/she has pronunciation problems (3) Vocabulary limitations (1). SOLOM score= 8 (Early production).

Student 2. Comprehension: The student cannot understand simple conversations (1). Fluency: Speech is very halting and fragmentary (1). Vocabulary: Limitations in vocabulary are severe (1). Pronunciation: The student has utmost pronunciation problems, conversation is virtually impossible (1). High number of errors in grammar and word order (1). SOLOM score= 5 (Pre- production).

Student 3. Comprehension: the student understands most of what is said at slower than normal speed (3). In fluency, the student usually hesitates, often forces him/herself into silence by language limitations (2). In vocabulary, he/she misuses words and has limited vocabulary (2); It is very hard to understand the utterances because of pronunciation problems (2). In grammar, he/she makes frequent errors which occasionally obscure meaning (3). SOLOM score= 12 (Speech emergence).

Student 4. Comprehension: the student cannot understand simple conversation contents (1). Fluency: speech is halting and fragmentary (1). Vocabulary: limitations are extreme (1). The student has pronunciation problems, conversation is virtually

impossible (1). Errors in grammar and word order are severe (1). SOLOM score= 5 (Pre-production).

Students 5. Fluency is usually hesitant and forced into silence by language limitations (2), Comprehension is difficult, the student can comprehend only social conversations with frequent repetitions (2). The student makes frequent errors in grammar and word order (1). Pronunciation problems require concentration from the listener (3). Vocabulary limitations (1). SOLOM score= 8 (Early production).

Student 6. Comprehension: the student understands most of what is said at a slower pace from normal speed (3). In fluency: the student usually hesitates, often forces him/herself into silence by language limitations (2). In vocabulary, he/she misuses words and portrays limited vocabulary (2); it is very hard to understand what is uttered because pronunciation problems (2). In grammar, the student makes frequent errors which occasionally obscure meaning (3). SOLOM score= 12 (Speech emergence).

Student 7. Comprehension: the student cannot

understand even a simple conversation (1). Fluency: Speech is halting and fragmentary (1). Vocabulary: limitations in vocabulary are extreme as to make conversation virtually impossible (1). The student has severe pronunciation problems, conversation is virtually impossible (1). Errors in grammar and word order are (1). SOLOM score= 5 (Pre-production).

In order to contextualize the previous analysis, we applied the speaking rubric to rate the learners' speaking competence in oral fluency, where it is clearly seen that there was an evident lack of students' oral production in terms of vocabulary, grammatical errors, better communication, as well as interaction. According to the graphic (see fig. 1) Students 1, 2, 4 and 5 used very basic vocabulary and expressions, they hesitated too much when speaking and had a lot of problems with pronunciation and intonation. Students usually did not respond appropriately or clearly. Students 3, 6 and 7 used limited vocabulary and expressions, they spoke with hesitation which often interfered with the communication exchange. Even though, they tried to communicate and interact, they did not respond clearly enough.

**FIGURE 1
SPEAKING RUBRIC FOR FLUENCY ACTIVITIES. – INITIAL RUBRIC**

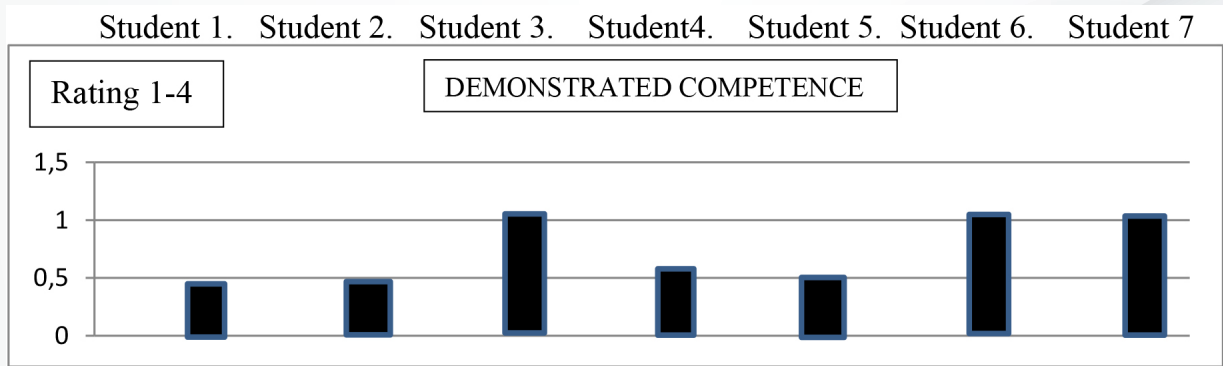


Figure 1 Results from: Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners. O'Malley and Valdez Pierce (2005).

