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FACULTAD DE LENGUAS
LICENCIATURA EN ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

**The influence of socio-affective factors to
interact abroad**

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Languages

for the Degree of

LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

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Puebla, Pue.

February 2025



**THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-AFFECTIVE
FACTORS TO INTERACT ABROAD**

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partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of**

LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS



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Puebla, Pue. February 2025.

ABSTRACT

This thesis project was carried out at Public University at the English Language Faculty. The thesis project was a qualitative approach, and had two main objectives, identifying the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers' interaction when they travel abroad and analyzing the impact that socio-affective factors have on non-native speakers to communicate when they travel abroad. In this case, participants traveled abroad to the United States to a Summer Camp.

In order to collect data to achieve the main objectives, a questionnaire with twelve questions was applied to eight participants, nonetheless, just six of them described their experience more extensively, which allowed us to analyze data properly. Research findings revealed that participants presented anxiety and self-esteem issues when they had their first contact with American native speakers, they did not feel confident enough to speak English since the beginning. However, they developed self-confidence through different strategies to improve their listening and speaking communication. Further results and implications are exposed within this thesis project.

KEY WORDS: Nonnative speakers, English as a Foreign Language, Socio-affective factors, summer camp, American native speakers

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dra. to give me a second chance even when the first project was not like we expected, she did not hesitate in giving me her support a second time. Thanks Dra. Salas, for being an extraordinary academic, for your human quality, and, above all, for your patience and support, we did it!

I also want to express my gratitude to Dra. Elizabeth Flores Salgado and Mtra. Gabriela Alhor Martínez, for taking the time to read this research project, for their observations and their valuable opinions. Thank you so much for being part of this.

DEDICATORIAS

Haber concluido mi proyecto de investigación y con ello, la licenciatura, ha sido uno de mis mayores logros. Sin embargo, esto no habría sido posible sin el apoyo y esfuerzo de la persona que más amo en el mundo, mi mamá. Quiero dedicarle este logro principalmente a ella, porque gracias al apoyo que siempre me ha brindado, pude concluir esta etapa de mi vida. Gracias mamita hermosa por siempre estar para mí, por todo el esfuerzo y dedicación que pusiste a mi educación, sin duda alguna esto no habría sido posible sin ti. Te amo y te admiro con todo mi ser. Has sido y siempre serás mi inspiración y motivación para superarme día con día.

También, quiero agradecer a mi hermano, a mi tía y a mi primo, quienes pusieron su granito de arena para ayudarme a concluir mis estudios universitarios.

A Dani, mi mejor amiga y hermana, que siempre ha estado para mí y me ha escuchado en mis momentos más difíciles, sin duda alguna tú has sido lo mejor que me pudo haber pasado en la facultad de lenguas. Agradezco tanto que me hayas motivado a vivir una experiencia que resultó ser maravillosa. El habernos ido de campamento, viajar juntas, conocer nuevos lugares, los días a tu lado, las largas platicas y los chocolates a escondidas son cosas que voy a atesorar por el resto de mi vida. Gracias por siempre estar, te amo, mejor amiga.

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Chapter I

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Working on a summer camp for the first time in the USA as non-native speaker (NNS) who learnt English as a foreign language in an academic environment, can be challenging.

Interaction between non-native speakers (NNS) and native speakers (NS) can be a little bit hard at the beginning as they are not familiarized with how English is spoken in real contexts.

Aspects such as accent, fluency, listening and some others can influence interaction between NNS and NS. According to Ellis (1999), cited in Xu (2006), interaction is defined as “communication between individuals, particularly when they are negotiating meaning in order to prevent a breakdown in communication”. However, communication can be influenced by socio-affective factors. Communication needs more than just having English proficiency. It requires understanding, sharing and meaning. Self-confidence and self-esteem play an important role for NNS when they interact with NS. Self-esteem is described by Rosenberg (1989), cited in Dev (2016) as the type of attitude, it can be either positive or negative, towards a person’s self. He assumed that an individual who respects himself and considers himself worthy is someone with high self-esteem”. Thus, if NNs feel confident and comfortable, communication would be fluent and successful. However, if a non-native speaker has English proficiency, but he does not feel confident, communication will probably have some complications. Gusmann (2015) pointed out self- esteem as a factor which influences the success or failures in students when learning a new language. He mentioned

that when students feel capable, their oral production will be an achievement because they feel confident and believe in themselves. It is important having a strong self-esteem and strong self-confidence for non-native speakers to achieve successful communication.

1.1 Justification

This study emerges from my own experience when I went to a summer Camp last year. That was the first time that I traveled abroad, and I was completely sure that my English proficiency was accurate, but when I had my first interaction in English with a native speaker, being a non-native speaker, I felt shameless to speak the foreign language. I just felt negative feelings about myself trying to communicate in a foreign language, in a foreign country under real contexts. Once I arrived at the Camp, I met some friends who also are not native speakers, they are from other countries, not the USA, and they told me that it was hard to get enough confidence to speak English with native speakers, they were afraid about commit mistakes when they are speaking, even though they know they can manage English language.

Thus, when I came back to Mexico, I wondered to myself what are the socio-affective factors that affect non-native speakers' communication when they travel abroad. This study intends to identify the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers when they travel abroad and interact under real contexts.

1.2 Objectives

The next objectives guided this thesis project:

- 1. To identify the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers' interaction when they travel abroad.
- 2. To analyze the impact that socio-affective factors have on non-native speakers to communicate when they travel abroad.

1.2.1 Research Questions

The next research questions helped to collect information to achieve the goals of this thesis project:

RQ1: What are the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers' interaction when they travel abroad?

RQ2: How socio-affective factors in non-native speakers impact when they travel abroad and communicate in real contexts.

