



Examining EFL Students' Self-Perceived Oral Communication Competences: A Case Study of an Online Exchange Project

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Abstract

In order to meet the need to improve learners' communication competences in English as well as increase their range of repertoires to deal with complex online communication situations in an international and intercultural context, we developed an out-of-class online exchange project between learners of English located in Spain and Romania. The project was conducted in English and was connected to the topic of English language pronunciation and oral communication skills, as well as language learning strategies. The participants in the project were 61 first-year L1 Spanish students and 42 L1 Romanian students learning English as a Foreign Language at University. The project was carried out during one online meeting in the second semester in 2021 and it involved the students in project-based synchronous collaboration. More specifically, during the group videoconferencing they had to reflect on their speaking skills and pronunciation difficulties in English and establish clear actions to improve. In addition, the students created a poster summarising the content of the project visually and reflected in written form on the experience after the videoconference. Here we present a qualitative thematic analysis of these project outcomes, namely the poster and the individual reflection text. The purpose of collecting these data was to gain insight into the students' self-perceived oral communication competences. We used ATLAS.ti 8.2.0 and adopted a bottom-up approach to searching for themes in the data, or Themeing the Data (Saldaña, 2009). The emergent themes were triangulated between the authors of this study, to strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings. The presentation is focused on the findings.

Keywords: *Communication competences, English, international collaboration projects, online learning.*

References

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