USING VIRTUAL RESOURCES TO ENHANCE SPEAKING SKILLS FOR
BUSINESS ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This research project is based on the use of virtual resources to develop speaking skills for business English at Autónoma University. This study was categorized into Action Research. The subject of the study was the level 5 business learners at Autónoma University.

Data collection was carried out to show how the implementation of six lesson plans enhanced speaking skills for business learners at fifth level through virtual resources. They were used in class to provide teachers with the chance to do different speaking activities due to the nature of those virtual resources.

The main data of this study was collected by conducting class observations and transcripts collected by conducting interview which were analyzed qualitatively and supported by other data such as photographs and videos which were also analyzed qualitatively, besides questionnaires were applied.

The findings of this study revealed that virtual resources enhanced business fifth level learners at Autónoma University to speak English and at the same time there was more practice in speaking skills having in mind aspects such as business vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy and fluency.
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INTRODUCTION

Learning to speak English is an active process of communication which is nowadays a need. It is no more an issue of status, however it is a vital necessity for a good quality job and to be successful in one’s career. Lots of accomplishments in life are highly dependent upon the way you conduct yourself with the global customers, particularly in the international companies. Even in the management jobs the high profile people also require a fluency in English; it does not mean you have to speak as a native speaker, however it is necessary to express orally some important points in a smart way. Taking into consideration our experience as in- service English teachers at different places and taking a look at English teaching in Colombia, we can agree that one of the greatest needs teachers have to face up is to develop the speaking skills in the foreign language, this is due to different factors which have a great influence during the process of development of these skills, some of these factors are; learners’ lack of time as we know learners manifest all the time that they have to do plenty of activities.

Another factor is learners do not have the same vocabulary to express themselves. Also, because they are not aware of the real need to speak English, maybe teachers do not motivate them taking into account their interests. In that way our challenge as teachers is to get them involved in activities which allow them to practice everywhere and at the same time they can enjoy what they do, it is also important to highlight that the use of the technology as a tool is necessary for the development of this research. In this regard, while working at Autónoma university as English teachers during the first semester, by conducting classroom observation and surveys with the teachers and also the learners, the researchers found some difficulties in English, we observed that the group involved in this project was facing a problem which can be stated as follows: The need for teachers to look for a way to help students to enhance the
speaking skills during the learning-teaching process at Autónoma University. Therefore it is considered necessary to design some strategies to develop the speaking process.

It is important to mention that after having an informal conversation with our colleagues at university they agreed that speaking is the ability we need to promote and develop daily. For that reason, it is considered a need to design some strategies to develop the speaking process.

In order to gather evidences for the needs analysis at speaking, a survey was applied to 20 learners from a total of 24 to identify their perceptions of the English speaking process, according to the results obtained from the survey, the following aspects have emerged: 10 of them manifested that they need English at work due to the activities they have to perform every day at the workplace, other 5 learners do not need it by now and the rest 5 learners are not working at the moment. Also 7 learners agreed that the skill they work the best is writing, while 15 of them considered speaking the ability more difficult to work with, and the one they would like to develop. (Appendix 1)

On the other hand, it was important to check their speaking production in order to realize about their weaknesses and what the reasons are for this low performance, so we decided to work some oral presentations which were evaluated taking into account the Common European Framework for level B1(2001). Making evidences of speaking difficulties such as: The learners’ lack of vocabulary to express their ideas in a coherent way, learners’ pronunciation, most of the students mispronounce some known words due to the lack of practice and repetition exercises, besides they try to translate from Spanish into English which makes more difficult to express their ideas in a fluent way.

Another aspect to be taken into account is the use of grammar, the learners make use of inaccurate grammar structures when speaking, for example: overuse of to be and sometimes
they tend to omit it, lack of connectors, meaningless sentences, subject verb agreement, verb form, article noun problems, word order and sentence structure, personal pronouns and lack of coherence.

Another instrument used in order to gather information, was the teacher’s survey in which emerged the following results: Teachers agreed that it is necessary to improve learners communicative skills through activities which enhance learners to interact each other, providing them with the appropriate materials, also teachers should motivate and encourage students to work autonomously, so they can achieve their goals, and the speaking is the skill they need to work hard through communicative acts such as: speeches, debates, discussions, interviews, oral presentations and role plays among others. (Appendix 2).

Therefore, the problem that would be solved by conducting this research is the students’ lack of speaking skills, because speaking is an important ability of language learning that the students need to develop and improve in order to be competent for communicating at everywhere, just it is also necessary to highlight that the use of the technology as a tool will be necessary for the development of this research.

Having in mind that we are going to work with virtual resources which are an essential tool to facilitate the learners’ learning process, it is necessary to point out that the role of these resources is to help learners to develop the oral communicative activities in the business program in an effective way and at the same time keep in touch with the technological advances that are within our reach. These virtual resources are going to be useful during the whole process; therefore our task is to make learners interact by using a specific vocabulary of business, performing different kind of business activities through these virtual resources to enhance the speaking skills.
The research question is: How does the use of virtual resources have an impact on the development of speaking skills for Business English learners at a private university?

The object of study of this research is: The English speaking learning process.

The field of research is: The guidance of speaking skills in the business program to fifth level learners through virtual resources at a private university.

As well, the general objective proposed is: To enhance speaking skills in business program fifth level learners through virtual resources at a private university. So we consider necessary to establish some objectives in order to reach the general one.

Specific objectives:

1. To identify the theories used as the foundation for the research study

2. To identify learners speaking skills development and perceptions by means of a survey and oral presentations.

3. To design and implement a pedagogical strategy based on virtual resources to develop speaking skills in business program level fifth at private university.

4. To build a body of knowledge regarding the approaches used to support learners’ speaking in English as a foreign language, keeping into consideration teachers’ performance in this process.

5. To implement and evaluate the didactic proposal.

In order to accomplish the objectives proposed above, we formulated the following scientific tasks:

1. Identification of the theories used as the foundation for the research study

2. Identification of students speaking skills development and perceptions by means of a survey and oral presentations.
3. Designing and implementing a pedagogical strategy based on virtual resources to develop speaking skills in business program fifth level at a private university.

4. Building a body of knowledge regarding the approaches used to support student’s speaking in English as a foreign language, keeping into consideration teachers’ performance in this process.

5. Implementation and evaluation of the didactic proposal.

This process involves teachers’ supervision and collaborative work as well as learners’ participation during each one of the steps of the process. This process implies the use of virtual resources to be implemented inside and outside the classroom to enhance the development of speaking skill in both daily communicative context and business settings.
JUSTIFICATION

As many people know, English is the language which connects people from different regions, cultures and nations. Globalization has encouraged the domestic companies to think beyond their nations, it means that the ability to use a language efficiently is determinant as a requirement to keep working. English is being the most commonly used language in the working world; the knowledge of English is one of the most important employability skills.

Therefore, teachers should work all the time in order to make students aware of the importance of learning English as a fundamental necessity in the Colombian context. It does not matter what career learners choose, whether it is engineering, laborer, salesperson, management, business or accounting if they want to exceed their colleagues, and to be more competent in the working market, they will need to increase their English skills, and speaking skills are essential for those who want to be successful at their workplace, due to there are many companies throughout the world that require different kind of employees with English skills.

The realization of this action research project is very important taking into account that Autónoma University has been working in ESP (English for specific purposes) English program for levels 4 and 5, and most of its learners are from the business program, which demands a great opportunity for us as researchers to make an education contribution with this research project. Besides, there are other reasons for learners’ developing speaking skills. For instance, the learners will be able to think and speak in English at the same time during spontaneous conversations interacting with their partners and teachers. It is also known that for some learners English has become a difficult skill to practice, which is why we as researchers should design and implement some strategies to motivate and encourage them to have a successful speaking process.
The challenge of our project is to use virtual resources to foster speaking skills, we consider that the results obtained by this project will benefit the learners involved in the study as well those in ESP programs.

We chose working with virtual resources because it does not limit learners speaking performance, thus learners can interact in the classroom by producing different oral communicative activities which will provide them the necessary practice to develop the speaking skills inside and outside the classroom. In this concern, the virtual resources will be a vital tool to connect learners thought the communicative activities due they can participate during the process at everywhere. Besides, teachers and learners can agree on the activity to be performed. After the performance, it is necessary to give a feedback to learners to focus on improvements they should take into consideration for next time.

This kind of activity is helpful for ESP learners because they can practice real life situations performances including specific vocabulary related to business for this specific case and getting learners involve in all business situations. In this regard the appropriate use of technological tools is necessary for developing speaking skills as a direct complement of the teacher’s and learners’ interaction in the classroom. These virtual tools provide plenty of different kind of activities which can be performed in the business field at every time, it is an important aspect because teachers and learners can take advantage of this, and it is fundamental to support with something which works for teachers and learners, in the case that teachers want to offer learners access to digital material, or they want to create business material themselves, whatever they decide to do, it is impossible to imagine a course which is simply done in the classroom, without being able to provide autonomous learning opportunities outside the classroom, besides it is necessary to take into account those business learners that for any reason cannot attend classes regularly, these virtual resources become a vital support for them.
CHAPTER I

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Previous studies

Throughout this section, we will focus on some previous studies in the field of English language teaching and learning, concerning to speaking skills in ESP business, bearing in mind the similar contexts. The pedagogical interventions attempt to provide not only learners but also teachers’ tools to become even more successful at learning and teaching the productive skills. Besides, these previous investigations at both international and national context help teachers to build up the constructs that researchers consider useful for this study.

1.1.1 International and national research

Taking into consideration some research carried out around the world about teaching business English, some of them are concerning to this project, for instance: Teaching Business English on an Individual Basis (Pelcová, 2014) where the author describes an analysis of specific aspects of teaching Business English (BE) on an individual basis with main focus on its essential features and the personality of the BE teacher. The theoretical part provides general characteristics of this particular variety of teaching based on an academic research. The practical part involves teachers’ personalities including their teaching methods and its analysis with the reference to the theoretical part. One of the most interesting conclusions of this author is that the role of the teacher during this process is fundamental, he always has to be honest with the learners and admit a certain learner’s dominance which can also be used to benefit both sides. Considering that every kind of teaching is a mutual process of development (Scrivener, 2005)

We as researchers consider that this work is very important because it focuses in the business part as well as the role of the teacher which is relevant in order to develop a successful
project, the teacher plays a vital role in our research work, because he becomes a facilitator and motivator of different aspects.

Another research to be considered is a corpus–based study of the lexis of business English and business English teaching materials. (Nelson, 2000), this author deals with two fundamental issues in the research, the first one is regarding lexis in the Business English environment. It firstly asks whether the lexis of Business English is totally different from that which is performed in everyday situations as general English, and the second one is regarding the lexis found in Business English published materials which is significantly different from that performed in real-life business. It also fulfils a further important descriptive role. This project has also focused on describing the lexical world it found. The project is based on: representative samples of all three lexical environments: Business English, general English and the Business English found in published teaching materials. It involves both methodological and logistical problems of how the best way to approach the study, and how to get the data necessary to carry it out. A general conclusion from the author’s point of view is that Business English displayed significant differences from general English in terms of its lexis, semantic prosody, clusters and the semantic ‘meaning world’ it is made up of. Likewise, published materials differed greatly from real Business English in many of the same ways. This work is important to be taken into consideration because it is related not only to the environment in general and Business English, but it is also concerned with the use of Business materials as it is one of our research purposes.

In the national field a few projects about this research have been carried out. An example is the research entitled Goal-setting and Self-reflection to Enhance Learners’ interaction in an ESP Context by Lozano (2015), this project was developed at Minuto de Dios University in Bogota Colombia, it is basically a qualitative action research study which explores the
interactions of young-adult learners carrying out self-reflection on their learning processes in an ESP (English for special purposes) course at an airline training-center in Bogotá, Colombia. According to a deep analysis learners had poor knowledge of technical English, and lacked strong communicative and interactional competences, so the project intends to develop a pedagogical intervention focused on the use of communicative tasks appropriate to their professional context. Learners focus on the specific language functions and vocabulary necessary to complete communicative tasks (role-plays) successfully, and this helps to increase learner’s awareness, confidence, and positive self-concept. The result showed learners’ progress in the development specific (ESP) language functions and technical vocabulary. This project shows a way to work on ESP contexts, through the development of communicative and interactional competences, which can also be developed within a business English program.

Another Colombian research entitled “Shaping the ESP curriculum of an English for PhD students program: a Colombian case study of questionnaire research” by Janssen, Nausa, Rico (2012) shows the findings from EAP (English for academic purposes), this project was directed towards PhD students at los Andes Colombian university, an analysis was conducted through a questionnaire research focusing on describing learners situated contexts and interests, obtaining data contributing towards a future program development, it also involves the way learners perceive the different languages sub-skills in both local and international contexts. In this case, the project is useful in terms of the situated contexts, because it could work for business English learners.

Finally, Arias (2013) in her project “reading through ESP in an undergraduate law program which is a study conducted to learners in fifth level English at Colombian private
university. This project was carried out at Universidad Santo Tomas de Tunja. It focuses on the analysis of results from applying readings through English for specific purposes under the criteria of communicative approach, the instruments applied for data collection were semi-structured interviews, the learners’ written and oral samples and the research journals. The findings showed that learners were very motivated to practice the vocabulary about their field of study and encourage them to use English every moment.

This work shows the learners’ progress based on the practice of English for a specific purpose in this case law, and it provides meaningful ideas in order to be taken into account during the development of our research project also based on the learners English practice related to business at everywhere and every moment.

1.2 Theoretical constructs

Reflecting upon the problem addressed in this research, taking into consideration the context in which the research problem would be developed, and carrying out the corresponding literature review, we consider necessary and indispensable to gather relevant theoretical support for its execution. The main theoretical constructs that support the research project are: ESP (English for specific purposes), business teaching in the Colombian context, speaking skills and virtual resources.
1.2.1 What is ESP (English for specific purposes)?