1.3 Relevance of the study

When I came back from the USA, after having traveled abroad for the first time as well as working on a summer camp, I reflected about why I struggled with the foreign language at the beginning of my journey. Speaking English as a foreign language in real contexts in the

USA can be scary, especially when it is the first time and there is just practice in a college environment with no native speakers.

Even though there is a practice of the foreign language that exists, there also are some socio-affective factors that could affect the management of the language in real contexts, and I would like to know what those are and how they can impact when nonnative speakers travel abroad. Furthermore, this study attempts to identify the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers' interaction when they travel abroad and analyze the impact that socio-affective factors have on non-native speakers communicating when they travel abroad.

Finally, this study could help students to reflect, understand and work in the socio-affective factors that can affect communication according to what participants mentioned in this study, so when they travel to United States to a summer camp, they could feel more confident.

1.4 Conclusion of Chapter I

This chapter offered an overview of the study and exposed the justification and the relevance of the study, which pretends identify the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers' interaction when they travel abroad and analyze the impact that socio-affective factors have on non-native speakers to communicate when they travel abroad.

Chapter II

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the most significant topics and concepts to answer the research questions established in Chapter 1. This study aims at identifying the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers' interaction when they travel abroad as well as analyzing the impact that socio-affective factors have on non-native speakers to communicate when they travel abroad. This chapter will then, introduce topics such as how NNSs learn English, differences between English as a foreign language and English as a second language, NNSs pronunciation, how communication is developed between NNSs and NSs, and the socio-affective factors that influence communication between them.

2.1 English as a Foreign Language vs English as a Second Language

As it well known, English is a lingua franca, and it is spoken all over the world. However, in many parts of the world, English is spoken as a foreign language; in some others, it is a second language, but what is the difference between them? Moeller & Catalano (2015) point out “Foreign language learning and teaching refer to the teaching or learning of a nonnative language outside of the environment where it is commonly spoken” (p.327), it means that the learner does not have a real contact with the language, he or she learns English with not having a real context to practice it. On the other hand, when English is learned as second

language, the learner has real a real contact with the language because he or she are under a real context, for example, those who live in a country where English is the national language, so English is not only spoken in the learning environment but also outside. Moeller & Catalo (2015) state “Language scholars distinguish between the terms acquisition and learning: ‘acquisition’ refers to the process of learning first and second languages naturally, without formal instruction, whereas ‘learning’ is reserved for the formal study of second or foreign languages in classroom settings” (p.327). Thus, EFL implies practice English not only where it is learned but also outside.

Kramersch (2000) points out “second language (L2) is generally used to characterize languages acquired, in natural or instructional settings, by immigrants or professionals in the country of which that language is the national language; foreign languages (FLs), by contrast, are traditionally learned in schools that are removed from any natural context of use”. In summary, it can be said that the main difference between ESL and EFL is how you learn both within the learning environment and outside of it.

2.2 Linguistic competence

Linguistic competence is a term that was introduced by Noam Chomsky, Newby (2011) cited a famous Chomsky’s statement “We thus make a fundamental distinction between competence (the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language) and performance (the actual use of language in concrete situations)” (p.16). Thornbury (2006), cited in Abdulrahman and Ayyash (2019) defined linguistic competence as the native speakers’ ability to formulate

“well-formed sentences” However, as Chomsky stated, there is a difference between knowing the language and put the language in real practice.

Troike (2003) stated that communicative competence involves not only the knowledge of a language, but also what message to communicate to whom, and how to communicate it appropriately in any context, and that it also involves the socio-cultural knowledge that enables speakers to use and understand different speech forms. (cited in Abdulrahman and Ayyash, 2019). In short, Troike meant that the knowledge of the language is not the most important to communicate, but also how the message is expressed, it includes appropriateness and the understanding of the speaker to understand different speech forms.

2.3 English Speaking skill and Listening skill

Leong and Ahmadi (2017) asserted that the development and improvement of speaking skills are crucial for effective communication. Within language learning, speaking is often considered a challenging aspect, with many learners struggling to articulate their thoughts proficiently in a foreign language. Nunan (1995) mentioned “Learning the speaking skill is the most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language and success is measured based on the ability to perform a conversation in the language” (p.35). However, as Bashir, Azeem, & Dogar (2011), cited in Leong and Ahmadi (2016), noticed that learners require ample opportunities, both within their classes and outside of them, to practice speaking English in order to develop proficiency.

Listening is also an important part of communication. According to Rost (2013), listening involves a sophisticated process enabling individuals to understand spoken language. It is not

only crucial for effective communication but also aids in comprehending the world around us, and comprehend the world is not solely contingent upon the verbal expressions of speakers; rather, listeners assume a pivotal role in the comprehension process by employing their cognitive resources to interpret auditory input and discern the intended meaning conveyed by speakers (Anderson and Lynch, 1988, cited in Alzami, 2021). This is why it needs to be developed; because verbal communication necessitates attentive listening and comprehension of the speaker's words to effectively engage in dialogue (Wah, 2019). Nonetheless, listening skill is a very challenging ability to develop; due to the need for focused attention and the inconsistent nature of English pronunciation, listening is frequently regarded as the most difficult language skill to master (Sa'diyah, 2016; cited in Alzamil, 2021). Additionally, Djaborova (2020) made an important distinction between hearing and listening.

“There is a difference between listening and hearing. Hearing refers to the sounds that your ears receive, and it is a physical process that ensures a person does not have any hearing problems. By contrast listening requires more than that, it requires focus and concentrated effort, both mental and somehow physical.” (p.212)

In short, listening is a challenging skill and requires extra effort to be developed.