The above information showed that the learners' prior experience in speaking English was very limited. These students have been attending, mainly, to teacher centered classes where they have just received grammar content along with the corresponding set of rules, there was very little exposure to listening and speaking practice. Apart from that, tenth grade students seemed to be really nervous and insecure, they constantly said that they were not good at

speaking, that it was too difficult for them and that they forgot everything when they faced situations where speaking was required.

In order to know more about the English class and tenth grade students' self-confidence level and to confirm how the low confidence in some of them could possibly affect their oral production and willingness to participate in the speaking activities proposed

throughout the school year, we used an interview to the students at the beginning of the study to collect more data. . (See appendix 3)

Three aspects were considered during the interview to know the students' perception together with what they wanted to get from their English class and how they felt towards it. Summarizing some of their answers we may conclude that:

1) Oral participation in the English class: Most of the students recognized that a space to practice speaking is given in class. They also had had enough repetition drills to improve pronunciation, they also thought that the way classes were oriented, reinforced their communication competence.

2) Cognitive domain: Students agreed on having a lot of rote drills, repetitions, grammar rules and practicing vocabulary through metaphor, analogies, contrast and matching exercises along with the way they help them to improve and enhance their communication ability. Only two students claimed the need for more dialogues to interact with others.

3) Self-confidence: Mostly all the students agreed they need more reinforcement and assistance to overcome their fear and insecurity at the time of participating in the communicative activities. They said they feel ashamed, inhibited, and intimidated when having to develop oral activities in the English class; even though they have good preparation, it is because their peers might make fun of them as a result, they said they felt better when being allowed to present their work in groups.

There was also a concern on the importance of having teacher's support and assistance, and how well students felt when receiving such help from teachers and other students. According to them, this interactive assistance boosted their self-esteem, strengthened their oral production and encouraged to strive and do a good job.

In the revision of previous studies at a national level, we found some research that have being developed and that aim to analyze the affective competences in EFL learning, as stated by Prada (2015, 21):

- Zapata (2007) conducted a case study with first semester students in an English language teaching program in Colombia. Findings revealed that anxiety is one of the factors affecting students' oral

participation and is caused by internal (self-esteem, motivation, introversion and extroversion, lack of vocabulary, beliefs, ability to take risk), and external factors (methodology and interaction). The findings concluded that anxiety affects oral competences of language students.

- Mendoza (2007) conducted a case study in a public high school with 6th grade students who showed symptoms of anxiety in specific situations as conversations, role plays and oral participation or any other speaking activity. Findings showed that students felt anxiety and nervousness during oral activity participation.
- Castrillon (2010) found that there are different learners' factors that may influence participation in a classroom such as unwillingness to participate and fear of making mistakes in front of their classmates.
- Urrutia and Vega (2010) found that oral participation of foreign language learners was affected by their lack of vocabulary, shyness, and fear of being humiliated. Also, this study showed that students' cooperation, involvement, self-confidence, knowledge of vocabulary, and the class environment motivated them to improve their speaking abilities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework covered two main aspects: EFL students' oral production in terms of fluency, the use of socio-affective competences and the student's self-confidence, which is a personal factor that plays an important role in the achievement of EFL learning. Learning a foreign language can be either a fascinating and challenging experience or a very traumatic one.

This process involves a great range of variables such as neurological, psychological, cognitive and affective aspects which must be considered when teaching teenagers, like in our case. Brown (2000) stated that the affective domain is the emotional side of human behavior and involves a variety of personality aspects such as motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence. Foreign language learners cannot speak the language or express themselves freely and fluently without some degree of self-confidence as Brown (1994) affirmed.

The above information made the researchers decide to work on improving 10th graders oral skills, their motivation and confidence. Besides, it is important

to consider what Yashima et al. (2004) cited by Prada (2015) affirmed “the practice of different oral communicative activities and the enhancement of self-confidence are essential factors that determine learners’ willingness to participate in oral activities in class.” (p. 141) What is clear is that where there is self-confidence and motivation there is a chance to increase oral communication.

As it can be seen in Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) not only the cognitive domain (knowing, or head), but also the affective domain (emotions, feelings, or heart) must be considered in language learning education. Consequently, EFL school teachers can increase their effectiveness by considering the affective domain while planning their lessons, giving lectures, developing class activities and/or assessing student’s learning.

Additionally, Dornyei (2005) pointed out that “students lack of confidence is a sensitive area in primary/secondary school learning because students are in the developmental age and doubts and worries about oneself are more common feelings than confidence or

pride, those feelings emerge from the accumulation of inter and intrapersonal experiences.” (p.87). In the case of our research participants, the development age ranged from 6 to 12 years old. During this period of time the language skills of children continue growing and many behavioral changes occur as they try to find their place among their peers, especially when they are learning a foreign language.