Throughout the world it has been an important concern about English as a real need for different purposes due to it has become the international language which is required at all fields of knowledge at the present time in order to fulfill people’s expectations regarding their academic and professional development. Thus, we can say that (ESP) English is taught to people who need to know scientific, technical and other different English vocabulary from specific fields for their education or their careers, especially for those who English is not their mother tongue, however the definition of ESP has diverged into different points of view based on some researchers’ opinions about the topic. According to Robinson (1980) defined it as the teaching of English to the learners who have specific goals and purposes. And he also considers, these goals might be professional, academic, scientific etc. While on the other hand Mackay & Mountford (1978, p 2) manifest that ESP is the teaching of “clearly utilitarian purposes”. They referred to these purposes as the same mentioned above like the academic, professional or scientific ones which depend totally on learners’ needs. Other researchers’ points of view is from Hadley (2006), cf. Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998, p. 3). They stated that “it is our contention that all courses in specialized language and practice fall under the English for specific purposes rubrics”

When they refer to this specialized language and practice, it means business, academic, occupational etc. While Hutchinson & Waters (1987) they theorized that "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" ( p. 19).

It is important to highlight that according to these researchers, they insisted on the learner’s reason for learning and not on any occupation or profession particularly, this point of view is very respectable but it is necessary to keep in mind that the occupational field has become a
big challenge into the academic context, therefore ESP has different kinds of applications in nowadays English social context. As we can observe there is a controversy and scope of ESP definition, although a great majority of its proponents seem to agree that ESP is a very flexible approach of teaching of English as a second language (TESL) / teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL), that it involves on integrally way not only with special disciplines and occupations, but also focus on learners’ needs. On the other hand, according to Barron (1994) says that ESP is related to the academic, vocational and professional areas which together develop the practice of specific purposes in an integrated way, also Widdowson (1983, pp. 108-109), points that “ESP is (or ought logically to be) integrally linked with areas of activity (academic, vocational, professional) which have already been defined and which represent the learners’ aspiration. The learning of ESP is in consequence an essentially dependent activity, a parasitic process, and it follows that the pedagogy of ESP must be dependent too. It has no purpose of its own; it exists only to serve those that have been specified elsewhere”

As already said by these researchers ESP is useful as an important complementary activity which supports and enhance learners’ interaction of different areas as mentioned above in order to develop the learners’ needs, keeping in mind that it cannot work in isolation. Today not only learners of modern languages are expected to speak one or more foreign languages, learners of Science, Technology, Business and Economics or other branches such as; History and Sociology, they need to have a good command of at least one foreign language because as we know most of the material used in all these areas is written in English and there is a real need, not only to understand what is written but also what is said in a foreign language, what is more, it is also necessary to be able to write and speak the language in an appropriate way to communicate regarding the specific need.
Another point of view to be considered is from Hutchinson and Waters (1987) “English for specific purposes (ESP) refers to features related to English language instruction, from the point of view of the precise language (technical) that is needed in order for learners to succeed in their different disciplines and careers; ESP courses are tailored to specific needs.” (p 37)

As we can realize most of the researchers of (ESP) agree on the concept that it is mainly focused on learners’ needs, which makes an interactive process in order to help learners from different areas to achieve their academic and professional goals successfully. In the same way, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) agree that ESP teaching is linked to a particular discipline or profession and makes use of a methodology that differs from that used in general-purpose English teaching, since many learners need English in order to use it in specific occupational or educational settings with specific jobs (such as nurse, engineer, flight attendant, pilot, biologist, accountant, business people, manager, banker, lawyer etc.).

In concerning to mention above, it is known that many learners need English in order to use it in specific occupational or educational settings. For them it would be more efficient and better to be taught based on communicative skills needed for particular roles as the ones mentioned above, rather than just to concentrate on more general English. However the use of general English is necessary to perform different kinds of situations.

Regarding the specific case of business, it is important to highlight that we found that the situational based ESP syllabus was the one that could suit the learners’ needs the most. Based on situations in which business learners have the possibility to perform many types of roles concerning to their real needs at everywhere, developing activities which include general and specific business vocabulary through oral interaction among themselves and the teacher who plays an important role in this process.
Likewise, in this project, we intend to work on learners’ business situations which allow them to interact and perform a varied kind of roles through a teachers’ instruction developing interactive communicative activities and at the same time with the teachers’ guidance and encouragement during the whole process in order to achieve the goals proposed at the beginning of the research.

Analyzing and having in mind what ESP importance means into English, it is necessary to have a look about how it has been developed into the business context.

1.3 General considerations on English business teaching in Colombia

English plays an important role in business in Colombia and abroad. Every day millions of people all over the world use English to conduct business. Business English as a requirement is increasing in high demand at all Colombian universities, therefore English language teachers can expect to teach a business English class at some point in their careers. Opportunities for teaching Business English are available in Colombia and everywhere, it is a challenge for teachers to guide effectively their learners during this teaching process. But it does not mean that the focus on this is only on specific business English vocabulary. According to Ellis & Johnson (1994) the main communication skills to be trained in a business class are presentations, meetings and negotiation. Regarding this, we also consider that it is also vital to use and practice general English to develop the activity in an integral way. Related to this, Williams (2014) expresses that Colombia always has a very close business relationship with United States, in this concern employees are also required to communicate in English, therefore companies are usually looking for well qualified and experienced English teachers to fill these positions.
As it is known, there are many individual professional people who require more general Business English. These people may need to know how to cope themselves in English at meetings, in negotiations, on the phone etc. or be able to perform a variety of social tasks when they are abroad on business, even if they are working for local or multinational companies; besides, these kinds of learners will need general English in order to perform their business activities in a proper way.

On the other hand, we should have in mind that the essential of business is to provide customers with the goods and services they require and want. The word business also refers to an organization that provides these goods and services, because the main goal of businesses is the continuous seeking to make a profit.

An aspect to be taken into consideration is that English teaching skills, quite often requires a high degree of specialist knowledge in one particular field, if the learners do not have a background in law, engineering, accounting or medicine etc.; teaching ESP requires of a particular vocabulary referring to the specific case of business field to have a successful performance through the development of a variety of activities. These ones can be focused on a target situation related to their specific field of study and needs, by referring to this Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define the “target situation” as the one in which learners would use the specific language they were learning. So they can use the knowledge acquired for a better performance of the language.

For that reason, business education teachers in Colombia need to help students to develop their potential in the business context as professionals by exposing them to, management principles, personal and finance environment, taking into account the technological part. Without this exposure, students may get a delayed and it can be difficult for them to understand how to manage their finances, how to act in a professional manner, and how to work well with others. Especially at present time, when Colombia has opened its borders for foreign
investment and there are multinational companies looking for employees who can lead and cope at least with two languages at the workplace. In this regard, Hadley (2006 p3) states that “the key to teaching ESP is to focus on the “S” for specific. ESP can be differentiated from general ELT by its concern with specialized language and practice”. Thus, it is necessary learners practice general English and specific one as well, in order to be more competent at the workplace and everywhere.

Another important point to keep in mind is that learners have the possibility to interact one and other by working in teams, and by acquiring group and interpersonal skills in the classroom, they will be preparing for the working world. Where possible, the physical environment should support experiential and co-operative learning, for instance, by allowing them for flexible use of space. Consequently, the classroom should have facilities for students to prepare and present information. Processes should be in a place to ensure that the environment is one in which students feel safe and comfortable, able to take risks, learn from their mistakes, reflect, and move forward.

And also, the business classroom is the place to monitor and direct business-related activities and learners’ work. Besides practicing reciprocal learning, teacher as learner and learner as teacher, it is also fundamental. As it was highlighted above at the present time the use of the technology is essential as direct complement during the process. For that reason, teachers need to keep up-to-date with the latest business news and technological advances.

Digital technologies are integral to business. In the classroom, digital technology can be used very effectively to simulate business practice and enable students to apply their learning. There are many online communicative business activities we can use on the web, we are aware about that, for instance, a well design business activity encourages learners to participate actively in different types of communicative activities. In this regard, the role of the teacher is
indispensable in order to facilitate learners’ practice in every context, the effectiveness of teaching English for business is highly related to the teacher’s role.

Referring to the teacher’s role, Henton, M. (1996) points out that the role of the teacher is to observe their students closely during each session, identify gaps in their knowledge base or skills, and adjust the activity and their teaching accordingly.

Effective teachers of business studies use a variety of approaches and strategies to support learner learning processes. Business studies involve both theory and application, therefore the teacher needs to be as much facilitator as teacher to focus on the specific behavior. During the process of teaching English for business, it is important to create situations where students can actively work with the content of their learning, rather than require students to provide specific answers to preconceived questions, teachers should invite students to go deeper into the topic, ask their own questions, and on that way the learners can construct their own knowledge.

So, taking into account what it has been said, it is essential to have an environment in which the teacher builds respectful relationships with their learners to help them to feel more comfortable, thus they can perform their business activities in a friendly atmosphere and at the same time can develop and produce the vocabulary required to promote oral communication skills which allow them to reach their goals successfully.

Considering the speaking role into the development of ESP business communicative activities, it is necessary to go deeper into it as main part of our research project.
1.3.1 Speaking as a skill

In regards to the conception of speaking Brown (1994), Burns and Joyce (1997) point that “speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking” (p7).

The authors agree that this process is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. However, speech is not always unpredictable, because there are language functions or (patterns) which can be identified and they tend to recur in certain discourse situations.

On the other hand, they manifest that speech has its own skills and speaking particularly requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (linguistic competence), but also that they understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language (sociolinguistic competence), structures, and conventions. In this regard, Bygate (2001, p 16) manifests that ”the key role of speaking skill in developing learners’ communicative competence has also become evident, since this skill requires learners to be in possession of knowledge about how to produce not only linguistically correct but also grammatically appropriate utterances.”

In this connection, speaking is a complex act with many different elements which are interacting among themselves to produce effective communication. The grammar patterns play an important role into its production, because without some grammatical structures, it is complicated to produce and express sentences in a coherent way. Also we have to keep in mind aspects such as: lack of confidence, limited language or vocabulary knowledge, due to very often learners do not know how to express their ideas even in their mother tongue. About this, Bygate (2001) also says that speaking was considered as effective medium for providing
language input and facilitating memorization rather than a discourse skill in its own right and there were significant aspects such as the role that the internal mental process plays when learning to produce new and more grammatical structures, which were neglected under this view.

Taking into account another viewpoint of speaking skills which belongs to Celce-Murcia (2001) & Olshtain (2000) it is clear that speaking in a second language (L2) has been considered the most challenging of the four skills due to the fact that it involves a complex process of constructing meaning. Besides, this process requires that the speakers know why, how and when to communicate based on the specific cultural and social context where the speaking activity takes place in. Additionally to this, Bygate (2001, p 18) says that speaking “involves a dynamic interrelation between speakers and hearers that results in their simultaneous interaction of producing and processing spoken discourse under time constraints”.

In other words the speaking process described by Bygate not only means a dynamic interrelation between the speaker and the listener, but it also demands limitations in time in order to produce and process a spoken discourse, so it is important that both of them (speaker and listener) can interact and develop a speaking activity into a period of time required for that performance. Studies conducted for the last decades have established that speaking is an interactive, social and contextualized communicative social event. Therefore, the development of skills communicative competence is something vital.

Actually, it was assumed that the interactional nature of spoken language requires the speaker’s ability to use motor-perceptive skills, which are concerned with correctly using the sounds and structures of the language, and interactional skills, which involve using the previous skills for the purposes of communication. This means that EFL learners should acquire the
knowledge of how native speakers use language in the context of structured interpersonal exchanges in which many factors interact (Bygate, 1987 & Brown, 2001).

Consequently, the speaking process involves the other skills (writing, reading and listening) as an integral unit, having in mind that during its production all of them take part in it. For instance, it was proved that learning speaking can help the development of reading competence (Hilferty, 2005), the development of writing (Trachsel & Severino, 2004) as well as the development of listening skills (Regina, 1997).

In this regard the development of speaking skills is really important in EFL/ESL programs. Nunan (1999) and Burkart & Sheppard (2004) argue that success in learning a language is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the (target) language. Therefore, speaking is probably a priority for most learners of English (Florez, 1999). Speaking instruction is important because through it learners acquire EFL speaking skills thus, they can communicate spontaneously and naturally with native speakers. Furthermore, if speaking activities are taught properly in the classroom, speaking can raise general learners’ motivation and make the English language classroom a fun and dynamic place to be (Nunan, 1999 & Celce-Murcia, 2001). According to this assumption, Harmer (2001, p 269-270) states that speaking also happens in the context of limited processing capacities due to limitations of working memory, and thus a consequent need for routinization or automation in each area of production arises. Besides, speaking involves a sort of monitoring during and following speech production and the managing of communication under a range of external pressures (Bygate, 1998 & Basturkmen, 2002).

Regarding this topic, it is necessary to say that it is not enough to provide a good physical space and a good atmosphere where learners feel comfortable avoiding pressures, but also during the speaking production process the memorization of a specific vocabulary and the
automation of itself plays an important role. It does not mean that learners have to memorize their role, conversely as it has said, the interaction among themselves and the spontaneous way to perform the activities during the production are also fundamental.

Moreover, Bygate (1987) refers that it also involves routines and negotiation skills. Routines present the typical patterns of conversation including interaction and information routines, conversations, interviews, or conversations at the party, while negotiation skills serve as a means for enabling the speaker and listener to make themselves clearly understood. Bygate notes, refers to ‘the business of agreeing who is going to speak next, and what he or she is going to talk about’ (p.27). This is achieved by two aspects: management of interaction and turn-taking.