2.4 Communicative competence

The term communicative competence has been introduced for the first time by Hymes (1972) as a reaction to the Linguistic competence theory from Noam Chomsky (1962), Hymes (1972) states that communication implies more than knowing grammatical rules.

Communication requires an understanding of linguistic, sociolinguistic, and socio-cultural aspects of that language to make it effective.

“According to Hymes (1972) ‘communicative competence’ refers to the level of language learning that enables language users to convey their messages to others and to understand others’ messages within specific contexts. It also implies the language learners’ ability to relate what is learnt in the classroom to the outside world.” (cited in Saleh, 2013, p. 12)

Although Hymes was the first author to introduce the term, there are some other authors that proposed different models about what communication is; those are Hymes’ model (2001), Canale’s and Swain’s model (1980), and Alcon’s model.

- Hymes’ model (2001) asserts that the process of language acquisition extends beyond mere comprehension of grammatical principles, necessitating a command of socio-cultural conventions. Departing from Chomsky's exclusive focus on grammatical aptitude, Hymes contends that learners must also develop the capacity to employ language judiciously across diverse social settings. This encompasses discerning appropriate moments for speech, as well as discerning suitable conversational topics and manners tailored to specific interpersonal dynamics, environmental contexts, and modes of communication. This point of view challenges the Chomskyan premise that proficiency in grammatical structure alone suffices to elucidate communicative efficacy. Instead, Hymes advocates for a more comprehensive framework that encompasses linguistic, communicative, and cultural dimensions. He advocates for the incorporation of four analytical levels to unravel the complexities of language and its utilization, with the goal of synthesizing linguistic principles with theories pertaining to communication and culture. Such an approach acknowledges the intricate

interplay between language organization, social milieu, and cultural norms in the process of language acquisition and utilization.

- Canale's and Swain's model (1989) focuses on two items, grammatical and sociolinguistic competence and their model remarks on the importance of grammar for successful communication. Both theoretical frameworks (Hymes' model and Canale's and Swain's model) underscored the significance of considering both grammatical proficiency and social adeptness in every communicative instance. According to Canale and Swain (1989), an understanding of sociolinguistic competence is indispensable for comprehending communicative competence, just as crucial as the examination of grammatical competence. According to Canale and Swain there are four components in the communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic and discourse competence.

- Alcon's model (2005) proposes three main components in communication: 1. Discourse competence, 2. Psychomotor skills and 3. competencies and strategic competence. The first component involves linguistic, textual and pragmatic competence, the second one refers to the four macro skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking. The last component refers to the strategies that help to balance the need of linguistic or sociolinguistic competencies (Jorda 2005). For Alcon, the macro skills in learning a language are very important and should be developed simultaneously because if a learner has sociolinguistic and grammatical competence but does not possess the macro skills, then their communication would not be efficient, because learners might possess proficiency in applying grammatical principles within their written compositions. Concurrently, their exposure to and comprehension of sociocultural norms, like those prevalent in their native language, may equip them with the ability to direct social and cultural conventions within varied contexts.

However, despite this knowledge, they may encounter difficulty in articulating themselves fluidly unless they have developed proficient speaking skills. Alarcon believes that language macro skills stand at the heart of communicative competence and form a major part of it (Ahmed and Pawar, 2018). As described above, defining what communicative competence is, results a little bit difficult because exist many different perceptions about its meaning. Nevertheless, Yufrizal (2017) pointed out “In terms of linguistics, communicative competence refers to language user’s grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately.” Giving a general but comprehensible meaning about what communicative competence might be.

2.4 Pronunciation in English for Foreign Learners

Pronunciation is one of the most important aspects in English, it is one of the key requirements for language proficiency in order to make an understandable communication between native and nonnative speakers. Abdalgane and Idris (2020) point out that proper articulation of words significantly contributes to the achievement of EFL learners on a global scale. Contrarily, deficiencies in English pronunciation hinder the development of communicative skills necessary for establishing effective interpersonal connections between speakers and listeners. Gilakjani (2012) argues that “intelligible pronunciation” is one of the principal perfect teachings in any course, “intelligible pronunciation” (p. 119) means not a perfect pronunciation but an easy and understandable functional communication.

Morley, 1991 (cited in Gilakjani, 2012) highlighted that imperativeness for students who are acquiring English for global communication purposes to strive for a level of oral expression that is both intelligible and comprehensible, aiming not necessarily to mimic native speakers, but to achieve a proficiency that ensures effective mutual understanding.

However, in the process of acquiring a foreign language, learners frequently encounter challenges in mastering pronunciation due to discrepancies between the phonetic structures of the target language and those of their native tongue, (Çakır and Baytar, 2014). Despite the challenge that represents mastering pronunciation in the target language, Burns (2003) claims that foreign learners should sound and speak as native speakers is fast disappearing. According to him, is more important to achieve a) intelligibility that is when the speaker produces sound patterns that are identifiable as English, b) comprehensibility, when the listener can recognize the meaning of what is said and c) interpretability which means the listener understand the aim of what is said.

2.4.1 Suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation

Ladefoged (2006) cited in Sharma (2021) defines suprasegmental features as “those aspects of speech that involve more than single consonants or vowels' ". According to Lasi (2020), supra segmental features are divided into a) stress, b) intonation, c) rhythm, d) voice quality.

Additionally, Yadgarova (2023), considered e) length and f) juncture.