In a foreign Language class, students with lack of confidence do not participate successfully in oral activities that require interaction while presenting information; they tend to remain silence while others take the center stage, in such case, teachers should help them to develop their speaking ability in many ways, for example, by asking them to be aware of the scripts for different situations, so that they can predict what they will hear and what they will need to reply.

In relation with that, Brown (1996) pointed out that “teachers can use six approaches that will promote fluency: a) encourage students to go ahead and make constructive errors, b) create many opportunities for students to practice, c) create activities that force



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students to focus on getting a message across, d) assess students' fluency not their accuracy, and e) talk openly to the students about fluency." (p. 32)

Furthermore, Arnold (2011) refers that "there is a strong relationship between competence and confidence, developing greater competence leads to more confidence but also having confidence makes it easier to acquire greater competence". (p.12) Students with low self-esteem are excessively fearful and timid, as a consequence, they are unable to make decisions concerning the development of activities and group work, they expect failure and are reluctant to express opinions. Those, among other reasons, make the affective domain more difficult to assess than the cognitive one, that is because it is related to judgment and changes in feelings, interests, and values (caring), as Burwash & Snover (2016) remarks.

Hence, effective teachers must motivate, understand and involve students and as Pattavina (1981) affirmed, "they need to: a. establish the affective climate of the class, b. Manage conflicts and crisis, and c. Use positive classroom management practice." (p 142) It is interesting to see how these actions encourage

students to take part in speaking activities where they have to interact orally with others, be part of a group discussion, or while watching a video, all in a friendly atmosphere and without the pressure, be evaluated or judged.

In general, the speaking ability includes three areas of language: 1) Mechanics (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary); using the right words in the right order with the correct pronunciation, 2) Functions: transaction or information exchange and, interaction or building relationships: knowing when clarity of the message is essential, and 3) Social and cultural rules and norms (turn- taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers), understanding how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what and for what reason (Stovall, 1998).

Authors like Skehan (1996 and 1998), Bygate (2001), Fortkamp (2000) and D'ely (2004, 2006) agreed that mastering a foreign language involves speaking it with complexity, fluency, and accuracy. From the three aspects previously considered, fluency is specially studied in this project, as this is the skill our research



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subjects needed more. We supported our investigation in this regard on theorists like Bygate (2001) who stated that “it is unlikely that a single task (or even a short series of tasks) will result in measurable changes in general language skill (e.g., fluency)” (p.23) as well as, Ellis (2003) describes fluency as “the extent to which the language produced in performing a task manifests pausing, hesitation, or reformulation.” (p 342) In the same direction, Skehan (1996) affirmed that “the speaking fluency pertains to the ability to produce the spoken language without undue pausing or hesitations.” (p 22).

In this research we found Essberger’s strategies (2004) on oral presentations very useful, henceforth, we adapted them to implement oral projects in the classroom to encourage students to practice their English speaking skill while producing oral content spontaneously. According to this author, oral presentations have the following advantages:

- Give the presenting student a good opportunity to practice unaided speaking
- Give the other students good listening practice
- Increase student’s confidence when using English. It can be a good practice for students to speak in English to develop abilities for their future professional lives (p. 38).

Such advantages were used in this research as a way to encourage students to speak and feel comfortable while doing so.

METHODOLOGY

The relation between self-confidence and foreign language oral production was evident in tenth grade students at a public school in Bogotá through the initial speaking rubric for fluency activities in oral projects 1 and 2, and the language plus testing set.

A pedagogical proposal that included a number of oral projects presentation and lesson plans, was designed, applied, and evaluated in order to help tenth grade students to become more confident and fluent at the time to make the oral presentations while interacting with others in EFL. The proposal which we presented, not only considered the cognitive domain, but mainly the affective and the social domains as well.

We must recall that oral Projects presentations are important to develop communicative skills, since they

are supported with audio-visual aids such as videos, listening tracks, posters, pictures or technology resources which give students a great amount of cultural background and information, as stated by Mizuki (2003) “A reason for promoting the inclusion of oral presentations in the English class, concerns the development of learner autonomy rather than teacher dependent” (p. 144).

The two oral projects (see appendixes 4 and 5) were assigned to first and second term school of the academic school year, as follows: First term, daily routines and second term, past holidays. These oral projects presentation include videos and activities related to the cognitive and socio-affective aspects. The researcher provided a classroom setting where students were engaged in collaborative learning along with the teacher’s participation so there was a suitable environment for students facilitating like this their learning process. The undertaking of the oral presentations involves continuous peer review as well as feedback, therefore the goal of EFL oral projects was to value students’ effort and participation.