On the other hand, the first one means that the participants select the topic, how it is developed, its length, the beginning or the end is controlled by the agenda of management. Besides, he says that effective turn-taking requires five abilities: how to signal that one wants to speak, recognizing the right moment to get a turn, how to use appropriate turn structure in order to one’s turn properly and not to lose it before finishing what one has to say, recognizing other people’s signals of their desire to speak, and, finally, knowing how to let someone else have a turn. (Bygate, 1998 p35-40) Another interesting point of view is Harmer’s (2001) focuses on the elements of speaking which are necessary for fluent oral production, distinguishes between two aspects knowledge of ‘language features’, and the ability to process information on the spot, which means ‘mental/social processing’. The first one, language features, that is necessary for spoken production involves according to Harmer (2001) the following aspects: Connected speech, expressive devices, lexis and grammar, and negotiation language.
Besides this, he says that in order to have a successful language interaction it is important being aware of the use of the language features through mental/social processing with the help of ‘the rapid processing skills’, as they are called by Harmer (2001, p.271). ‘Mental/social processing’ includes three features, language processing, interacting with others, and on-the-spot information processing. According to his point of view this skill will help them to achieve successful communication goal.

To sum up, we can say that both authors Harmer and Bygate approach the speaking from the viewpoint of a skill that involves several elements to be considered during language teaching. As we just realize they agree and differ in some aspects mentioned above about the speaking process. For us as teachers, it is important to analyze all of them and do our best for the learners taking into account their needs.

Now, it is necessary to have a look of the importance of speaking skill in the higher education context.

### 1.3.2 Speaking skills in the higher education context

A speaker's skills and speech habits have an impact on the success of any exchange (Van Duzer, 1997). Speakers must be able to anticipate and then produce the expected patterns of specific discourse situations. They must also manage discrete elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing, providing feedback, or redirecting (Burns & Joyce, 1997).

A learner involved in the exchange with a salesperson must know the usual pattern that such an interaction follows and access that knowledge as the exchange progresses. The learner must also choose the correct vocabulary to describe an item for example, rephrase or emphasize words to clarify the description if the clerk does not understand, and use appropriate facial
expressions to indicate satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the service. Other skills and knowledge that instruction might address include the following:

“producing the sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures, and intonations of the language; using grammar structures accurately; assessing characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge or shared points of reference, status and power relations of participants, interest levels, or differences in perspectives; selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs; applying strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, or checking for listener comprehension; using gestures or body language; and paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement” (Brown, 1994 p26).

The importance of developing these skills relies on many facts, when talking about ESP, the teachers and institutions must take into account the real needs of students at work. That is the natural setting of the language for them and that setting defines the people they interact with, the kind of language they must use on a daily basis, the nature of the language itself (if they use English to talk to native speakers or not –lingua franca-).

The purpose of this kind of speaker changes, because they do not need to speak accurately (grammatically correct) but they need to get an agreement as quick as possible (communicatively effective). But the message and the words used must be correct to avoid misunderstandings which can be fatal in this kind of negotiations, then it can be said that learners can have some grammar problems or mistakes but the terms have to be clear and synthesize the intention of both speakers.
The communication can be even more difficult if both speakers are non-native speakers of the English Language (lingua franca); in this case the cultural issue takes relevance and demands cultural awareness which can be risen in the classroom through listening activities (audios and videos) that expose students not only to settings where native speakers interact but also to those ones where non-native speakers exchange information, both settings are very common when being involved in international trade.

1.3.4 Speaking skill

Teaching speaking into the classroom is the perfect chance for the teacher and learners to practice the target language in an environment free of stress and pressure. At the same time it provides the teacher with enough elements to assess the students’ oral performance: achievements, mistakes, difficulties, among others; this is an important step before they become independent users of the language.

There is a variety of speaking techniques which contribute to the development of speaking skills in a different way. Harmer (2001).

One of those techniques is the use of pictures (photographic competition) or instance, the teacher can bring some pictures and he tells students they are going to be the judges of a photographic competition. Students have to decide the criteria in order to make their choice; then the teacher will be walking around monitoring difficulties and the correct use of language. The idea is that they choose two finalists and at the end they select the winner; the point is that they have to decide this supporting their points of view and using the criteria they had agreed on.

Another technique is the role play. Also known as simulation, it is an important technique to be used into the classroom in order to make students act-out real life situations. The situation can be chosen by the teacher according to the level of proficiency of the students and according
to the needs of students (business, medical, or legal purposes). Each one of the students has a particular role into the activity which makes them think and speak according to the instructions given by the teacher and from the point of view of the character.

An interesting technique is the **portrait interview**, it can be used at any level and the teacher can choose any kind of portrait in which several people are shown. The class is divided in groups according to the number of people in the picture. Students from each group write as many questions as possible for their character. Then they mix in new different groups where there must be learners from the different groups or characters. Each learner takes the identity of one of the characters they did not prepare questions for. Then they answer the prepared questions to each other; finally the teacher chooses one student per character to do exactly the same but in front of the whole class.

**Discussion** is another relevant technique which can bring spontaneity to the class and allow teachers and learners to talk about any topic at any time in the classroom. It provokes fluent use of the language, especially if the topic is of learners’ interest.

**Information gap**: two learners have different bits of information, and they can only complete the activity by sharing information- as they have different information there is a gap between them. It is important that both learners understand the task details;

**Meeting and greeting**: this is a really interesting technique to be used to raise cultural awareness among learners. Learners role-play formal/business social occasion (s) where they meet a number of people and introduce themselves or exchange information with the people they just met.

**Student presentations** (talk on a given topic or person): if teachers want the activity to work, time must be given to the presenters to find information and plan their presentations. Teachers
can offer models for learners to follow. The learners listening to presentations must be given listening tasks too, for instance they can be asked to provide feedback after each one or after all the presentations.

**Moral dilemmas**: learners are given a “moral dilemma” and they are asked to come with a decision about how to resolve it. For example, they are told that an employee from their company has been caught providing information to the competence. Then they are given the student’s (far-from-ideal) circumstances, and offered five possible courses of action – from exposing the employee publicly to ignoring the incident – which they have to choose between.

All these techniques are applied in order to improve learners’ performance; the way they are introduced and the way students can interact with them depend on the sources offered by the teacher. The idea is to maximize the use of virtual resources to show the activity and also the different ways learners can interact among themselves and with the teacher.

### 1.4 Virtual resources

First of all, it is essential to keep in mind that virtual learning allows the learners to connect, interact, share, learn and overall to work autonomously in different kind of activities outside of the classroom through some collaborative tools such as: Skype, Google Drive, Drop Box, You Tube and so on.

This type of learning can be synchronous which means that all learners log in at the one time in a virtual classroom, and it can also be asynchronous where learners can participate in sessions assessing recordings in their own time. This is a space for instance collaborative virtual environment into the educational context. It is also considered that these virtual resources promote learners engagement while increasing academic success. Besides, virtual resources
allow learners to set up a throttling scheme that will manage the number of specific tasks which can be run at the same time. According to Atzory (2010 p1) “*The Internet of Things is expected to play a key role in a range of domains, from factory automation to healthcare*”.

It is known that the internet plays an important role from various domains such as learning, the most important one in this case, virtual resources allow learners to keep up dated and facilitate the learning process during its practice, besides they help learners to feel more comfortable in their own space taking into account learners’ availability. Therefore the appropriate use of these technological tools is fundamental so they become helpful and do not represent an obstacle for learners.

Another aspect to be taken into consideration is that the technology can sometimes be a barrier to teaching and learning due to the lack of those virtual resources or the inappropriate use of these tools by learners, thus it is very important to provide learners with a training, hereby they can feel comfortable and motivated when they have to use them.

Regarding these virtual resources, we are going to mention some of them which are going to be indispensable for the development of our research project.

**Skype:** It is an essential app which you can have in your dock or taskbar, you can message one and other and swap files directly in an easy way. Besides it allows you to call and video call your team members for free. And it can also be used for quick conversations to keep in touch with someone else. On the other hand, it is necessary to mention that it is free to use across a number of devices and more 520 million people worldwide use Skype.
**Google drive:** It is a cloud storage tool that allows you to co-create and co-edit different kind of documents or visuals in a real time with your learners or members of a team at the same time. You also can store and share your files in a safe way with others.

**Drop box:** It makes file sharing a breeze and it nearly guarantees that you don’t have to use a USB storage any longer you can add something to your Dropbox folder, it will be automatically available to other people with access to the folder, there are also simultaneous edits, two separate versions are created then you manually can edit and combine the two documents by using this tool you can share training materials, make files and share them with other people, backing up documents, images, passwords and accessing files from multiple computers.

**You Tube:** It is a free video-hosting website that allows members to store and serve video content. This is a virtual resource which allows billions of people to discover, watch and share originally create videos, it provides a forum to people to connect, inform, and inspire people across the globe by using the platform with the creation and distribution of original content.

**Edmodo:** It is an online networking application for learners and teachers, it is primarily a tool for within class communication and provides the way for teachers to communicate among themselves, one of the advantage it has, it’s that it cannot be blocked by DET firewall, through this tool you can build and online learning conversation with your class about the subject you want, on the other hand this tool is more secure than Facebook. Besides this, Edmodo is a global education network that helps connect all learners with the people and resources needed to reach their full potential. This important virtual resource helps the learners’ interaction with teachers and among themselves.

This educational social network links the way students live their lives and how they learn at school or at university; it links people and resources at full potential.
Whatsapp is an instant messaging service for smart phones and tablets, it used to belong to What Sapp Inc. but now Facebook owns it. If the device is connected to Wi-Fi the service is totally free. Users can send and receive files such as audio clips, images, and videos. This is a very useful resource because through it teachers and learners can develop different kind of activities in an easy and fast way.

Research and academic databases, they are rich resources which provide learners, professors, instructors, and researchers with information organized in digital formats; they are an excellent source of information for scholarly journals, reports, newspapers, working papers containing digitized primary sources and e-books. Some examples of these databases are: Proquest, ERIC (Educational Resource Information Center), Web of knowledge (Thomson Reuters), Scirus (Elsevier), EBSCO.

Digital libraries, collection of digitized documents organized in electronic form so they can be available on the internet. The users can access different material such as magazines, books, newspapers, sound files, images, and videos. Most of them are also related with the specific field of study to be consulted.

The virtual resources mentioned above provide teachers and learners with different tools which can be used to facilitate the learners ‘performance when they have to express orally through the specific virtual resources selected for this project.
CHAPTER II

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 Research question

The research question is: How does the use of virtual resources impact the development of speaking skills for Business English learners at a private university?

The object of study of this research is: The English speaking learning process.

The field of research is: The guidance of speaking skills in business program to fifth level learners through virtual resources at a private university.

2.2 General objective

To enhance speaking skills in business program fifth level learners through virtual resources at a private university.

Specific objectives:

1. To identify the theories used as the foundation for the research study

2. To identify learners speaking skills development and perceptions by means of a survey and an oral presentations.

3. To design and implement a pedagogical strategy based on virtual resources to develop speaking skills in business program level fifth at private university.

4. To build a body of knowledge regarding the approaches used to support learners’ speaking in English as a foreign language, keeping into consideration teachers’ performance in this process.

5. To implement and evaluate the didactic proposal.
In order to accomplish the objectives proposed above, we formulated the following scientific tasks:

1. Identification of the theories used as the foundation for the research study

2. Identification of students speaking skills development and perceptions by means of a survey and oral presentations.

3. Designing and implementing a pedagogical strategy based on virtual resources to develop speaking skills in business program fifth level at a private university.

4. Building a body of knowledge regarding the approaches used to support student’s speaking in English as a foreign language, keeping into consideration teachers’ performance in this process.

5. Implementation and evaluation of the didactic proposal.

2.3 Research methodology

“One of the main issues when doing action research is the mode of research”. Wallace (2005, p 38), it has to do with the kind of method to be applied.

The approaches are quantitative and qualitative, the research techniques can be introspective and empirical, and there are also individual and collaborative approaches. Having in mind the nature of this research project in which we had to guide, observe, describe, interpret and analyze the way our students enhance their oral interaction skills and at the same time that the project is carried out in a collaborative way by two researchers working at the same institution, we considered collaborative action research was the one to explore phenomena as well as to plan and implement the project. According to Kemmis & McTaggart (1988, p9) put it, "The linking of the terms action and research highlights the essential feature of the method: trying out ideas in practice as a means of improvement and
as a means of increasing knowledge.” They also identified collaboration as an important feature of this type of research.

Collaborative action research was chosen for the present study due to the characteristics it has: there are two teachers from the same institution, one of them can be an observer what facilitates things because that teacher knows the kind of learners they are and the environment for teaching and learning the target language.

With the cooperation in mind, collaboration can do much to sustain motivation, save time for the allocation of different tasks as appropriate, and generate richer input from the combined talents and insights of those involved. On the other hand, Freeman (1992) says that the view of action research is concerned to its original goals, in order to bring changes in social situations as the result of group problem-solving and collaboration. The action research has tended to take on an individualist focus nowadays, and teachers try to investigate and teach in the isolation of their own classrooms, taking into account this situation, Kemmis & McTaggart (1988, p5) express that “the approach is only action research when is collaborative, though it is important to realize that the action research of the group is achieved to the critically examined action of an individual group members.”

Therefore, collaborative action research offers opportunities for the results of research to be put into practice, commented, canalized, and fed back in a more reflective way inside the institutions due to the fact of having several members of the same communities immerse in the same project.

This kind of action research has the advantage to make teachers share common problems and to work as a research community to examine their different assumptions, values and beliefs within the institutions where they work. Organizations are more open-up to change when those changes are brought through group processes and collective pressures. Collaborative action
research is more empowering than the individual one as it offers strong framework for whole-school change.

“This kind of research also increases the individual and collective knowledge about teaching, as it occurs through teachers’ own experiences, has the potential to bring research and practice closer together in productive ways”. (Burns, 1998, p13)

According to the mentioned above, we chose working with collaborative action research which is the appropriate one in order to carry out our project in a successful way.

2.4 Type of Study

The type of research is Classroom Action Research, as Burns (1999) argues that action research is a self-reflective, systematic and critical approach to enquiry participants who are at the same members of the research community, which aims to identify problematic situations or issues considered to be worthy of investigation in order to bring about critically informed changes in practices.