Stress was defined by Underhill (2005), cited in Sharma (2021) as “accent or emphasis given to a particular syllable of a word.”. Yadgarova (2023), referred to stress as the extent of volume, tension, resonance, and muscular effort employed in articulating a particular

syllable. Yadgaroba cited Cross (1992) who defined stress as “the articulation of a syllable with greater emphasis, or more force than others”.

a) Kelly (2000) defines intonation as the way the voice goes up and down when we are speaking. It is how pitch works in language at the sentence level and it is also an utterance’s quality. Furthermore, Underhill (2005) cited in Sharma (2021) distinguished that intonation is not only what you said but also how you say it.

b) “Rhythm is the perception of some kind of underlying regularity of occurrence of prominences and word stresses.” Underhill (2005), cited in Sharma (2021).

c) According to Sharma, voice quality is a term that has not received enough attention in second language learning, but it refers to the broader, enduring configurations of articulators commonly shared among various sounds in a language, influencing accentuation and overall vocal quality on a global scale.

d) Yadgarova (2023) remarked “The length of a sound is the amount of time it takes for it to be articulated. Length is the quality of vowel in most of languages”

e) Juncture is defined by Trask (2005) as “any phonetic feature whose presence signals the existence of a grammatical boundary” (cited in Yadgarova, 2023).

2.5 Socio-affective factors that influence speaking skills

Kiruthiga and Christopher (2022) distinguished three affective factors that influence speaking skills, a) motivation, b) self-esteem and c) Anxiety.

a) Motivation improves learners' productivity and facilitates their linguistic proficiency. It highlights a positive correlation between heightened motivation and language acquisition. Two primary forms of motivation are identified: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation originates from within an individual, influenced by personal interests and aspirations, leading to feelings of accomplishment and self-determination. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation stems from external factors, often looking for recognition or avoiding negative consequences, such as financial rewards or academic evaluations.

b) Self-esteem denotes an individual's evaluation of their intrinsic worth, which is influenced by their personal life encounters. Various emotions, including fear, anger, affection, pride, and unease, contribute to this assessment. Those with robust self-esteem typically demonstrate heightened motivation in pursuing their goals, whereas those with low self-esteem may grapple with feelings of inadequacy. It is advisable to promote positive and constructive self-evaluations. Educators should exercise caution when offering corrective feedback on language usage, recognizing its potential impact on learners' self-assurance and self-esteem. Students with strong self-efficacy tend to exhibit greater enthusiasm for learning compared to those with weaker self-efficacy. These students harbor confidence in their ability to invest effort and acquire proficient language speaking skills. Proficiency in these skills supports their confidence in communicating effectively in social settings. Although, individuals with reduced self-efficacy often harbor doubts about their capabilities and may withdraw in response to criticism.

c) In language learning contexts, anxiety commonly denotes the apprehension and unease experienced by individuals when required to communicate in an unfamiliar language. This apprehension is often compounded by the fear of losing one's sense of identity, resulting

in heightened anxiety and a diminished ability to demonstrate linguistic proficiency, particularly in English. There exists an inverse relationship between language acquisition and anxiety: reduced levels of nervousness facilitate greater acquisition, whereas heightened anxiety impedes the learning process.

d) Moreover, anxiety impacts academic performance, self-esteem, oral and written communication skills, as well as one's positive self-perception. As learners mature, they typically develop strategies to distinguish themselves from others and adopt precautionary measures when necessary. Inhibition, as a defensive mechanism, serves to prevent individuals from engaging in utterances or actions that may threaten their well-being. As individuals grow older, there is a natural increase in inhibitions. This heightened inhibition stems from a fear of criticism or ridicule from others, leading them to avoid speaking English altogether to prevent embarrassment. Consequently, elevated levels of inhibition hinder effective language acquisition.

2.6 Self-regulation

Emotional self-regulation involves an ability to respond to ongoing demands in such a way that within a social environment it is tolerable and flexible enough to allow for spontaneous emotional reactions, as well as the capacity to delay such reactions as needed. According to Pritch (2000), cited in Nosratinia and Deris (2015), Self-regulation (SR) is defined as “An engaged and productive procedure in which learners establish objectives for their learning endeavors and subsequently endeavor to oversee, adjust, and govern their cognition, motivation, and conduct, influenced and restricted by their objectives and the situational

aspects present in their environment." In the learning environment, certain contemporary academics characterize Self-Regulation (SR) as an inherent ability that drives learners to seek and implement personalized strategic approaches, potentially improving the efficiency of their Second Language (L2) acquisition process (Tseng, Dörnyei, & Schmitt (2006), cited in Nosratinia and Deris, (2015)

2.6.1 Self-awareness

Stainer (2014) defined Self-awareness as the capacity to acknowledge one's strengths and weaknesses, leading to constructive self-reflection that fosters improvement in one's quality of life. Self-awareness, recognized as a fundamental aspect of students' emotional intelligence, significantly influences their motivation to learn. It serves as the cornerstone of emotional intelligence, encompassing self-understanding and the potential for personal growth through introspection and self-awareness.

2.7 Intercultural interactions

Effective communication between people who do not share the same native language needs the use of a common language that both parties understand. This could involve utilizing one person's native language or a mutually understood foreign language. Presently, English serves as the predominant common language in such scenarios, being widely adopted for this purpose (Putra, Rochsantiningsih and Supriyadi, 2020). The concept that adjusting your communication approach to match that of another participant from a different culture during intercultural exchanges can reduce cultural barriers and enhance communication may be

elucidated by the similarity attraction paradigm, The premise suggests that adjusting one's communication style fosters perceptions of likeness, subsequently generating favorable attitudes towards individuals from different cultures. Recent research highlights those perceived similarities in communication styles, perceived reinforcement of self-concepts, and positive expectations significantly forecast inter-ethnic and inter-ethnic attractions during initial encounters (Lee & Gudykunst, 2001; and Byrne, 1971, cited in Pekerti and Thomas, 2003).