According to Harmer (2001) “the ability to speak fluently presupposes not only the knowledge of the language features, but also the ability to process information and language on the spot.” (p. 269), then, among the necessary elements for oral production, the researchers of this study, considered the following aspects as the most relevant traits to work with tenth graders at School:

- Connected speech: Effective nonnative English speakers need to be able not only to produce the individual phonemes as in saying “I have gone” but to use “the connected speech” (as in “I’ve gone”).
- Lexis and grammar: Teacher should provide a variety of expressions for different functions such as agreeing or disagreeing, expressing surprise, shock, or approval.
- Language Negotiation: Effective speaking benefits from the negotiator language used to seek clarification and to show the structure of what is said. e.g.: - I’m sorry. I did not quite catch that, I am sorry. I did not understand, could you say that again, please?
- Interacting with others: Most speaking utterances involve interaction with one or more participants. Excerpt taken from Prada (2015)

The previous aspects are the ones to be reached with this pedagogical proposal. Looking forward to evaluating the oral presentations, the researchers considered students' projects content and information, as how they presented and delivered that information. At the time to speak, the students' fluency (smoothness and confidence), interaction (clarity and use of conversation management strategies), and role playing, were also relevant to this research.

Apart from the oral practice, a set of "building self-confidence" activities and videos on how to become more confident, were also included and consistently worked with the students throughout the entire lessons in the two oral projects developed. Those affect -based activities (role plays, chats with other peers, videos, discussions, improvisation, and presentations) aimed to become more confident, that is, relating self-confidence with self-esteem and mentioning some steps to gain confidence in that sense e.g., - have a good posture, smile often, be grateful for what they are, praise others' achievements, speak more in public and interact with others, etc. One effective way to do this is in the context of a game and as stated by Krashen (1981), "building up their confidence is therefore of the essence because it is one of the key affective domains facilitating language learners' spoken production." (p.52)

As a result of that cooperative work, students reflected about their role in the class, their values, their right to be there, associating such processes with supportive people to keep their thoughts positive; they also became aware of their abilities to participate in the oral projects in English, shared their experience, and interacted with others in a foreign language.

The activities done in class were student centered and communication was authentic. To do this, the researchers adapted the curriculum and included a relevant affective component to establish that the affective climate we mentioned before (including materials and topics of meaningful work, physical development, creative expression, transformation activities, and learning skills to reach a positive management practice,) help to build relationships and connect to this age group with a good management of conflicts and crisis.

FINDINGS

This pedagogical proposal was evaluated with a lesson plan checklist proposed by Scrivener (2005)

(appendix 6). This was used to describe every aspect of the classes and see how helpful they were to help most of the students to improve their oral production with cognitive and affective strategies. Every aspect of the "lesson plan checklist" was analyzed according to the two oral projects developed:

- Aim: The aim of the lesson plans and oral projects was to help tenth grade students to become more confident and fluent in EFL.
- Profile of the students: Tenth grade students at a public in Bogotá, with a beginner's English level.

According to the analysis of our findings, we can determine that the objectives were reached in the sense that reading and writing practice were carried out to improve structure and sentence formation, along a set of repetition drills were done to reinforce speaking skills like pronunciation and fluency.

In the case of the Warm-up activities, they were found to be interesting by the students, they had the opportunity to interact with others, learn, and be ready for the lesson that would follow. Same case with the presentation of the materials. Since teaching inductively made students take part in their learning, through meaningful and contextualized sentences as well as exercises that motivated them to speak. In other words, students' self-reflection became part of the teacher's work to transform their learning.

Checking the guided practice, teachers are now more conscious about the value of the observation, reflection on the teaching practice, the importance to listen to others, the student needs in both cognitive and affective domains of learning, like this, taking into account the needs they have based on the requirements of the society. The teacher acted as a facilitator in all the tasks related to the aid.

In the independent activities, students used all the concepts or information they have learnt independently in meaningful and creative activities. While in the evaluation processes, the students' tasks were properly evaluated according to the aims and objectives proposed. As a result, we designed follow-up activities for students to practice on the topics worked during the subsequent lessons, in order to reach the goals.

RESULTS

Based on the same three aspects, but focusing too much in the students' self-confidence level,

we conducted a second interview in order to know the students' progress. Hence, we analyzed Oral participation in the English class. From that, we can conclude that most of the students recognized that a wider space to speak was given in class, and that they had more repetition drills to improve pronunciation, which reinforced their communicative competences. Whereas in the cognitive domain, students agreed on the importance to study grammar structures, vocabulary, reading and writing exercises to improve communication in FL.