Regarding the type of action research this project is based on, we decided to work with this type of research taking into account the process it has, this research is conducted in some cycles to solve the problems discovered in the teaching and learning process based on the plan, observation, description, reflection and application of permanent communicative activities to develop the business speaking practice through virtual resources.

2.5 The context of the Research

The research work was carried out at a private University, Autónoma de Colombia which is located in the city Centre of Bogota. The Autónoma university is a higher education institution, the university, was founded in 1971 by fifty nine people mostly college teachers. The university has got one branch with eight thousand students approximately.
English is a mandatory subject for the programs at the three different shifts (morning, afternoon and evenings). Learners have to study three general English levels and two ESP levels (four and five) according to their careers.

It has faculties such as: Engineering (Industrial Design, Environmental Engineering, Electro-mechanic Engineering, System Engineering), Law, Economics, Accounting and Management, Human Sciences, and Business Administration.

The Faculty which runs the English teaching program is the Instituto superior de Pedagogía. The participants in this research project are learners who have low speaking ability based on the result of an interview and survey which were done to most of the learners; despite they are coursing level five, the last level of English. The university provides five levels of English; the last two levels are given in (ESP).

**Participants**

The learners who participated in the study whose age ranged between twenty to thirty five years old belong to the English business fifth level (B1+) course corresponding to the Common European Framework (2001), it is compound by learners from different semesters. After finishing this English course they get their degree as requirement for all different programs at the university.

The number of students of the sample is twenty four that corresponds to a group of fifth level business English from different programs at Autónoma University. The current study sought to enhance students’ interactional abilities while taking part in ESP communicative activities. There are ten males and fourteen females, because the whole group of learners in this program is 24 and their socioeconomic stratum is from one to three, mainly. The learners show interest in the teacher’s guidance of the learning process to develop speaking skills during
the business class which is a good step to start the development of the study. These students have 4 hours of English class weekly. Their study shift is Friday from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Saturday from 9:00 am to 11:00. Finally, the first day of class they signed a consent letter for the acceptance to participate in the research.

2.6 Instruments:

The qualitative data were collected through observation from developing communicative activities in the class, analyzing reflecting and describing, finally the implementation of the action. The qualitative data were also in the form of observation checklist which would be fulfilled by the English teacher and the research collaborator. This research has some instruments to gain qualitative data. In order to gather the qualitative data, the instruments used in the present study were; a. teacher’s observation, b. interview, c. questionnaires.

. Questionnaires:

Arhar, Holly, & Kasten, (2001); Patten, (1998) manifest that they consist of open or closed ended questions or items to measure facts, attitudes or values. For an action research is easier to collect information for a big number of participants to interview them, in this case action research may employ the use of questionnaires when it is impossible to interview every respondent. Although open-ended responses are difficult to analyze, they often provide specific and meaningful information.

Two questionnaires were applied at the beginning of the first two sessions of class in order to keep on gathering information related to learners ‘speaking skill and the use of virtual resources to improve the speaking skill (Appendix 4)
**Classroom observation:**

According to Lukin (1995) it is a fundamental part of action research. It helps researchers to document and reflect systematically about classrooms interactions and events as the way they occur rather than we can think they occur. It is also for the use of procedures that ensure that the information collected provides a relevant basis for answering research questions and supporting the interpretations that are reached.

Class observation was held twice; one teacher was giving a class while his peer was observing the teacher and learners’ performance, the observer was filling previously design observations form. (Appendix 5)

**. Interview:**

McNamara (1999) defines it, as a particular useful instrument for getting the story behind the participants’ experiences in which the role of the interviewer is to pursue in-depth information around the topic. They may be useful as follow-up to responds to questionnaires and to obtain further information.

Two interviews were conducted in order to search for information regarding learners’ opinions related to class activities and the development of their speaking skill through different moments of the class. (Appendix 6)

These three research instruments were filled out in three different moments of the class, questionnaires at the beginning of the didactic implementation, classroom observation while the didactic proposal was been implemented, and finally the interviews at the end of the process.
CHAPTER III

3. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

In order to carry out the project, 6 lesson plans were designed based on the English business program of level five. It is necessary to highlight that the last lesson plan (6) was designed to show learners’ production, in which learners have to introduce and talk about a specific topic during the whole class according to the program established by the university.

These lessons plans are divided into five parts. The first section provides the information about the institution, the level, the number of the lesson plan followed by the teacher’s name.

In the second part we can identify the learner’s name, the topic, the virtual resource used, the specific aims and the previous knowledge for the lesson plan.

In the third part we can find a warming up activity that intends to create a friendly atmosphere between the teacher and the learners. It also helps them to feel more confident to participate during the activity.

There were different kinds of warming up activities applied according to the topic and the purpose of the lesson, finally we can see three different phrasal verbs with their definitions and a filling the gaps activity to practice them.

In the fourth part the lesson plans have an input which contains specific vocabulary related to the topic, for the practice of this vocabulary different types of exercises were applied, for instance, filling-in speech bubbles where the students have to fill those bubbles by matching sentences in an exercise of association. Also the lesson plans provide reading information and a listening activity about the topic in which different techniques were used as follows: compiling information, by using this technique learners have to write some sentences which provide information about the topic. Another activity was information gap that was filled out by the learners. The technique used for this activity was finding words in which learners should
do it in the given boxes. Finally, filling out the spaces where learners have to complete information according to the topic.

One more activity was true or false, while doing this learners have to decide if the statements are true or false according to the information from the text.

We also applied a matching activity; for this activity learners must link a word with the corresponding definition or link two words related to the meaning.

Finally we designed multiple choice questions; here, learners have to choose the correct answer among three or four possibilities.

**In the fifth part** we can see the specific speaking technique according to the topic, the techniques used were: *discussion* (round table) in which learners expressed their points of view about the topic after doing previous activities related to it. *Role play* (oral interview), in this case learners acted out an interview about the topic through a virtual resource like Skype.

*Moral dilemma*, in this activity learners were divided by groups in order to agree or disagree about a specific situation. In the classroom, learners interacted among themselves and the teacher. *Oral presentations*, in this activity learners made presentations about the topic developed in class.

*Conversation*, learners and the teacher talk among themselves through whatsapp responding about the target topic.

*Information gap*, through this kind of activity learners fill in text gaps by swapping information about the topic assigned to each one of them, obviously the required information to fill in the gaps is given to one of the students so the other has to ask questions and vice versa.

On the other hand, each lesson plan applied a virtual resource which was used sometimes in the input stage of the lesson or sometimes in the output one.
3.1 Pedagogical Strategy

The use of virtual resources was the core element of this research project, they tended to develop the learners’ speaking skills in Business English level 5. Through the use of virtual resources such as Skype, whatsapp, podcasts, and YouTube, learners were able to practice with new vocabulary related to business, and at the same time to practice listening and reading comprehension. These virtual resources provided the teacher and learners with opportunities to respond (orally) to written and oral texts; they also allowed learners to interact in order to speak about different topics, besides, through these virtual resources, learners were able to do different activities autonomously; likewise, learners could focus on the communicative skills based on the planned lessons which intended to show learners’ oral performance.

3.2 General objective

The lesson plans intended to promote the development of speaking skills through the use of virtual resources in Business English level 5 at Autónoma University.

3.2.1 Specific objectives

1. To promote communicative skills in Business English.

2. To expand vocabulary related to phrasal verbs.

3. To use virtual resources to enhance learners to speak English in business contexts.

4. To encourage learners to participate actively during the lessons.

This instructional design was implemented according to the proposed objectives in a Business English level 5 class at a private university.

Lesson plans samples:
Table 1: Lesson Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Virtual Resource</th>
<th>Task Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>You Tube</td>
<td>Round table discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Selling</td>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>Role play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Insurance Business</td>
<td>Google drive</td>
<td>Moral dilemma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Dropbox</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Technological innovations</td>
<td>Whatsapp</td>
<td>Conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Customer service</td>
<td>You Tube</td>
<td>Oral presentations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own design (appendix 8)

CHAPTER IV

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis was designed considering the theory of Denzin and Lincoln (1994) claim that qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the researcher in the world and at the same time it is based on material practices which consist on a set of interpretative data because through this practice the world is turned into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings among others. Besides the authors say that; the theory arises from the data gathered to identify constructs, categories and relationships established among them.
These authors also validate the effectiveness of this approach allowing for the continuous comparison of data in order to group and classify them for the construction of a theory.

According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), in speaking about qualitative analysis, it refers not to a quantifying of qualitative data but rather to a nonmathematical process of interpretation, carried out for the purpose of discovering concepts and relationships in raw data and then it is necessary to organize all these aspects into a theoretical explanatory scheme. Therefore data might consist of interviews and observations, but also it should include documents, films or videotapes and even data which have been quantified for other purposes such as census data.

After we have organized the theory, we used the color coding technique to identify each one of the aspects emerged from the speaking process to unify the constant patterns keeping in mind their relation with the theory and the research question. After we had organized the information, we applied the color-coding technique to identify the aspects emerged in the speaking process to unify the patterns taking into consideration the theory and the relation with the suggested research question. We kept on contrasting the information in order to get more precise and effective results from the data gathered. After doing all this process and we took into account the methodology, the supporting theory and the research question, in order to draw conclusions we followed the model of (Denzin and Lincoln’s 1994) methodological triangulation, which means checking out the consistency of findings generated by different data collection-method to data analysis this approach allowed us to apply three different instruments which were: questionnaires, interviews and teacher’s observation, the process consisted in the collection of data through these three different instruments, we also analyzed the information gathered having in mind the activity task, the kind of speaking objectives and the speaking techniques developed.
On the other hand Denzin and Lincoln (1994) claim that triangulation is a process of verification that increases validity by incorporating many viewpoints and methods, it means the combination of two or more theories data sources, in order to study a single phenomenon. This process can be employed in both cases qualitative (validation) and quantitative (inquiry) studies. In our specific case to validate the findings we focused on methodological triangulation (qualitative-validation) which means the use of more than one research method or data collection technique, because the data were assembled through learners’ interviews, learners’ questionnaires and teacher’s observation.

4.1 Results

In this section we reflect on the outcomes gathered on the triangulation process of three different instruments used in order to identify common recurrences and similar patterns among them. These results were analyzed based on an interpretative approach.

The first instrument was the questionnaire; the second the teacher’s class observation; and the third, the interview. From these instruments emerged the research categories and sub-categories which allowed us to find out the respective theory in order to answer to the research question.

. Questionnaire result

Based on the questions provided on the questionnaire the following aspects emerged:

To the question number one, could you understand the new vocabulary introduced by the teacher? From a population of 24 learners, 98% answered that they could understand the new vocabulary given by the teacher, while just 2% said that they could not.
To the question number two, was the topic interesting to you? 100% said that it was really interesting.
To the question number three, were the teachers’ instructions clear for you? 95% answered that they understood the instructions in a good way, while 5% manifested that they did not understand the instructions at all.

![Pie chart showing responses to question about teachers' instructions]

To the question number four, did you participate actively in the class? 100% answered that the lesson plans encouraged and demanded them to participate in each activity developed in class.

![Pie chart showing responses to question about participation]

Did you participate actively in the class?

- 100% participate
- 0% NOT
To the question number five, did the activities allow you to speak English in class? 100% said they could speak English in class because the oral production was mandatory for each one of them at the end of each lesson plan.

To the question number six, could you use the new vocabulary to talk about the target topic? 99% said that they could use the new vocabulary to talk about a specific topic, while the 1% answered that they could not do it.
To the question number seven, could you interact with your teacher and your classmates? 100% answered that there was a real interaction among themselves and the teacher.

![Chart: Could you interact with your teacher and your classmates?](chart1)

To the question number eight; do you consider that the material provided by the teacher was useful? 100% considered that the material provided by the teacher helped them to understand much better the class.

![Chart: Do you consider that the material provided by the teacher was useful?](chart2)
To the question number nine, did the use of virtual resources help you for a better comprehension of the topic? 99% said that through the use of these tools, they could practice and understand the topic given in class.

![Pie chart showing 99% yes and 1% not for the use of virtual resources helping comprehension.]

To the question number ten, could you speak about a business related topic through the use of a virtual resource that was previously chosen by the teacher? 100% said that they expressed their ideas by using business vocabulary through different types of virtual resources chosen by the teacher previously.

![Pie chart showing 100% yes and 0% not for the ability to speak about a business topic through virtual resources.]

**Peer observation class result**
After observing the six lesson plans classes and taking into consideration aspects such as learners’ participation, speaking process, class development and pedagogical implementation of the use of virtual resources to enhance speaking skills for business learners and based on the question given, the following results emerged:

From the class observed by the teacher, the first aspect to keep in mind is the learners’ participation in each one of the activities developed in class. Teacher encouraged them to participate during the class, for instance at the beginning of the class, the teacher always used to start with an activity which allowed them to relax and create a good atmosphere before introducing the target topic.

The second aspect to be taken into account is the speaking process, learners showed a higher compromise to communicate in English during the class in spite of the lack of vocabulary some of them had from the previous levels, and they were also practicing the vocabulary related to business and interacting most of the time. The observer can say that with the implementation based on the virtual resources learners had, it was evident that learners increased the speaking activities in the class and autonomously overcoming those difficulties found during the speaking process.

Referring to the third aspect which is class development. The teacher always applies a warming up activity in order to make learners to feel comfortable and relax before introducing the new topic. The observer manifested that the teacher introduced the new vocabulary based on different kind of material like flash cards, articles, posters and so on. Besides the teacher was correcting the learners’ speaking performance and provided them the corresponding feedback, there was also a continuous monitoring of the business speaking activity through virtual resources by the teacher.