Moreover, when engaging with someone from a different culture, individuals may feel compelled to reaffirm their own cultural identity through their actions. For instance, Laurent (1983) discovered that individuals in multicultural settings displayed behavior more aligned with their culture compared to when they were in a homogenous cultural environment. Similarly, Cupach and Imahori (1993) proposed that the prominence of cultural distinctions can heighten cultural identity, subsequently influencing subsequent behaviors. In essence, people tend to conform to the norms of their own culture in such situations. (cited in Pekerti and Thomas, 2003).

2.7.1 Culture

American anthropologists, in 1952, Kroeber and Kluckhohn undertook a critical examination of various concepts and definitions of culture, identifying a staggering 164 different definitions. Apte (1994: 2001), writing in the Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics, summarized the landscape by stating: "Despite a plethora of efforts to define culture

adequately, there was in the early 1990s no agreement among anthropologists regarding its nature." (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2012).

Spencer-Oatey (2008) defined culture:

“Culture can be understood as a broad collection of implicit assumptions and values, life perspectives, beliefs, regulations, procedures, and customary behaviors that are collectively shared by a particular group of individuals. These cultural elements exert influence over each member's conduct and their interpretations of the "meaning" behind others' behaviors, although they do not rigidly dictate every aspect of individual behavior.” (p. 2)

On the other hand, The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition delves deeper into the concept of culture, defining it as the collective patterns of behaviors and social interactions, as well as the cognitive frameworks and comprehension acquired through socialization. From this perspective, culture emerges as the development of a collective identity within a group, nurtured by distinctive social behaviors and norms particular to that group.

2.8 Summer Camps

A Summer Camp in the USA is a fun holiday full of activities that seek to teach children important life skills for later in life. Some camps are dedicated to a certain field, these include sports, drama, computer programming, science, mathematics and music. While certain camps may offer a little of everything, (Manson, J., 2019). As it was mentioned, summer camps are

not only a place to spend a great and funny time, but also a tool to learn about different fields. In short, summer camps are not only a fun holiday but also a useful one.

2.8.1 Exchange programs: summer camps

Exchange programs are non-profit organizations dedicated to fostering cross-cultural understanding through various work and volunteer exchange initiatives. For over four decades, these programs have facilitated transformative international cultural exchanges for young individuals from across the globe. They serve as a valuable resource for summer camps seeking staff, volunteers, camp counselors, and support personnel. Additionally, they offer international students the chance to work in short-term, seasonal positions in the USA. These programs not only assist students, such as LEI students, in enhancing their English language skills but also provide them with enriching experiences in the USA, enabling interactions with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. (Peregrina 2015).

Summer camps has two specific areas where foreign staff can work, such as: support staff, and counselors. Support staff are those who are in service positions, they oversee laundry, maintenance, and kitchen, they do not work with campers directly, instead, they are in charge of doing things working on the camp. On the other hand, counselors oversee the campers. They usually work with 10 children and spend the whole day with them. They participate in activities with them, they eat with them, they sleep with them, they are like their models. That's why a strong counselor must speak fluent English, because they are in contact with children 24 hours a day, they spend and share the whole day with them and have to make the summer camp experience memorable. (Camp leaders, n.d).

2.9 Conclusion of chapter II

In this chapter we made a review about all the important topics in this research. We explained each topic and developed each of them by considering different points of view from different authors such as what is Linguistic Competence, the difference of English as a Foreign Language and as a Second Language, Culture, Communicative Competence, Suprasegmental Features, and some other important topics. The literature review tried to explain the important topics as clearly as possible.

Chapter III

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

Chapter 3 includes the description of the methodological paradigm that was adopted to achieve this study and justifies the reasons for choosing it and. Items such as context, participants, instrument data collection, and data analysis had been explained. Data analysis is another important aspect that was described in this chapter, which also embraces ethics and data protection to carry out this study successfully. It is essential to clarify that this study was carried out ethically, in order to protect personal data and only use it to help to understand the primary concerns of this research, names were changed. Finally, this chapter also includes a conclusion.

3.1 Research design

The qualitative approach is the research design that was implemented to carry out this study. The main characteristic of this approach is that, although literature yields little information of the phoneme, it is essential to learn more from the participants thought exploration. Heale & Twycross (2018) mention that case study does not have one definition, but it can be easily defined as a rigorous study about a person, a group of people or a unit, which is direct to generalize to over a group of units.

Furthermore, it has also been described as an exhaustive, systematic investigation that can be related between a single individual, group community or some other unit and the way researchers have to examine in-depth data associated with several variables. For example, Crasswell 2012 points out that literature review provides the meaning and the importance of the central phoneme, (p.19) However, literature review by itself does not justify the reasons Why this study was carried out, it is participants' view what help us to enable literature review with the concerns of this study. It justifies and helps us to comprehend research questions.

Researchers need to observe and stay close to their participants, in this case, what was done is to know who the participants were, their background and specific characteristics in order to make sense of what is going to be researched. Frankel and Wallen (2009) state “It is impossible for the researcher to stand apart from the individuals he or she is studying” (p.425). Moreover, this research has been done through a descriptive questionnaire whose purpose was to gather information that will reinforce and prove the literature review from the unknown variables and need to be explored. That is why qualitative research will help to collect and provide a real impact in conclusions.

3.2 Justification for choosing methodology

Mohajan (2018) states “qualitative research is a form of social action that stresses on the way of people interpret and make sense of their experiences to understand the social reality of individuals” he mentions that qualitative research uses different instruments to obtain, analyze and interpret data. This research used an open-ended questionnaire to obtain information to answer and comprehend the initial research questions established. Moreover,

Brink (1993), cited in Mohajan (2018), claims that qualitative researchers are tempting to what people believe, their experiences, and their perspectives in a meaning system.