Moreover, we could see that regarding self-confidence most of tenth grade students felt a lot more comfortable to attend class and eventually participated in the proposed activities when being asked to. They said they received more reinforcement and assistance from the teacher, which helped them to overcome fears to speak in public, as a result, they felt more secure and confident at the time to participate in the communicative activities.

Apart from increasing student's self-confidence, the researcher wanted to have a group of students willing to communicate, get their message across

smoothly, and understand that making mistakes, speaking reasonably quick and stopping sometimes (oral pauses) were part of their learning process so they could reach some fluency in their oral interactions and improve their performance in their presentations. The emphasis of the projects was more on content and the delivery of the information, that could be assessed with a speaking rubric focused on fluency.

As an EFL teacher, the researcher observed that those students with high self-confidence had a better disposition and willingness to participate in class activities and get involved in their learning process in a higher level than those with low self-confidence.

As a consequence, those outgoing students learnt English much easier. This is, "the way we feel about our capacities and ourselves can either facilitate or impede our learning." (Arnold and Brown, 1999, p. 8)

Apart from the previous evaluation, the "speaking rubric" was used at the end of the two projects to rate the learner's speaking competence in fluency in oral



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activities. In the following charts, (fig. 2-3) we can identify the results in which students showed their outcome at the end of the first and the second project (OP1-OP2); in there, it is clearly

seen that there was a significant increase in the students' oral production in terms of vocabulary, in addition to a better communication, and more interaction.

FIGURE 2
SPEAKING RUBRIC FOR FLUENCY ACTIVITIES- ORAL PROJECTS 1 AND 2

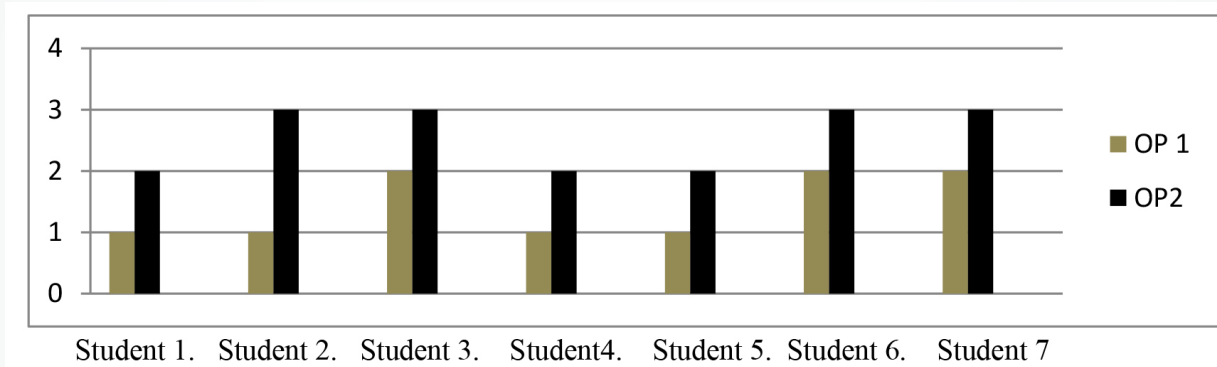


FIGURE 3
RESULTS FROM: AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS. O'MALLEY AND VALDEZ PIERCE, (2005). ADAPTED FROM PRADA (2015) P 81

STUDENTS	ORAL PROJECT 1 RATING	ORAL PROJECT 2 RATING	TOTAL OF RATINGS
Student 1	1	2	3
Student 2	1	3	4
Student 3	2	3	5
Student 4	1	2	3
Student 5	1	2	3
Student 6	2	3	5
Student 7	2	3	5

Figure 3 Results from: Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners. O'Malley and Valdez Pierce, (2005). Adapted from Prada (2015) p 81

Once the oral projects were applied and evaluated, the students' progress was evident in some fields. We can observe that, as to what is related to fluency when speaking:

Oral Project 1. Students 1, 2, 4 and 5 showed an evident progress, they: use only basic vocabulary and expressions together with basic structures. Making frequent mistakes, hesitating too often when speaking - which often interferes with communication- was identified too; their purpose while communicating was not clear, inferring that they need a lot of help to communicate. They

usually do not respond appropriately or clearly, we identified frequent problems with pronunciation and intonation. However, students 3, 6 and 7 increased significantly their progress and performance in the activities proposed, they used limited vocabulary and expressions, a variety of structures with frequent errors, or use basic structures with only occasional errors; this group of students spoke with some hesitation, which often interfered with communication, they tried to communicate, but sometimes did not respond appropriately or clearly, pronunciation and intonation errors sometimes made it difficult to understand the student.