The fourth aspect to mention is the pedagogical implementation based on virtual resources, the activities developed through virtual resources were organized keeping in
mind the corresponding topic from the lesson plan. The learners participated during the development of different speaking activities at the university through some virtual tools. According to Comas-Quinn, De los Arcos, and Mardomingo (2012); Roed (2003); Shih and Yang (2008)”virtual learning refers to a learning paradigm in which learning interact with a virtual environment to acquire the learning objectives. Appropriate usage of such as environments results in optimal cost, time and efficiency. It also allows learners to practice speaking outside the classroom. Additionally, (Brown and Dunguid, 2000) mentioned that learners improve their speaking self-efficacy because virtual environment provides them opportunities to interact with others.

. Interview results

These were the five questions of the students’ interview.

1. What did you like the most from the class?
2. Which activity encourages you to participate more?
3. What was the most difficult part of the class?
4. What activity made you speak in the class?
5. Do you consider that the use of virtual resources helped you to develop your speaking skills? Why? Why not?

Based on the learners’ interview, the following findings arose:

Learners considered the virtual resources gave them the chance to practice speaking in different ways and different activities such as: moral dilemmas, conversations, listening comprehension, and warm up activities.

Virtual resources also allowed learners to work on pronunciation through the videos and the activities done into the classroom.
One more aspect learners highlighted was the use of vocabulary; the activities planned and organized through the virtual resources allowed them to improve their lexicon regarding different topics in business English.

**Research Categories**

We established a core category and three subcategories to answer the research questions as shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Core Category</th>
<th>Subcategories</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How does the use of virtual resources impact the development of speaking skills for Business English learners at a private university?</td>
<td>Building up lessons</td>
<td>1. Appropriate vocabulary for businesspeople.</td>
<td>- Learners’ questionnaire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To enhance speaking skills</td>
<td>2. Suitable speaking tasks for the Business English learners.</td>
<td>- Learners’ Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>through virtual resources.</td>
<td></td>
<td>transcriptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Moving from traditional tools to virtual resources</td>
<td>- Peer’s observation check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>list.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The research categories merged from the data collected through the three instruments applied after each one of the steps (lessons) of the implementation process. The core category is **Building up lessons to enhance speaking skills through virtual resources.** and the sub-categories are 1. Appropriate vocabulary for businesspeople. It is related to the research question “How does the use of virtual resources impact the development of speaking skills for Business English learners at a private university?” By acquiring new Business English words, learners have the possibility to express themselves and at the same time this vocabulary becomes a vital element in order to develop the four language skills; and in this particular case the speaking one. These excerpts are the evidence of the way learners consider vocabulary as a fundamental element of the Business English learning process.

**S2:** Is very important to learn the activities listening conversations and vocabulary.
**S3:** Pronunciation, vocabulary, listening is very important for my learning.
**S4:** For me, uhhh, is very important to practice the language and vocabulary
*(Source: Learners’ Interview Task: Lesson Plan 1)*

**S5:** The activity in which I participate more was reading I practiced vocabulary…
**S4:** The part... the difficult is new vocabulary from conversations.
**S1:** Yes, I can practice myself…and learn new vocabulary.
*(Source: Learners’ Interview Task: Lesson Plan 3)*

The teacher encouraged learners to speak and practice English introducing new vocabulary about marketing.
*(Source: Peer Observation Task: Lesson Plan 5)*

In spite of the good performance of learners during the activities, some weaknesses arose. For instance, unknown business vocabulary made the process difficult. The prior Business English knowledge did not allow learners to play the different business roles.
The second sub-category is Suitable speaking tasks for the Business English learners is directly related to the research question “How does the use of virtual resources impact the development of speaking skills for Business English learners at a private university?”

Speaking is the skill to be developed, by means of the planned resources and activities, during the implementation of this project; therefore it becomes a challenge for learners and teachers to deal with this skill in an appropriate way so that as an outcome of this, learners will be motivated to participate during the lesson and furthermore improve their fluency and pronunciation.

Participation is important during the language practice, vocabulary acquisition, and for a better development of the different language skills. For this project, participation is relevant for the research question because learners highlighted the activities that allowed them to participate actively during the lessons. Learners made this evident through the following excerpts:

L1: For me...we speak for the activities and for describe...the persons.

L2: The activity I spoke more was the round table
(Source: Learners’ Interview Task: Lesson Plan 1)

L2: The activity in which I participated to buy a laptop computer.
L5: The activity that made me participate in class was moral dilemma.
(Source: Learners’ Interview Task: Lesson Plan 3)

The teacher encouraged learners to participate in the activity allowing them to practice English using new vocabulary
(Source: Peer Observation Task: Lesson Plan 5)

Pronunciation is necessary in order to communicate in a coherent way, allowing the listener to receive the right message. Pronunciation mistakes lead to linguistic misunderstandings and communication gaps which discourage learners to speak in different contexts. This is the reason why pronunciation becomes essential when developing speaking skills inside and outside the classroom. During the implementation it was noticed that pronunciation was very important in order to develop the speaking skill, this was made evident by learners when they expressed it as shown in the following excerpts:

L4: It is very important to practice the pronunciation for understanding better the language...
L5: The practice of pronunciation makes speaking easier
(Source: Learners' Interview Task: Lesson Plan 1)

L1: The most difficult part of the class was speaking dilemma because the pronunciation was
complicated.
L2: The most difficult part of the class was the listening because the pronunciation is very
difficult.
(Source: Learners’ Interview Task: Lesson Plan 3)

The teacher made students repeat the new words in order to help them practice their
pronunciation.
(Source: Peer Observation Task: Lesson Plan 5)

Learners showed pronunciation and fluency difficulties which made it difficult for them to
speak and do tasks in a proper way. Listening was difficult for them but it is important as a
receptive skill that introduces new words and helps them to improve their intonation and
pronunciation day by day.

The third category, moving from traditional tools to virtual resources is directly related to the research
question “How does the use of virtual resources impact the development of speaking skills for
Business English learners at a private university?”

Technology is understood here as the devices, infrastructure and processes to create, store, secure,
and exchange all forms of electronic data. In education, specifically in teaching English as a Foreign
Language, it is useful to expose learners to natural environments which are difficult to find in an ordinary
classroom; this kind of tools encourages learners to practice the use of the target language outside the
classroom and learners can do it on their own, these tools become a fundamental element of
autonomous work and self-access study. Virtual Resources are among these useful tools teachers
can provide students with.

Virtual Resources are tools which allow language learners to be exposed to different natural language
settings; they also offer a great variety of activities for learners to practice in order to develop the
language skills, in this specific case, for developing the speaking skills. The use of several virtual
resources (dropbox –google drive-, youtube, whatsapp, skype, and so on) was proposed in all the
stages of the implementation phase of this project. It was done according to the objective of each one
of the lessons and of course according to the characteristics of the learners (level, interests, and
needs). The use of virtual resources enhanced learners to practice vocabulary, to listen to
conversations, it also encouraged them to work autonomously, self-correct, and practice different kinds of activities. The virtual resources are an important complement to other resources in order to develop speaking skills. Finally, learners can keep informed and practice English at any time. As the core element of this research study, its importance has been shown by the following learners’ excerpts:

L1: Yes, in the videos the music, the listening when I use the virtual resources I listen to conversations.
L2: Virtual resources are important for learning: listening conversations and vocabulary.
L3: The use of technology is very important because pronunciation, vocabulary, listening are important for my learning.
L4: Virtual resources are important for the pronunciation practice to understand better.

(Source: Learners’ Interview Task: Lesson Plan 1)

Virtual resources help me to develop speaking skills...
L1: I can practice myself speaking and learn new vocabulary.
L2: They help me to practice, and they help me with the skills speaking, listening, vocabulary, and pronunciation.
L3: Technology is very advanced to develop our practice and we can improve English all the time, and I realize of a mistake myself and practice different exercises.
L4: They are important complement to develop speaking skills.
L5: They help us to keep informed and practice English.
(Source: Learners’ Interview Task: Lesson Plan 3)

The teacher started the class by using whatsapp in order to motivate learners to keep on practicing with the virtual resources.
(Source: Peer Observation Task: Lesson Plan 5)

Something to keep in mind is the lack of an adequate laboratory for the learners to practice and to use the appropriate virtual resources in order to develop their speaking skills.

The merging of these sub-categories allowed researchers to figure out how the lessons outcomes and learners perceptions about the use of virtual resources to enhance speaking skills development in English for business contexts.
**LEARNEARS’ SPEAKING SKILL PROGRESS RESULTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBCATEGORIES</th>
<th>PREVIOUS LEARNERS’ PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>LATER LEARNERS’ PERFORMANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appropriate vocabulary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interview:</strong> Learners were not able to use and practice the vocabulary given by the teacher. L4: <em>the difficult part is the new vocabulary for conversations</em> <em>(Source: learners’ interview Task: Lesson plan 1).</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Questionnaires:</strong> Learners found difficult to assimilate and practice the new business vocabulary. <em>(Source: learners’ questionnaires Task: Lesson plan 1).</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Teacher’s observation:</strong> Learners showed difficulties when they tried to perform different activities with a new business vocabulary <em>(Source: teachers’ observation class 1: Lesson plan 4).</em></td>
<td><strong>Interview:</strong> Learners could use and practice the new vocabulary given by the teacher.L1: <em>I can practice myself and learn new vocabulary</em> <em>(Source: learners’ interview Task: Lesson plan 3)</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Questionnaires:</strong> Learners could assimilate and practice the new business vocabulary. <em>(Source: learners’ questionnaires Task: Lesson plan 4).</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Teacher’s observation:</strong> Learners showed a good progress when they were performing different activities with a new business vocabulary <em>(Source: teachers’ observation class 2: Lesson plan 6).</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suitable speaking tasks for</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interview:</strong> Learners had some difficulties in order to perform their speaking activities. L2: <em>The most difficult part of the class was the speaking dilemma because the pronunciation was complicated.</em> <em>(Source: learners’ interview Task: Lesson plan 2).</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Questionnaires:</strong> Learners agreed the problems they had to communicate each other during the performance of speaking activities. L1: For me the speaking is very difficult.</td>
<td><strong>Interview:</strong> Learners made progress during the performance of speaking activities. L4: <em>The practice of pronunciation makes me speak easier.</em> <em>(Source: learners’ interview Task: Lesson plan 4).</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Questionnaires:</strong> Learners had a better performance of speaking activities through the speaking techniques practice in everywhere. L2: <em>The activity I spoke more was the round table.</em> <em>(Source: learners’ questionnaires Task: Lesson plan 1).</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>the Business English learners</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: learners’ interview Task: Lesson plan 3)
| Source: learners’ questionnaires Task: Lesson plan 1.  
Teacher’s observation: Learners had some difficulties to communicate properly among themselves and the teacher. L1: *The most difficult part was pronunciation because the listening is very hard*  
(Source: teachers’ observation class 1: Lesson plan 4)  
Teacher’s observation: Learners could express themselves and interact during the speaking activities with the teacher. T: *The teacher made learners to repeat the new words in order to help them practice the pronunciation*  
(Source: teachers’ observation class 2: Lesson plan 5)  
---  
Moving from traditional tools to virtual resources.  
**Interview:** Learners found some difficulties to practice English by themselves due to aspects such as; time, places and motivation.  
**Questionnaires:** Learners were not enough aware of the importance of using virtual resources during the speaking process, therefore they had some difficulties when performing speaking activities through them.  
**Teacher’s observation:** Learners did not know how to use some of the tools provided by the teacher and because of this, there were some inconvenient to make the activity in a good way.  
**Interview:** Learners had the possibility to interact one and other and with the teacher through the use of virtual resources L1: *Virtual resources helped me to develop speaking skills.*  
(Source: learners’ interview Task : Lesson plan 3)  
**Questionnaires:** Learners could work autonomously and interact through virtual resources. L3: *Virtual resources allowed me to participate in speaking.*  
(Source: learners’ questionnaires Task: Lesson plan 4).  
**Teacher’s observation:** Learners showed a great improvement during the practice of speaking process through virtual resources. T: Learners were motivated during the practice of speaking activities when they were using the different types of tools.
Taking into consideration the previous results, it is also important to analyze them keeping in mind the three instruments mentioned before.

**Questionnaire:**

To the first question most learners answered they could understand the new vocabulary introduced by the teacher.

Secondly, learners said the topics of the class were interested for them.

In both cases learners showed interest and comprehension due to the teacher’s decision to implement a lesson plan based on learners’ needs.

The teacher’s instructions were understood by most learners in a good way.

All the learners manifested they had participated during the class and they also consider that the activities allowed them to speak English in class.

These answers show a complete coherence with theory because they knew that despite of the complexity of the speaking tasks, they used virtual resources to communicate orally.

**Interviews:**

Learners stated that they could practice by themselves learning new vocabulary and at the same time the interacted with each other. It shows that the planned interactive communicative activities allowed them to perform as desired.

For learners the most difficult parts of the class were business vocabulary and moral dilemma. Speaking techniques for ESP classroom lead learners into the real business context in this specific case, when learners must argue their partners and support their ideas.

**Class observations:**

The results of this instrument showed that the activities were planned taking into account the characteristics of learners their needs and interests.

The instructions were clear and the warm up activities elicited the use of language and learners were engaged to speak despite of the lack of vocabulary from previous levels.
Virtual resources were a key element that allowed them to communicate and show progress in the speaking development process.
4.2 CONCLUSIONS

Referring specifically to the research question of this study, we concluded that enhancement and improvement of English speaking skills during the practice are due to the following aspects:

1. The face to face practice interaction and the autonomous one through virtual resources.

2. The active participation and responsibility of learners when performing a speaking activity.

3. Selecting the business material learners wanted to work with and creating a friendly environment made them feel comfortable in order to express their ideas in a natural way.

The findings got from the research involve the enhancement of speaking skills based on business vocabulary in the classroom. Besides, other different aspects arose: First, virtual learning as an important strategy which helps learners to keep in touch during the classes through various types of virtual resources which facilitate the speaking production. Second, learners showed a great collaboration and participation during the interaction among themselves and the teacher in the development of activities. Third, speaking techniques such as role plays, moral dilemmas, information gap, discussion, meeting and greeting, and students’ presentations were an essential contribution to enhance speaking skills in the EFL classroom keeping in mind that learners and teacher worked as a real team.