What makes qualitative research suitable for this study is that this methodology are not interested in statistical analysis and empirical calculation but in describing and interpret issues or phenomena systematically from what individuals or population (being studied) think(s) to create new concepts and theories. On the other hand, case study as a type of qualitative research as it has its roots in sociology, finding an especial value in different fields, such as psychology, history or education, being the las one the field this study belongs to. In addition, Craswell (2009), points out case study is conducted by using numerous sources such as questionnaires, interviews observations, written accounts, and audio-visual materials.

In short, this methodology was chosen because it fits with the purpose of this study which is to analyze and comprehend a specific situation guided by a specific instrument (open-ended questionnaire) that different individuals answered under their own perspective and beliefs.

3.3 Description of the context

The study was carried out in a Public University located in Puebla de Zaragoza, Mexico which is the “Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla” (BUAP). BUAP was founded in 1987. BUAP has many different academic areas such as natural sciences and health, economics and administration, engineering and exact sciences, and social sciences and humanities. These areas have many different BA degree programs such as law, and English Language Teaching which belong to the social sciences and humanities area. Then, electronic

engineering that belongs to engineering and exact sciences area. Another program is tourist administration from economics and administration, and as a final example nursery which belongs to the health area.

The participants of the study came from the areas and bachelor's degree mentioned before. As a manner of a general context, the graduation profile bachelor of the participants is going to be described briefly. The described was taken from the official page of the BUAP and was translated from Spanish to English.

- Law: contribute to the training of professionals' law at the bachelor's level with a comprehensive education orientated to the professional skills development for the solution of legal problems.
- English Language Teaching: knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, and values which will help to the undergraduate to develop a professional and working activity.
- Electronic engineering: the undergraduate possesses aptitudes to be adapted to multiples work areas thank to the multidisciplinary with which they are trained within the FCE (Facultad de Ciencias de la Electrónica).
- Tourist administration: uses a foreign language in an integral way in order to carry out the communication processes related to the content and activities of their discipline which are going to help the undergraduates to establish intercultural and collaborative relations, to explore and construct knowledge within it.

3.4 Description of the participants

The six participants were Mexican students who are 22-24 years old and speak Spanish as a mother tongue and English as their foreign language, all of them had experience in attending summer camps in the USA. They answered a questionnaire and wrote about their experience and their feelings about being in the USA for the first time. They also studied at BUAP but in different fields, such as English Language Teaching, Electronic engineering and Tourist administration. Participants are 3 male and 3 females. However, for ethical reasons, pseudonyms were used in this study to protect personal information about the participants. Males are named as Patricio, Angel and Osmar. Patricio is 26 years old, and Angel is 24 years old, and both are electronic engineers. Osmar is 26 years old, and he is English teacher. On the other hand, females are named as Andrea, Daniela and María, they are 25 years old, and Maria is 24 years. Andrea and María are English teachers, and Danieal is chef.

3.5 Description of the instrument used to collect data

The instrument that was designed to obtain data was an open-ended questionnaire (see Appendix A). The questionnaire has 12 questions, which mainly focus on knowing the feelings and thoughts from the participants about their first experience in the USA. The questionnaire also includes questions that aim to obtain information about possible challenges they had to face to improve their English. The design of the instrument took one week, like making questions and dismissing the ones which were not helpful to collect information to answer the principal objectives from this research. Finally, the questionnaire

was written in Google forms, so as it is in digital form, it would be easier to send it and get it back.

3.6 Privacy protection

The participants' names were changed for a pseudonym as this study concerns their privacy. Although participants' mother tongue is Spanish, the questionnaire was applied in English and all of them answered in English, so none of the questions had to be translated.

3.7 Description of data collection

Once the instrument was validated, the link was sent through WhatsApp to those who went to a Camp in the USA. It was sent to 10 individuals but only 8 of them sent it back. However, only 6 of the participants were more descriptive with their answers, so their answers were helpful to obtain information to achieve the principal objectives from this research. The process of data collection was long on average, the participants took three weeks to send the questionnaire back.

3.8 Description of data analysis

In order to analyze data, the questions were divided into similar patterns, once they were done, charts and concept-maps were used to clarify and understand better the information that was collected. Finally, due to the information was clear and organized, conclusions were easier to obtain.

3.9 Conclusion of Chapter III

This chapter described the methodology that was used to carry out this study, and it also explained how the process was to analyze data to obtain the results from the instrument. Furthermore, a brief description of the participants' privacy was also included.

Chapter IV

Results

4.0 Introduction

Chapter 4 presents the results of the instrument previously applied. The objective in this chapter is to expose the participants' answers and to analyze them, and in order to find the answers for the research questions and to provide a better perspective from the results, answers will be categorized according to similar patterns. As ethics are primarily important in this research, participants' real names were not revealed, instead they are referred to as: Patricio, Angel, Osmar, María, Andrea and Daniela.

4.1 Overview of the study

The presented results are divided in four parts: 1) background of the participants, 2) knowing how the interaction with NS for the first time was, 3) A whole view of the participants during the experience, 4) feelings after, during and before the experience. After presenting the results, opinions and a general discussion will be presented.

4.2 Results

After applying the instrument that was designed to collect data for the study, the results are presented. As it was explained before, the instrument was a questionnaire that consisted in

12 open-ended questions, it helped to obtain relevant information to answer the research questions that guided this study:

- RQ1: What are the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers' interaction when they travel abroad?
- RQ2: How socio-affective factors in non-native speakers can impact when they travel abroad and communicate themselves under real contexts?

Research questions were answered after reading and analyzing carefully the participants' answers. Charts and concept maps were useful to categorize the information and make a better understanding of the participants' answers.