Oral Project 2. Students 1, 4 and 5 reached higher levels, and they were a little more communicative. They used limited vocabulary and expressions, along with a variety of structures with frequent errors - or uses basic structures with only occasional errors-; they spoke with some hesitation, which often interfered with communication, tried to communicate, but sometimes did not respond appropriately or clearly. Pronunciation and intonation errors sometimes made it difficult to understand them. While students 2,3,6 and 7 rocketed to a significant level. They used a variety of vocabulary and expressions but made some mistakes in word choice; a variety of grammar structures was used, but some mistakes were found. They also spoke with some hesitation, but that did not usually interfere with communication; and stayed on task most of the time while communicating effectively; generally, they responded appropriately and kept trying to develop the interaction, pronunciation and intonation, which were usually clear/accurate with only a few problem areas identified.

From the oral presentations we can affirm that students are now more willing to speak in class and take part in the oral projects, also that there are fewer

hesitations and more interaction which shows that students' level of self-confidence has increased. We may say they believe in themselves and feel more capable to accomplish their tasks.

During the whole school year, especially during the first and the second project, there was a lot of work and practice, not only in the students' speaking ability to interact with others, but also considering all the benefits (input) they received from reading, writing, and listening exercises. However, the expected improvement in oral production took much more time than it was expected, but definitively the constant affective support to students' self-confidence made the process easier.

As a consequence of the previous actions, students are now less inhibited or intimidated by their peers, they do not feel the pressure to reach a grade, on the contrary, they acknowledge the necessity to improve. Some of them worked in groups while others think they are responsible for their own work and decided to work alone. They expressed their appreciation for the teachers support and assistance while reaching their goals.



Foto: Freepik.es

The results obtained by the researcher were according to the general objective expected for this study which was to increase self-confidence level in tenth grade students at a school level in order to improve their EFL oral production and fluency seeking to benefit their English performance. Since the topics and vocabulary had already been worked in previous classes, students had the opportunity to “recycle” it and integrated it to new communicative situations. The researcher also observed that the students were taking advantage of corrections made by their peers, which made them improve in every speaking activity.

CONCLUSIONS

The increase in self-confidence of the students who took part in this study as how it affected their oral production in foreign languages was evident; as seen in the initial speaking rubric, the speaking rubrics for the fluency activities for the oral projects 1 and 2 and the language plus testing set. The general question was answered during, and at the end of the implementation of the pedagogical proposal described above when the researcher developed a set of Oral Projects presentations and lesson plans with a high component of “building self-confidence” activities. As a result, they became aware of their abilities to participate in the oral projects in EFL, shared their experiences and interacted with others in the target language. What is more, other students who did not use to participate, were motivated and supported by their peers.

This research study also showed us the importance to increase the socio- affective component which should be taken into account in any school curricula for EFL classes. Smith (1999) and Scimonelli (2002) argued that affective and social language learning strategies as well as communication strategies are the areas in which the teacher’s intervention should come first in order to develop positive frames of mind in the students and help them overcome the stress and sense of discomfort that a poor or low oral command of English sometimes causes as cited in Fandiño (2007).

At the end of this research project, there was an evident progress in students’ oral production, interaction, but above all, disposition to communicate with the teacher and other peers. Some students still depend on the listener for clarification and put ideas across with some difficulty, but their speeches were generally comprehensible and to accomplish their oral tasks they did for vocabulary at times.

The fact that students are now less reluctant to speak in English class and more willing take part in the oral projects, helped to fulfill students’ needs in both: the cognitive and the affective domain of EFL learning, taking into account, then, the needs they have based on the requirements of the society.

Based on this study, the researcher suggests that it is extremely necessary that language teachers use different techniques to build up positive attitudes among students so they can feel free to speak in class. Teachers must understand the importance of affection in the classroom, believing then that all students can learn. Teachers who boost students’ confidence in the classroom can provide the scaffolding for more effective and efficient learning. Besides that, as Andres (2002) affirms “if we want our students to develop their inherent potential to learn, the affective variables such as anxiety, motivation, self-esteem, and inhibition... [and] the inner needs of the learners can no longer be neglected”. (p 9)

The findings of this study can be replicated or adapted to other groups because it is well known that the “attention to affect can improve language teaching and language learning”, but the language classroom can, in turn, contribute in a very significant way to educating learners affectively” Arnold (1999) p 3. We can determine that students’ participation improved in all the developed activities, proposing his approach to other teachers so as to achieve the integration of those projects into the English programs. This pedagogical proposal have also contributed to help students develop their personal and professional goals plus to enhance their opportunities for the future.