Other findings are related to virtual resources as a key tool for providing learners with Business English listening material; it introduced new vocabulary and helped learners to improve their pronunciation so that they could recall those words when they needed it later on: for participating in class or for other kind of speaking activities such as presentations, conversations, or debates.
Taking into account the role of virtual resources during the teaching-learning process, it can be said that those resources are a very important complement for the classroom activities. They give teachers the chance to use different materials and tools but they cannot be the only ones that assure a successful learning process because human interaction is also necessary for learning the target language.
4.3 PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

This research study main concern is enhancing business speaking English through virtual resources at Autónoma University considering the importance of communicating in English in the working world nowadays and the advantage of using the technology. Researchers consider necessary to review strategies which motivate and help learners during the first levels to acquire more vocabulary and practice English autonomously through virtual tools, so learners can have a good performance of the target language in the last ESP English levels.

It is also fundamental to review and evaluate periodically the English speaking process at this university in order to make the corresponding adjustments if necessary.

On the other hand, it is necessary to mention the difficulties learners have for the access of these virtual resources at this University, besides this, some of them are damaged or do not work properly.

We consider that learners demonstrate a great performance during virtual environment English classes and they feel more comfortable interacting among themselves and the teacher, they also feel as real participants in the learning process when their opinions are taken into account on activities they should perform in class.

Lesson plans by using virtual resources are very useful in helping learners to practice English everywhere and it also enriches learners’ business vocabulary for the speaking production.

Having in mind the importance that speaking skill has in the field of teaching English as foreign language, therefore this research project focuses on the implementation and innovation of the way learners can communicate by using vocabulary corresponding to business through virtual tools avoiding the traditional speaking classes.
This study also tends to provide contribution to the Master Program of Education with emphasis on Didactics of Foreign Languages at Libre University in Bogota.
5. FURTHER RESEARCH

According to the conclusions, and the issues emerged after the research process carried out to develop this project, there are several points to highlight for further research. This research project encouraged learners to start practicing speaking; the project was carried out by the researchers in order to enhance learners for speaking production with the use of technology. It was structured into a speaking product approach which helped learners to follow sequential models for a better development of the speaking skills, besides researchers had the possibility to observe and monitor the performance of learners in order to make some changes if necessary. Another relevant purpose of this research is the way learners can practice autonomously everywhere making a successful speaking process at any time.

This project intended to work through virtual resources in order to develop speaking skills. There could be more projects related to other language skills (listening, reading, and writing). On the other hand, as part of ESB business English is not the only one taught at Autónica University, further research could be possibly applied to English for law, and English for engineering programs which include specific vocabulary.

Finally, further research could be implemented in other groups of Business English to validate the information merging from this project.
6. BIBLIOGRAPHY


Webgrapy:


6. APPENDICES

(APPENDIX 1)

LEARNERS’ SURVEY

UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE COLOMBIA
INSTITUTO SUPERIOR DE PEDAGOGÍA
ÁREA DE INGLÉS – NIVEL

LEARNERS’ SURVEY

Name ____________________________________________ Age __________________

Programme____________________________________ Semester______

Shift:  Day shift __________  Night shift __________

Did you study English before coming to university?  YES ____  NO ____

Where? ____________________________________  How long? ___________________

Do you need English at work?  YES ____  NO ____

Tick the skills you work the best:

LISTENING ____  SPEAKING ____  READING ____  WRITING ____  GRAMMAR ____

Tick the skills you consider difficult to work with:

LISTENING ____  SPEAKING ____  READING ____  WRITING ____  GRAMMAR ____

What (ONLY ONE) skill would you like to improve?

LISTENING ____  SPEAKING ____  READING ____  WRITING ____  GRAMMAR ____
(APPENDIX 2)

TEACHERS’ SURVEY

UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE COLOMBIA

INSTITUTO SUPERIOR DE PEDAGOGÍA

ÁREA DE INGLÉS

TEACHERS’ SURVEY

WHAT KIND OF INNOVATION DO YOU CONSIDER WOULD BE USEFUL IN ORDER TO IMPROVE OUR STUDENTS’ PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
Dear learner: You need to fill the following format in order to participate voluntary in the research study called: using virtual resources to enhance speaking skills for business English.

In order to protect your privacy, we will not report results that reveal your personal identity.

If you agree with your participation to collect some data, please fill in the format that is written in Spanish.

Thanks a lot.

Fecha: FEBRERO, 2 de 2016

Como estudiante inscrito al nivel 5 de negocios en la universidad Autónoma de Colombia, autorizo mi participación en la recolección de datos del presente trabajo de investigación desarrollado por los profesores Jorge Didier Palacios Mosquera y Mauro Javier Hernández Ramos.

Signature of group acceptance of the whole group

Learners’ names

1. CARRION CAMELO VICTOR ALFONSO
2. CASSIANI BAQUERO ALEJANDRO
3. GAITAN ARIAS FABIO NELSON
4. GUTIERREZ JORGE RICARDO
5. LOPEZ SANABRIA SERGIO ARLEY
6. LOZANO SOTO CELIA ALEJANDRA
7. MELO BASABE JORGE ARMANDO
8. MELO MORA ANGIE PAOLA
9. MOLINA ROJAS PAULA ANDREA
10. MORENO VARGAS YADY MATILDE
11. POVEDA RODRIGUEZ WILLMAR CAMILO
12. RINCON RAMIREZ LEIDY LORENA
13. RUEDA VALENTIN ANA XIMENA
14. SALAMANCA SANCHEZ SANDRA JULIET
15. SALAZAR PACHONJEYMY DAYANA
16. SALCEDO MURILLO LILIANA ANDREA
17. SUAREZ PINILLA ANDREA LIZETH
18. TOBAR TOVAR DANIELA
19. TORRES TUCUA CATALINA
20. VIVAS ROJAS MAGNOLIA
21. VILLAMIL LIZETH ANAMARIA

22. YEPES ZUÑIGA TATIANA

23. HERRERA BUITRAGO CAROLINA

24. RODRIGUEZ CARRILLO GABRIEL
APPENDIX 4

LEARNERS’ QUESTIONNAIRES

FUNDACIÓN UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE COLOMBIA
INSTITUTO SUPERIOR DE PEDAGOGIA - ÁREA DE INGLÉS
SPEAKING-SKILL DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
LESSON PLAN 6

Teacher’s name: __________________________________________ Date _________________________

Student’s name __________________________________________

Write YES or NO from each of the questions on the questionnaire:

YES The statement is always or almost always true for you (around 100%)

NO The statement is never or almost never true for you (around 0%)

1. I could understand the new vocabulary introduced by the teacher. ______
2. The topic was interesting to me. ______
3. The teacher’s instructions were clear for me. ______
4. I participated actively in the class. ______
5. The activities allowed me to practice speaking in class. ______
6. I could use the new vocabulary to speak about the target topic. ______
7. I could interact with my teacher and classmates. ______
8. I consider the material provided by the teacher was useful. ______
9. The use of virtual resources helped me for a better comprehension of the topic. ______
10. I could speak about a business related topic through the use of the Virtual Resource that was previously chosen by the teacher. ______
### TEACHER'S PEER OBSERVATION CLASS

#### Peer Observation Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor clearly communicates the purpose of class section and instructional activities.</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor uses concrete examples and illustrations that clarify the material.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor uses a variety of activities to ensure all learners are engaged.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor challenges learners to think analytically.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor fosters learners-to-learners interaction.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor links new material to previously learned concepts.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor uses visual and virtual resources where appropriate to accompany verbal presentation.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners feel comfortable asking questions.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners actively participate in class activities and discussions.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners are able to connect course material to other relevant topics.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS**

While the teacher was explaining the new topic, some learners seemed confused because some of them got at 6:30 p.m., even though the class kept going normally. Without any interruption, on the other hand, learners were motivated to know about the new topic to them as a common language.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/15" alt="Yes" /></td>
<td></td>
<td>From the beginning of the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/15" alt="Yes" /></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/15" alt="Yes" /></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS**

The teacher encourages learners to participate in the activity and at the same time allows them to speak and give feedback into their own comments related to the topic about marketing.
1. What did you like the most from the class?

___________________________________

2. Which activity encourages you to participate more?

___________________________________

3. What was the most difficult part of the class?

___________________________________

4. What activity made you speak in the class?

___________________________________

5. Do you consider that the use of virtual resources helped you to develop your speaking skills? Why? Why not?

____________________________________________________________________
(APPENDIX 7)

PICTURES ABOUT CLASS ACTIVITIES
LEARNERS’ FULL NAME: __________________________________________

DATE: __________________________________________________________________________

VIRTUAL RESOURCE: Video. You tube

TOPIC: Unemployment

AIMS: To get familiar and use the vocabulary about unemployment

To talk and express their ideas about the topic.

PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE: Job seekers

Warming up:

GUESS WHO?

A. Listen to your classmate answering your questions and guess who the character is.

B. Look at the pictures and predict what the topic is about.
1. What can you see in the pictures?

2. Why is it difficult to find a job nowadays?

3. Have you ever been in a situation like this?

4. What do you need to get a job?

**Complete the following sentences with the idiomatic expressions below.**

**To find out:** To discover about someone or something

**To get better:** To recover from an illness, to feel in a good way.

**To know by heart:** To memorize.

1. I don’t remember my manager’s mobile phone, but I_________________ my girlfriend’s flat address.

2. We need to_________________ what happened with our product, it’s damaged.

3. Helen has been very ill this week, I hope she_________________ soon.

**INPUT**

**Match the words with the expressions**

1. Person who hires others to work.  A. social protection

2. Jobs without legal benefits.  B. poverty

3. A low salary  C. informal employment.

4. A lack of work activity  D. labor market

5. The offers to work  E. minimum wage

6. An activity performed during a period of time which is paid monthly  F. job
7. The total lack of money
8. The benefit and right an employee has.

Read the article about unemployment in Latin-America and the Caribbean.

ECLAC-ILO report

Unemployment rate in Latin America and the Caribbean could rise 0.2 percentage point

The ILO and ECLAC forecast that unemployment will reach 6.2% this year, due to an encouraging economic outlook.

News | 13 May 2015

LIMA (ILO News) - The an encouraging economic outlook for the current year will likely prompt a mild increase in the regional unemployment rate to 6.2% from the 6.0% registered in 2014, according to estimates released today by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the International Labor Organization (ILO).

In a new edition of their joint publication *The Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean*, both institutions indicate that the 1% average expansion in economic activity forecast for the region will not be enough to reverse the deceleration process that began in 2011.

The stagnation of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita should weaken labor demand and, therefore, the creation of salaried employment. For that reason, a decline in the region’s urban employment rate—which refers to the relationship between the employed population and the total number of people who are of working age—is forecast for a third consecutive year.

The report says that on a regional level the decline in labor participation—which is to say, the proportion of the working-age population that is active in the workforce, whether employed
or unemployed—seen in 2014 is not expected to be repeated with the same intensity in 2015, which, coupled with a decrease in the employment rate, should lead to higher open unemployment, similar to the levels seen in 2013.

“The labor market situation in 2015 is not expected to be particularly conducive to progress in reducing poverty and inequality,” Alicia Bárcena, ECLAC’s Executive Secretary, and Elizabeth Tinoco, ILO Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, state in the document’s prologue.

In effect, the report indicates that during most of the last decade and at the beginning of this current decade, Latin America and the Caribbean made important advances in poverty reduction and income distribution, in a global context characterized by growing inequality. These improvements were due to the labor market’s positive trends, such as the robust creation of salaried employment and the reduction of gaps in labor income. Other contributing factors included public policies on labor matters (minimum wage, formalization, inspection) as well as non-labor matters (expansion of social protection systems and education).

The first part of ECLAC-ILO’s document analyzes the region’s labor performance in 2014 and attributes the decline in the unemployment rate seen last year to the atypical behavior of labor markets in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, more specifically to the steep fall in their labor participation rates.

In its second section, the report examines the expansion of social protection in the context of high degrees of informality in the region. It contends that, from a rights perspective, the universalization of social protection is essential to helping build societies where equality is the end-goal of development strategies.

The United Nations organizations indicate that to guarantee universal access it is necessary to
integrate contributory and noncontributory components in social protection systems, which entails significant challenges, above all in terms of institutional design and financing.

**Answer the following comprehension questions.**

1. What does it mean: The region’s urban employment rate?
2. According to the article, will poverty and inequality be reduced in 2015?
3. What were the important improvements that Latin America and the Caribbean made to reduce poverty the last decade?
4. Why is social protection important?
5. Is the unemployment rate in Latin America and the Caribbean getting worse or better?

**VOCABULARY**

**Complete the definition with the following words and phrases**

| Workforce, labor performance, atypical behavior, labor demand, monthly wage |

1. It’s the amount of money that an employee makes during a period of time of working ________________________________
2. It’s the unusual performance by someone or something _______________________
3. It’s a group of people who perform different kinds of activities at their workplace __________________________
4. It’s the way employees develop their job activities _______________________
5. It’s the vacancies of a company or a firm needs to cover hiring new staff.________________________
ELABORATION

Watch the following video and choose the best answer (A, B. or C)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMeSwC5dKPY

UN: Colombia has the highest unemployment in Latin America

1. **Jose Miguel Cabrera**:
   a. works in a multinational company
   b. has an informal job
   c. works in a domestic company

2. Colombia has a percentage of unemployment of:
   a. 10%
   b. 7%
   c. 10.6%

3. The ANDI’s president says that he will:
   a. promote industry and agriculture
   b. promote industry and economic
   c. promote agriculture and mining

4. According to the indicators Colombia had a (an):
   a. good economic performance last year.
   b. excellent economic performance last year.
   c. poor economic performance last year.