4.3 Concept maps and charts

According to Novak & Cañas (2006), concept maps “are graphical tools for organizing and representing knowledge. They include concepts, usually enclosed in circles or boxes of some type, and relationships between concepts indicated by a connecting line linking two concepts” (p.3), in short, concept maps are a tool that help to understand the relation among concepts, and how they are related to a main concept. On the other hand, charts have a similar purpose to concept maps, they help to categorize relevant information.

4.4 Background of the participants

Some of the participants are graduate students from BUAP, and the rest of them are active students at BUAP. They are between 24-26 and 3 of them are males and the rest of them are females. Most of them stayed in the USA for 4 months and just 1 participant stayed 6 months. They travelled between 2021-2023, some went to Wisconsin and the rest of them went to other states. (See Chart 1)

Chart. 1 Background of the participants

Participant	Age	Major	Summer camp in	Year	Role in the summer camp	Stay
Patricio	26	Electronic Engineering	Michigan	2022	Kitchen Staff	4 months
Angel	24	Mechatronic Engineering	Wisconsin	2022	Kitchen staff	4 months
Osmar	26	English Language Teaching	Pennsylvania	2021	Counselor	4 months
Maria	25	Gastronomy	Philadelphia	2021	Kitchen Staff	4 months
Andrea	25	English Language Teaching	Wisconsin	2023	Counselor	4 months
Daniela	24	English Language Teaching	Wisconsin	2022	Counselor	6 months

Source: own elaboration

This information was obtained from 1 & 2 questions (see appendix 1)

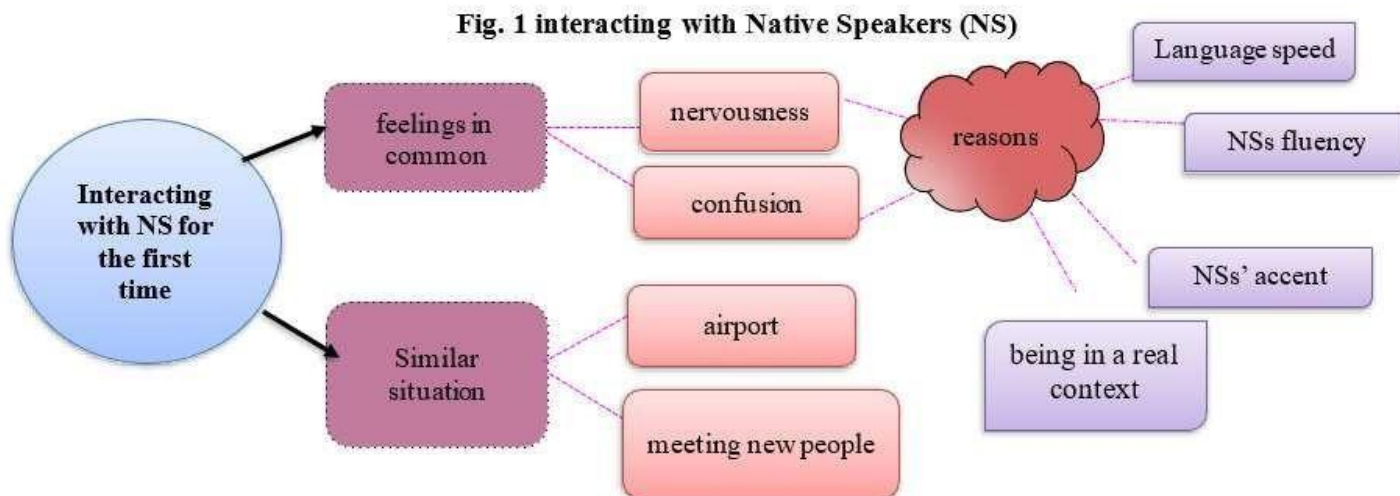
Chart. 1 shows relevant information about the participants, it indicates their names, age, their bachelor's degree, the year they went to USA for the first time, how long they stay there and their positions in the camp. With those data, it is concluded that most of them stayed in the USA 4 months, 3 of them probably had more interaction with native speakers because

they were counselors, and as it was mentioned in chapter II, counselors are in contact with native speakers 24 hours the 7 days of the week.

On the other hand, participants who were part of the kitchen staff were also in contact with native speakers, but not as much as counselors, because they are in the kitchen. Finally, data reveals that 3 of the participants have a bachelor’s degree in English Language Teaching, 2 have it in Mechatronic Engineering, and 1 of them has it in Gastronomy.

4.5 Interacting with native speakers for the first time

Participants mentioned some feelings and situations that were similar among them. Such as nervousness, confusion and some others. Regarding the situation, being in the airport and meeting new people was the most preferred. (see Fig. 1)



Source: own elaboration

This information was obtained from the questionnaire (see appendix 1).

Fig, 1 above is divided into 2 principal views, feelings and situation. Both share significant points, for example, according to the results, there were two situations in common among the participants: airport and meeting new people, and the main feelings share were confusion and nervousness, aspects such as native speakers' accent, being in a real context, language speed, and native speakers' fluency, were the reason for feeling those emotions.