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APPENDIX 1
LANGUAGE PLUS TESTING SET

The number at the top of each column on the SOLOM determines the value of each box checked in the column. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 score). Based on your observation of the student, indicate with an “X” across the square in each category which best describes the student’s abilities.

1. The SOLOM should only be administered by persons who themselves score at level 4 or above in the language being assessed
2. Students scoring at level 1 in all categories can be said to have no proficiency in the language. Pre-Production 5- Early Production 6 to 10 -Speech Emergence 11 to 15 Intermediate Fluency 16 to 20 -Advanced Fluency 21 - 25

	1.Pre production	2. Early production	3. Speech Emergence	4. Intermed. Fluency	5. Advanced Fluency	Score
A. Comprehension	Cannot be said to understand even simple conversation	Has great difficulty following what is said. Can comprehend only “social conversation” spoken slowly and with frequent repetitions	Understands most of what is said at slower than-normal speed with repetitions	Understands nearly everything at normal speech, although occasional repetition may be necessary	Understands everyday conversation and normal classroom discussions without difficulty	
B. Fluency	Speech is so halting and fragmentary as to make conversation virtually impossible	Usually hesitant: often forced into silence by language limitations	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussion frequently disrupted by the student’s search for the correct manner of expression	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussion generally fluent, with occasional lapses while the student searches the correct manner of expression	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussion fluent and effortless approximating that of a native speaker	
C. Vocabulary	Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make conversation virtually impossible	Misuse of words and very limited vocabulary: comprehension quite difficult	Student frequently uses the wrong words: conversation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary	Student occasionally uses inappropriate terms and/or must rephrase ideas because of lexical inadequacies	Use of vocabulary and idioms are approximately that of a native speaker	
D. Pronunciation	Pronunciation problems so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible	Very hard to understand because of pronunciation problems. Must frequently repeat to be understood	Pronunciation problems necessitate concentration on the part of the listener: occasionally may be misunderstood	Always intelligible though one is conscious of a definite accent and occasional inappropriate intonation	Pronunciation and intonation approximate that of a native speaker	
E. Grammar	Errors in grammar and word order so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible	Grammar and word order errors make comprehension difficult. Must often rephrase/be restricted to basic patterns	Makes frequent errors of grammar and word order which occasionally obscure meaning	Occasionally makes grammatical and/or word errors which do not obscure meaning	Grammatical usage and word order approximate that of a native speaker	

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APPENDIX 2
SPEAKING RUBRIC FOR FLUENCY ACTIVITIES

Name: _____ Rating: _____

Level / Segment: _____ Activity: _____

Comments: _____

Rating	Demonstrated Competence
4	• Uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions
	• Uses a variety of structures with only occasional grammatical errors
	• Speaks smoothly, with little hesitation that does not interfere with communication
	• Stays on task and communicates effectively; almost always responds appropriately and always tries to develop the interaction
	• Pronunciation and intonation are almost always very clear/accurate
3	• Uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions, but makes some errors in word choice
	• Uses a variety of grammar structures, but makes some errors
	• Speaks with some hesitation, but it does not usually interfere with communication
	• Stays on task most of the time and communicates effectively; generally, responds appropriately and keeps trying to develop the interaction
	• Pronunciation and intonation are usually clear/accurate with a few problem areas
2	• Uses limited vocabulary and expressions
	• Uses a variety of structures with frequent errors, or uses basic structures with only occasional errors
	• Speaks with some hesitation, which often interferes with communication
	• Tries to communicate, but sometimes does not respond appropriately or clearly
	• Pronunciation and intonation errors sometimes make it difficult to understand the student
1	• Uses only basic vocabulary and expressions
	• Uses basic structures, makes frequent errors
	• Hesitates too often when speaking, which often interferes with communication
	• Purpose isn't clear; needs a lot of help communicating; usually does not respond appropriately or clearly
	• Frequent problems with pronunciation and intonation

Adapted from Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners by J. Michael O'Malley and Lorraine Valdez Pierce, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

World View Levels 1-4: Video/DVD Speaking Rubric for Fluency Activities Copyright © 2005 by Pearson Education, Inc. Permission granted to reproduce for classroom use.

(taken from Prada, 2015)

APPENDIX 3
QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW.

Name_____ Grade_____

Dear student with the following questions we want to know your opinion about the English class in aspects like: Participation, methodology, and how you feel being part of it. Please, feel free to answer on your own.

• ORAL PARTICIPATION IN THE ENGLISH CLASS.