5. According to the government’s point of view:
   a. Colombia has generated more jobs than any other countries in the region.
   b. Colombia has generated the same numbers of jobs that other countries in the region.
c. Colombia has generated less jobs than any other countries in the region.

**UN: Colombia has the highest unemployment in Latin America.**

(Fill in the gaps using information from the video)

The government claims the country’s _________ is generating more jobs than any other nation in the region.

Jose Miguel Cabrera is _________ this March with an engineering degree.

But his job prospects are poor even though he has several internships including one with a _________.

I am afraid of graduating and not being able to become _________ because I can’t find a job.

What do I live on?

As he completes his course requirements for graduation Jose Miguel is working in Colombia’s informal economy just like more than half of the _________.

He’s sent more than 200 résumés to potential _________ and says he’s only had four interviews.

Seeing his friends graduate and go through the same thing makes him feel even less optimistic about finding a _______ ________ job.

At first you think ok I’ll work hard or maybe I won’t find a job I really want but you don’t expect to find that low ________ of work.

While Colombia claims to be creating more jobs, a recent United Nations report showed Colombia’s _________ at 10.6%, the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Economists say another problem is the types of jobs the _________ is creating.

The largest increase in jobs is in the _________ sector that is characterized by low quality employment and in mining a sector that generates dynamism in the economy but poor jobs.

Statistics show industrial _________ has consistently declined since early 2012.

The National Association of Colombian Industrialists has appointed a new president to do more to _________ the sector in this year.
But economist Eduardo Sarmiento Palacios says a lot more than a ____________ of direction is needed.

The president of the industry union says “I will promote industry, I will promote agriculture” but the exchange rate is making our products more ____________ abroad, with that depreciation and the free trade agreements what industry are you going to have: Just destruction of the agriculture and industry therefore the destruction of the foremost job creators.

The Colombian government continues to defy its critics and refuses to apologize for statistics that indicate poor ____________ last year, instead Colombian officials said positive indicators such as the data that shows a reduction in ____________ between 2010 and the end of 2012.

OUTPUT

According to the topic related to unemployment and the vocabulary practiced in class.

Let’s have a round table discussion about it.

Round table questions:

1. What do you think about unemployment in Colombia?

2. How does unemployment affect the employees’ quality of life?

3. What are the main reasons for unemployment high rate in Colombia?

4. How does informal employment benefit to unemployed?

5. How would you feel if you did not have a job for a long time?
UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE COLOMBIA
FIFTH LEVEL BUSINESS LEARNERS
SECOND LESSON PLAN
TEACHER: JORGE DIDIER PALACIOS M.

LEARNERS’ FULL NAME: ___________________________________________

DATE: __________________________________________________________

VIRTUAL RESOURCE: SKYPE

TOPIC: Selling

AIMS: To recognize, practice and use the vocabulary about marketing

To talk and express their viewpoints about different kinds of selling.

PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE: Marketing to students

Warming up:

Companies use a number of different methods to promote and sell their products or services. Flashcards names (advertising media, personal selling, sales promotions, public relations, direct marketing and sponsorship).

Choose one of them in groups of three and mention examples about them.

Complete the following sentences with the idiomatic expressions below

Figure out: to find the solution to a problem
Call of: to cancel
Hang out: to fool around.

1. I have an important meeting with an entrepreneur from a company tomorrow, but I’m getting ill, I’ll ______________________ this meeting for next week.
2. They like doing nothing on the web, I think they____________ all the time, and it’s a pity.
3. It is important to________ it_______ before it will be too late for our job’s activities.

INPUT

Match the words with the expressions

1. Startup budget A. Promoting a new product
Read the article about selling.

Let’s say you’re a newbie to the world of online sales and are looking to make money online, but you’re starting with a small startup budget. With the blinding wealth of information available for new business owners, knowing how to spend your limited funds can be a bit intimidating.

Here is a five-step checklist to help get you started and guide you toward success.

1. Spend time getting feedback on what you’re selling before launching.

Don’t rely on affirmation from friends and family to validate that you have a unique and salable product or service. Chances are, these people are emotionally attached to you, and they’re more likely to think every idea you share is the greatest thing since Nutella. Getting feedback from people who are emotionally attached to you is a “disaster from the start,” says Adam Callinan, founder of Bottle Keeper.

Get market validation from potential customers who aren’t in your social circle. Some entrepreneurs use the “will they pull out their wallet” test before investing money in a business. Callinan, who’d come up with a prototype for an individual beer bottle cooler, ran a crowd funding campaign on Fundable to gauge pre-orders for his product. His campaign raised nearly $14,000, 280 percent of his $5,000 goal.

Besides Fundable, there are a number of crowd funding platforms to choose from including Kickstarter, Indiegogo and Rocket hub.
Other ways to get people’s feedback, says Sujan Patel, vice-president of Marketing at When I Work, is using customer insight survey tools, such as Qualaroo and Client Heartbeat. If you’re just starting out, surveys are a chance to find out what the customer is hoping the product/service will solve or do for him or her. If you’re already in business, surveys can ask how the customer found out about the product or service, whether the customer is willing to be a return customer and why.

Or if you’re in a job in the industry you plan on starting a business in, get feedback from the people at your job -- your manager and clients -- says Steve Tobak, founder of Invisor Consulting.

2. Have a website.

You must have a website, says Joel Widmer, founder of Fluxe Digital Marketing. Not only for the obvious -- to have something to refer customers back to -- but having a website builds your brand’s digital footprint. Keep your site simple and copy-driven with opportunities for email captures on every page.

Three easy steps to having your own website to sell products without spending a lot of cash are:

- Select a content management system (CMS), such as Word Press, which is popular for its user friendliness and is free.
- Register a domain name and subscribe to a hosting service, such as GoDaddy or Blue host.
- Customize your CMS with ecommerce-enabling plugins and themes. Woo Commerce offers free ecommerce themes for Word Press, such as Storefront. Also, WP e-commerce and Market Press are additional free ecommerce plugin options.

Or for anyone setting up an e-commerce site, both Shopify and Square space are easy e-commerce platforms that allow you to build an e-commerce site yourself.
3. Know your competition and customers.

Study up on both competitor and complementary brands (i.e. if you are selling a fire alarm, then look for “house safety” websites). Widmer says your customers will be hanging out on websites for both competitor and complementary brands. He recommends using search tools such as Similar Web and Google’s related-search results (located at the bottom of every Google search) to see what sites your prospective customer may be visiting.

Other free research tools to get to know your market, suggests Brandon Schaefer, CEO of My Virtual Salesforce, are LinkedIn (to see who competitor brands are connecting with and what types of updates they're posting), Google Alerts (for brand mentions and keywords) and Google Trends.

4. Create an action plan for sales and marketing.

To earn your first million in sales, says Patel, work backwards and put a number on what it takes in monthly revenue to get to a million your first year -- meaning how many units, subscriptions or services must be sold. Create benchmarks to reach. Even if you don’t reach them, you have a blueprint.

One way to reach your goal is to figure out which marketing avenues to leverage. Given the wealth of social-media possibilities, start with one or two social-media outlets where you know your audience is. In general, for new products the best channels are Facebook and Pinterest, says Widmer. For expertise and services, try LinkedIn.

Also, two effective and free marketing strategies are blogging on your own site and guest blogging on complementary sites. This strategy helps build content and a digital footprint for your brand, says Widmer. For guidance on what hot topics to blog about, Buzzsumo, a free web service, allows you to input any domain or topic and get a list of the 10 most popular related posts at the moment. It can also inform you of what popular sites to hit up for guest blogging.

Should you guest blog, use the opportunity to lead users back to your site and capture emails, says Widmer. One way to do so is to use a “call to action” -- where you offer the reader
something of value, such as a free how-to eBook or a must-have checklist -- that the user can get or download by going back to your website and providing an email address.

Some other marketing tools? The free KingSumo app allows you to capture email subscribers through giveaways; Facebook Ads start at $1; and the e-newsletter tool Mail Chimp has a free option and is drag-and-drop easy.

5. Do as much yourself as you can.

The DIY mentality will usually save you money if your budget is limited. Also, it allows you to control the process and brand, explains Callinan, who built his ecommerce site from scratch by talking to others who’d already done ecommerce sites successfully. Don't farm out jobs you can do yourself, especially in the beginning.

If you need on-demand expertise from entrepreneurs with a track record, try Clarity, says Widmer. The service allows the user to get specific, consultant-level advice for a fee.

All startups are a gamble -- but as Patel advises, whose company will hit $10 million in revenue this year, “Hone in on where your strengths are and double down.”

Write true (T) or false (F) for the following statements.

1. There are 5 steps-checklists in order to help you to start a successful business. T  F
2. According to Sujan Patel, other ways to get people’s feedback is using customer insight questionnaires tools. T  F
3. There are 4 steps in order to sell your products easily on the web without spending too much money. T  F
4. According to Widmer, for new products the best channels are Facebook and Pinterest. T  F
5. Buzzsumo is a free web service which allows sellers to input any domain or topic and get a list of the 10 most popular related posts at the moment. T  F
6. According to the article Facebook Ads start at $2 T  F
7. The DIY mentality helps you to control your limited budget. T  F
8. The new companies or firms are not a gamble. T  F
VOCABULARY

Complete the sentences below with the following words

WP e-commerce and Market Press - potential customers - customer insight survey tools - LinkedIn - Google Alerts - revenue - call to action - The free King Sumo app

1. People can get feedback through____________________________________
2. It’s necessary to Get market validation from _________________________
3. A way to capture emails is through the use of a_____________________
4. For expertise and services you should use___________________________
5. Additional free ecommerce plugin options are_______________________
6. For brand mentions and keywords you can use_______________________
7. This marketing tool allows you to capture email subscribers through giveaways-______________________________
8. Sometimes companies have to pay millions of_____________ every year.

ELABORATION

A. Listen to an interview with Indira Thambiah, Head of E-commerce at Argos, and complete the sentences below with the words in the box.

Channel – enquire- identical- integrated- online- order- run store- telephone- website

1. Our experience shows that customers will sometimes buy______________, Sometimes order on the______________________ and sometimes go into the stores to pick up goods. So we need to understand what our customers want.
2. Our operations are fully integrated. The prices that we show on the__________ are __________________________to the prices that you would pay in the__________________?
3. You can call up a call center and________________ about an__________________that you placed through any______________________________.
4. We don’t________________ operations side by side, we run a truly__________
Multi-channel offer.

B. Listen to the last part of the interview, according to Indira’s experience decide if the statements are true (T) or false (F).

1. A lot of people research products online and then go to the store to pick that product up.__________
2. Customers on the high street behave very differently from customers’ online.__________
3. A good website is one that is easy to navigate, easy to find and easy to transact with.__________

OUTPUT

ROLE PLAY IN SKYPE

Role play this situation between a sales rep. and a customer.

Situation 1: customer

In the morning you saw a laptop computer in the shopping center’s store, when you came back the same day in the afternoon the price had risen up, you couldn’t buy it before because you hadn’t been paid yet, so you want to pay the same price that it had in the morning, then you are going to talk to the sales rep. to find out what happened.

Situation 1: sales rep.

You should listen to the customer complaints, explain him/her what happened with the change of price and offer him/her a possible solution for this situation.

You can offer to the customer solutions like these:

A. To keep the same price the laptop had before.

B. To give a special discount or bonus

C. To promote a new product with the same quality and cheaper.
LEARNERS’ FULL NAME: ________________________________

DATE: ____________________________________________

VIRTUAL RESOURCE: GOOGLE DRIVE

TOPIC: INSURANCE BUSINESS

AIMS: To recognize, practice and use the vocabulary about insurance business

To talk, practice and express their ideas about the importance of insurance at work.

PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE: Different types of selling.

Warming up:

Make groups of four, choose a learner from each group to go to another group and show a picture of different kind of insurance and say what insurance you or your family have.

Motor
Travel
Home
Money
Retirement
Life cover
Business

Complete the following sentences with the idiomatic expressions below
To give up: to surrender, to quit

To keep in touch: to be in contact

To keep on: to continuous

1. My business is working in the best way, I have to_________________ doing the same.

2. They don’t see very often, they should ________________ at work this week.

3. Launching and promoting a new product is a challenge and it’s also very difficult at the beginning, but we don’t have to______________________

INPUT

Match the words 1-5 from the article with the meaning a-e.

1. Insurance agent                   a. It’s a person who possesses material things
2. Manufacture                        b. Goods or products made in a factory
3. Injuries                                c. A set of rules given by a company or state.
4. Policies                               d. It’s a person who provides information about
5. Owner                                  covering protection.

   e. When someone is hurt due to different reasons.

Read the article about business insurance.

Types of Business Insurance

Insurance coverage is available for every conceivable risk your business might face. Cost and amount of coverage of policies vary among insurers. You should discuss your specific business risks and the types of insurance available with your insurance agent or broker. Your agency can advise you on the exact types of insurance you should consider purchasing.
General Liability Insurance

Business owners purchase general liability insurance to cover legal hassles due to accident, injuries and claims of negligence. These policies protect against payments as the result of bodily injury, property damage, medical expenses, libel, slander, the cost of defending lawsuits, and settlement bonds or judgments required during an appeal procedure.

Product Liability Insurance

Companies that manufacture, wholesale, distribute, and retail a product may be liable for its safety. Product liability insurance protects against financial loss as a result of a defect product that causes injury or bodily harm. The amount of insurance you should purchase depends on the products you sell or manufacture. A clothing store would have far less risk than a small appliance store, for example.

Professional Liability Insurance

Business owners providing services should consider having professional liability insurance (also known as errors and omissions insurance). This type of liability coverage protects your business against malpractice, errors, and negligence in provision of services to your customers. Depending on your profession, you may be required by your state government to carry such a policy. For example, physicians are required to purchase malpractice insurance as a condition of practicing in certain states.

Commercial Property Insurance

Property insurance covers everything related to the loss and damage of company property due to a wide-variety of events such as fire, smoke, wind and hail storms, civil disobedience and vandalism. The definition of "property" is broad, and includes lost income, business interruption, buildings, computers, company papers and money.
Property insurance policies come in two basic forms: (1) **all-risk policies** covering a wide-range of incidents and perils except those noted in the policy; (2) **peril-specific policies** that cover losses from only those perils listed in the policy. Examples of peril-specific policies include fire, flood, crime, and **business interruption insurance**. All-risk policies generally cover risks faced by the average small business, while peril-specific policies are usually purchased when there is high risk of peril in a certain area. Consult your insurance agent or broker about the type of business property insurance best suited for your small business.

**Home-Based Business Insurance**

Contrary to popular belief, homeowners’ insurance policies do not generally cover home-based business losses. Depending on risks to your business, you may add riders to your homeowners' policy to cover normal business risks such as property damage. However, homeowners' policies only go so far in covering home-based businesses and you may need to purchase additional policies to cover other risks, such as general and professional liability.

**A. Complete the statements according to the reading**

1. It’s important to discuss your business risks and the types of insurance available with your agent or broker______________________________

2. In order to cover legal hassles due to accident, injuries and claims of negligence, Business owners purchase______________________________

3. Everything related to the financial loss as a result of a defect product that causes injury or bodily harm of company is covered by __________________

4. Everything related to the financial loss and damage of a company is covered by______________________________

5. Homeowners' policies only cover______________________________
B. Answer the following comprehension questions according to the reading

1. What can your business agency say about the insurance service?

2. What does the amount of insurance you should purchase depend on?

3. What are the two basic forms that property insurance policies come?

4. What do specific policies include?

5. How is professional liability insurance also known?

ELABORATION

A. Listen to part one.

Irene Foster, and underwriter at the insurance company, Green Shield, Explains how and insurance company is structured. Listen to part one and match the jobs activities (A-F) with the people who perform them (1-3)

1. Manager  a. Take care of general administration.
2. Clerical staff  b. Handle online and telephone applications and claims.
3. Underwriters  c. Agree to accept a risk or not.
   d. Manage staff.
   e. Deal with the majority of applications and claims.
   f. Take decisions on special cases.

B. Listen to part two and answer the questions.

1. What example does Irene give of “high risk” case? Complete the sentence: When someone has made____________ claims or more in____________.
2. What example does Irene give of a case where the company may “review the situation”? __________________________________________________________________________

3. What special terms does the company sometimes offer in cases of high risk? Complete the sentence: We may quote a _______________ premium or offer only limited_________.

**OUTPUT**

**Moral dilemma**

You are members of a firm, this firm is very responsible with the monthly payments and it always gives compensation and excellent benefits to their staff, besides it provides training and support for those in need. The problem is that an employee got ill and he had to go to the hospital, he was told that it was not possible to provide him health care. He found out that the firm has not paid his social security during a year. He got upset about that situation, but at the same time he knows that he has a good job and he does not want to get in trouble with the firm in spite of he thinks, it is a kind of fraud from the firm against him. What should he do?

He has four options:

1. Talk to his colleagues about it in order the situation won’t be the same with others.
2. Talk to the firm’s representative.
3. Report the fraud to the corresponding entity.
4. Leave the firm.

Work in four groups, each group selects one of the options and support it with different points of view why it is the best option (one person from each group will say what the best option is)
UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE COLOMBIA
FIFTH LEVEL BUSINESS LEARNERS
FOURTH LESSON PLAN
TEACHER: JORGE DIDIER PALACIOS M.

LEARNERS’ FULL NAME: ____________________________________________

DATE: ____________________________________________________________

VIRTUAL RESOURCE: Google drive (dropbox)

TOPIC: Marketing

AIMS: To recognize, practice and use the vocabulary about marketing.

To talk, practice and share ideas of the importance of the four p’s of marketing.

PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE: Brands and selling.

WARMING UP:

The teacher will provide learners some different flash cards in which there are pictures about topics of their interest, such as: money, education, religion job, politics and sex. They cannot be in the middle so they love it or they hate it. And they have to explain why.

They will make 6 groups of four and a learner will be selected at random from each group.

VOCABULARY

Complete the following sentences with the idiomatic expressions below

1. Fed up: To be tired of doing something

2. Seek out: To search

3. Lay off: To stop employment
1. This activity I have been doing during the year, it’s a total waste of time, and I have decided to____________________________ something different for the future.

2. The Mazda Company won’t _______________ 100 workers next year.

3. I am sometimes____________________ of working at the same place and with the same people.

INPUT

LISTENING

Listen to a man talking about the 4 p’s of marketing then follow the instructions for each one of the exercises.

1. What words do the 4 p’s stand for?

   a. P___________
   
   b. P___________
   
   c. P___________
   
   d. P___________

2. Fill in the blanks using the words in the chart.

   Reputation, television, radio, print, buy, offers, moves, resources, goods, retail, scale, sellers, payment, customers, materials, movement, products, wholesalers, retailers

   **Placement**, where customers can ________________ the products. It has to do with the way the company ________________ its products to places where customers can get them.
**Distribution channels.** They are the paths that _________ follow from a company to its customers. These channels might include distributors, ____________, _________, and the internet.

**Logistics.** It is all about how _________ and _________ are bought, moved, and stored. This involves coordinating both _________ the company needs to produce a product and the _________ of the product to customers.

**Market coverage.** It is the amount of ____________ in a particular market that sell the company’s products. We can also talk about market coverage.

**Promotion.** It includes all the ways in which companies tell ____________ about their products.

**Advertising.** One form of promotion, advertising, is often done through _________, _________, _________, and the internet.

**Public relations.** Managing public opinion and the ____________ of a company and its products.

It relies on methods that do not require___________ such as press releases and press conferences.

**Marketing Campaign:** a large ____________ planned marketing effort to promote a company or its products is called a campaign.

**In store promotions.** Activities that promote a product or company at a _________ location are called in store promotions. This may include special ____________ demonstrations, displays, and free samples.
OUTPUT

DIALOGUE. (Google drive –dropbox)

In class students will talk about marketing, especially the campaigns they most remember about different brands. They will interact among them discussing about memorable advertising campaigns. They have to talk about the brand, its products, slogans, famous TV commercials, advertisements, and different marketing campaigns.

Make groups of 5 and record a 3 minute dialogue regarding the topic and send it to the teacher’s Google-drive.
LEARNERS’ FULL NAME: ____________________________________________
DATE: __________________________________________________________

VIRTUAL RESOURCE: Whatsapp

TOPIC: Technological innovations

AIMS: To recognize, practice and use the vocabulary about technology.

To talk about innovative technologies.

PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE: Selling and marketing

Warming up:

What´s up? (Whatsapp)

The teacher sends the students a message via whatsapp using acronyms (before the class) and students will try to reply to it in class. Some of them will read their replies in front of the class.

Complete the following sentences with the idiomatic expressions below

1. **Back up**: To make a copy in case something happens to the computer.
2. **Click on**: To move the mouse over an icon, image, word, or another object and click
3. **Go down**: To stop working (computer)

1. If you are at work and the computer ____________________ you can’t do anything.
2. It is always a good idea to ____________________ all the files.
3. If you ____________________ that icon you can change the screen color.
INPUT

READING

Read the ten slides on the web page through the link provided. Choose the home innovation automation devices you like the most and write down the features and use(s) of it. And what you think about it.


OUTPUT

SPEAKING

Report to the class the features and use of that innovation through a whatsapp audio clip. The clip must last 60 seconds at least.
VIRTUAL RESOURCE: Youtube

TOPIC: Customer service

AIMS: To recognize, practice and use the vocabulary about customer service

To talk, practice and share ideas of the importance of service policies

PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE: Technological inventions

Warming up:

. PRE-TEACH VOCABULARY: Write out the following words onto flashcards (using one color for the new vocabulary and another color for the synonym): polite, responsible, sociable, glad, smart, shy, confident, stingy, humble, old fashioned, moody. The learners should match the vocabulary with the synonyms. Once they have successfully done that, the teacher will place the flashcards face down on the table. The first student picks up a card and starts a story using their word. The students then take turns picking up a card and using their new vocabulary words in the story.

Complete the following sentences with the idiomatic expressions below

4. Fed up: To be tired of doing something

5. Seek out: To search

6. Lay off: To stop employment

1. This activity I have been doing during the year, it’s a total waste of time, and I have decided to __________________ something different for the future.

2. The Mazda Company won’t __________________ 100 workers next year.
3. I sometimes____________________ of working at the same place and with the same people.

**INPUT**

** VOCABULARY **

**Match the words 1-5 from the article with the meaning a-e.**

1. Customer ____________  A. A good relationship
2. Effort ____________  B. A person who buys at the same place
3. Rapport ____________  C. A physical or mental activity
4. Available ____________  D. increase
5. Boost ____________  E. Someone or something that is free to be used

**Read the article about Set Customer Service Policies That Satisfy**

Consumers are fed up with companies that treat them poorly. Without quality customer service and with the sharing capabilities provided today through social media, you could be steering a sinking ship.

Customer service affects all levels of your retail operation, and everyone involved needs to have the same mindset and follow the same policies. Take these steps to keep shoppers satisfied.

First, work on establishing the “people” aspect of customer service. This means the interaction between your employees and your customers.

Here are the basic policies you should establish and enforce:
• **Courtesy is king.** All customers should be treated in a courteous manner at all times. This may sound obvious, but we’ve all experienced the rude salesperson who snaps or loses their patience quickly. There is no excuse for being rude to a customer, even an irate one.

• **Be professional when on the sales floor.** All employee breaks and personal business should be conducted out of the view of customers, and cell phone calls or other personal communications should be limited to lunch or breaks.

• **Go the extra mile for a customer.** A conscious effort should be made to assist a customer in finding what he or she needs and/or in resolving a problem. If there is a policy, it should be stated politely. There is no room in customer service for “attitude.”

• **Dress appropriately.** Employees dealing with customers are expected to present themselves in a professional manner and dress accordingly. This can range from a uniform to a dress code to a no T-shirts, jeans, or halters policy. Whatever Works for your business should be enforced.

• **Develop rapport with the regulars.** Encourage your staff to get to know regular customers, greet them when they come in, and make them feel comfortable. A simple hello, good afternoon, or thank you can go a long way.

• **Have resources readily available.** There’s no better way to kill a sale then being unable to find what you need. From shopping bags to tape for wrapping packages, make sure to maintain your inventory.

• **Train and retrain.** It is very important that you train your staff in the manner that you want them to interact with customers and conduct themselves while on the sales floor. Since it is human nature to slip and revert to bad habits, to retrain occasionally allows for new ideas and reinforces positive conduct. Work with your employees, use role-play,
and seek out their input. The more involved they feel in creating the policy, the more pride your employees will take in providing quality customer service.

- **Don’t let your staff become slaves to your computers.** We’ve all stood in long lines while sales people and cashiers swiped cards and input tons of data into a computer terminal. Streamline your process to the best of your ability.

The layout of your store or facility has most likely been carefully planned, as has the manner in which you conduct business. All employees should be well trained and knowledgeable about the products. This can, and often should, include cross-training your staff to work in various departments. Likewise, cashiers should handle sales from all departments. By doing so, you can eliminate the need to shuffle customers from one person to another. You can also move idle employees to departments where they are needed.

Finally, you should make it easy for your staff to provide quality customer service. Remember, customer service comes from the top down. If you treat your employees well, they will pass that goodwill along to your customers.

The ultimate goal of good customer service is a happy, returning customer. Most businesses rely on their returning customers for 80 percent of their business, and it’s less expensive to maintain an old customer than to attract a new one. That’s why quality customer service boosts the bottom line.

Taken by: All Business Editors magazine
A. Choose A, B or C according to the statements.

1. Consumers are _____________ of companies that treat them bad.
   a. Happy
   b. Tired
   c. Satisfy

2. Everyone involved in the service customer needs to have the same__________ and to follow the same policies.
   a. Capacity
   b. Will
   c. Effectiveness

3. All customers should be treated in a ____________ way at all times.
   a. Polite
   b. Different
   c. Special

4. Cell phone calls or other personal communications should be allowed only for______________
   a. Home
   b. Free time
   c. Breaks

5. It’s important to dress smart to talk to your clients, you shouldn’t wear ________
   a. jeans or jackets
   b. uniforms
   c. dress codes
B. Write true or false according to the statements

1. It is necessary to train the workers in order to they can interact with the consumers in a good way__________

2. When employees are more involved creating the company’s policies, they are able to offer a better service to customers________

3. It is important to store a lot of data on the computers to be analyzed.________

4. When you threat your consumers well, they will tell others about the kind of service given by the company____________

5. It is more expensive for the company to maintain and old consumer than to attract a new one.

Watch the video about an angry customer and complete the sentences.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gD7xQGXpSBg&nohtml5=False

1. According to the customer the registration form is__________
2. According to the manager the registration form is __________
3. According to the manager all customers think that they have a registration form about____________
4. The general manager offer the customer_________________
5. The renew is___________________

Choose A, B, or C according to the video

1. Did the manager charge the customer :
   A. 2 months
   B. 3 months
   C. 1 month

2. In order to cancel the registration form is through:
   A. By phone
   B. By email
C. Personal contact

3. Monthly means:
   A. Only a month
   B. Every month
   C. Twice per month

4. The customer got upset because:
   A. He didn’t understand step 1
   B. He didn’t get a possible solution.
   C. He wasn’t told about the charge in the credit card.

**OUTPUT**

**Oral presentations:**

Taking into account the teachers’ previous class activity about technological inventions, learners will make oral presentations in groups of 3 expressing what technological inventions (Facebook, laptops, IPad, IPhone, smartphones, etc.) have been the best for them and why they consider it. The oral presentation should include aspects as the follows:

1. The characteristics of the device
2. How to use it
3. The importance of this technological device nowadays
4. What kind of role these tools perform in the labor market.