1. Does the teacher provide you a space to speak English in class? Which one?

2. When do you speak English in class?

3. Do your classmates help you to develop speaking skill?

B. COGNITIVE DOMAIN.

4. Are your classes full of rote activities such as rote drills, rote dialogues, reciting rules and practicing patterns?

5. Are you learning vocabulary and expressions through comparisons, contrasts, or matching?

6. Do you receive feedback from your teacher of your presentations? How?

7. Question: Are the topics of your oral projects meaningful and interesting for you?

C. SELF-CONFIDENCE:

8. Do you feel comfortable when you speak English in front of the class?

9. What do you prefer at the time to present your projects, working in a group, or by yourself? Why? How do you feel?

10. How do you feel when you have an oral language activity in the classroom?

11. Does your teacher “project positive expectations” and reinforce positive behavior through expressions of appreciation?

12. How do you think other students and your teacher in class will react if you make mistakes?

13. Do you think that you are good in English; are you confident of your ability?

Source: Taken from Prada (2015)

APPENDIX 4

Oral Project 1. Daily Routines

TOPICS	ACTIVITIES	TIME	RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Routines *Schedules *My perfect day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Video Our Teachers – My daily routine” *Power Point Presentations on schedules and daily activities. *specific vocabulary about daily activities *Listening activities *repetition and drills on pronunciation *voice recording reporting (cooperative) Role plays *matching activities *verbs activities (bingo) *songs 	9 HOURS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -English grammar in use-online-Raymond Murphy/ Cambridge University Press. -Our Teachers -My daily routine-British Council. www.britishcouncil.org.hk Hobbies & free time (handout). http://www.EFLsensei.com/ 	<p align="center">Evaluate Oral Presentations base on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *content and delivery. *fluency (smoothness and confidence). *interaction (clarity and use of conversation management strategies). *role play *sharing reactions and opinions *debating different sides of an issue *providing a summary *providing a “critical review” <p align="center">Speaking Rubric for Fluency Activities Copyright © 2005 by Pearson Education, Inc.</p>

Oral Project 2. Past Holidays

TOPIC	ACTIVITIES	TIME	RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Holidays and free time activities *Biography *Historical events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Video *Power Point Presentations on schedules and daily activities. *specific vocabulary *Listening activities *repetition and drills on pronunciation *voice recording reporting (cooperative) Role plays *matching activities *verbs activities (bingo) *songs 	9 HOURS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video.”Past Tense English with Sound and Light” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-XNvLR_YEY *Holidays (handout) http://www.EFLsensei.com/Me-bag (Seeds of confidence, 2010 Arnold & De Andres) 	<p align="center">Evaluate Oral Presentations base on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *content and delivery. *fluency (smoothness and confidence). *interaction (clarity and use of conversation management strategies). *role playing *sharing reactions and opinions *debating different sides of an issue *providing a summary *providing a “critical review” <p align="center">Speaking Rubric for Fluency Activities Copyright © 2005 by Pearson Education, Inc.</p>

APPENDIX 5

Lesson Plan Checklist. Scrivener, Jim (2005)

1. Aim: Is this a topic that can be continued in future classes as well?
 - a. Is it meaningful to your students?
 - b. Do you use it throughout the entire lesson? (I.e. are you consistent?)
2. Profile of students: who are they?
 - a. Does your material match the interest, age and language level of your students?
 - b. Have you taken into consideration the size of the class?
3. Objectives: Are your objectives observable?
 - a. Do your reading objectives involve the use of skills that will improve comprehension?
 - b. Do your writing objectives focus on communication?
 - c. Oral repetition and simply reading out loud do not guarantee comprehension. Nor do reading and writing a grammar point.
4. Warm-Up: Is it interesting?
 - a. Does it get the students' attention and prepare them for the lesson that will follow?
 - b. Can you be creative and use something more interesting?
5. Presentation of new material objectives: How are you teaching your students?
 - a. Is it all taught deductively? Can you do it differently?
 - b. Is the teacher doing all of the teaching? Is it a teacher-centered class? Can the students take a bigger part in their learning? Is it a student-centered class?
 - c. Are you teaching something beneficial to the students' acquisition of English?
 - d. Are sentences and exercises meaningful and contextualized?
6. Guided activity: Is it something more than simply repeating and filling in the blanks? (Including teacher's help)
 - a. Are you acting as a facilitator while your students are practicing their language?
 - b. Can you be more interactive and creative?
 - c. Is it meaningful and related to your aim?
7. Independent activity: Are students practicing the objective? (Excluding teacher's help)
 - a. Is it meaningful?
 - b. Is it creative?
8. Evaluation: Are you evaluating properly on your objectives?
 - a. Is it meaningful? b. Is it related to your aim?
9. Follow-up: Are you providing more practice on today's lesson?

(Taken from Prada (2015))