4.6 Struggles, Challenges and Feelings

In this section, participants mentioned their struggles, how they overcome them and their feelings regarding speaking the Foreign Language in a real context. Most of them agree they had struggles in listening and some other mentioned speaking. Participants mentioned having self- confidence to overcome the struggles, but others pointed out that asking for help was the best. (see chart 2)

Chart 2. Struggles, Challenges and feelings

Struggles in language	How did you overcome the struggles	Feelings before and afterovercoming the struggles
To be able to get what people say at a very fast pace (listening)	Practicing	Nervous and excited- Good
Some of them speaktoo fast (listening)	Practicing	Nervous-Great
Listening because I felt like they spoke fast, and in speakingbecause I was afraid to commit mistakes (listening and speaking)	Paying attention to whatthey say	Nervous and shy- Happy
Problems because not everyone speaks the same way, and the speed is different (listening)	Having less fear whenmaking mistakes	Nervous and excited- I feel I'm still

		overcoming my thoughts.
The way they speak. They do it fast and in speaking because I was afraid to commit mistakes (listening and speaking)	Making new friends, listening carefully, and practicing	Confused and bizarre- Confident
I didn't understand the accent, language speed and all the contractions which they used to talk. I didn't understand several words, (listening, vocabulary)	Talking, not being afraid of making mistakes, practicing	Nervous and not confident- Great and capable

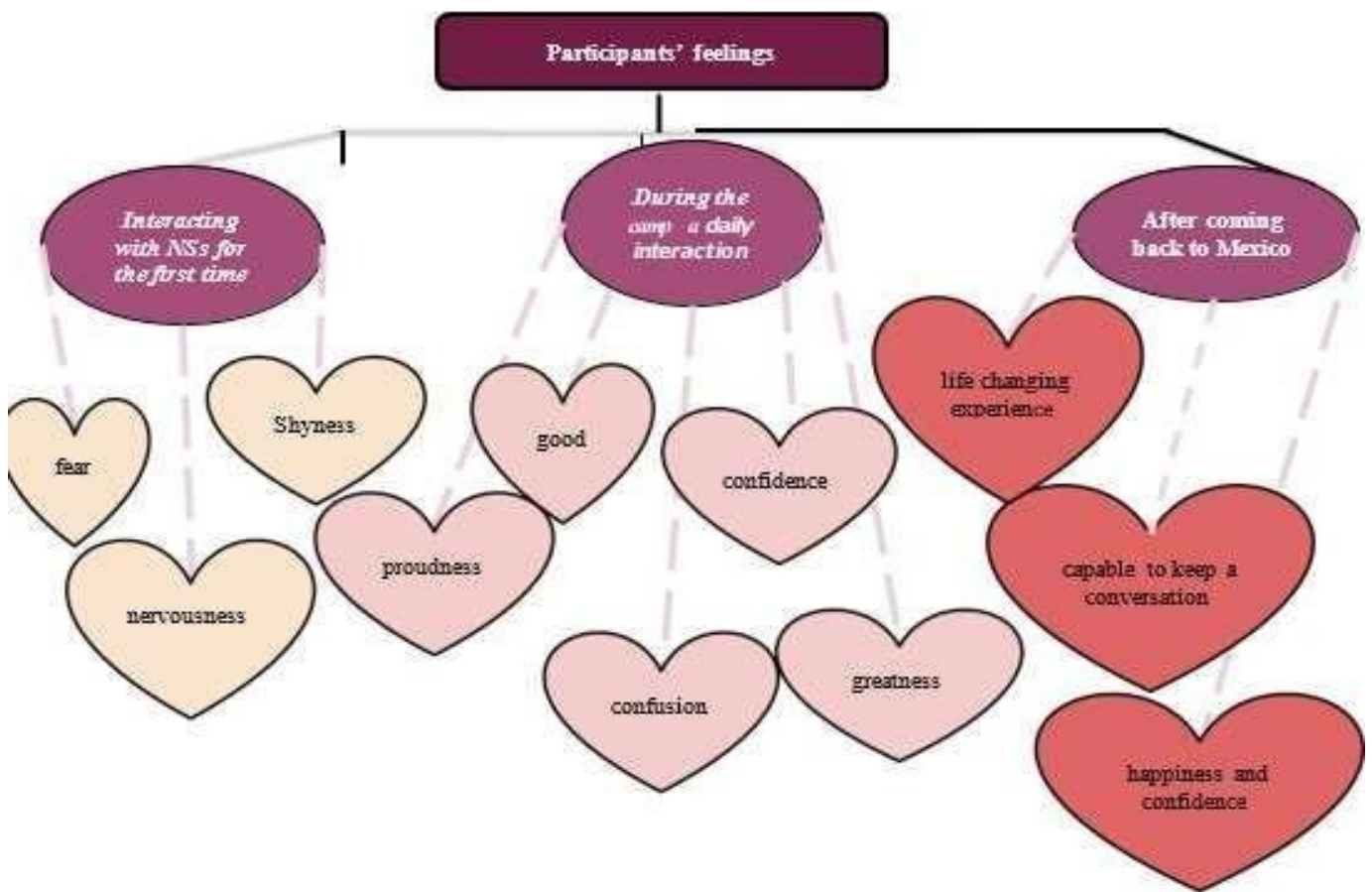
Source: own elaboration This information was taken from the questionnaire (see appendix A).

Chart. 2 explains what the struggles were during participants' stay in the camp, the chart exposes that most of the participants had struggles in listening, some in speaking and, one participant added "vocabulary". However, they overcame those struggles by practicing their listening, paying attention to how NSs speak. Being brave and having courage to speak a language they learnt in a classroom and interacting with foreign fellows was important for many participants and helped them to face their fears. Finally, the emotions that participants felt before and after interacting with native speakers were also identified. Most of them were nervous because that was the first time they had a real interaction with native speakers until they were there, in a USA Summer Camp. Nevertheless, all of them felt happy and more confident when camp finished.

4.7 Participants' feelings experience

Participants described their emotions about the whole experience, they mentioned how they felt before, during and after the experience. Feels such as nervousness, shyness, greatness and some others are mentioned in their experiences. See Fig. 2

Fig. 2 Feeling before, during and after the experience



Source: own elaboration

This information was taking from the questionnaire (see Appendix A)

Fig. 2 helps to categorize easily what the main emotions were the most recurring in participants, as it is shown in Fig.2, three stages are exposed, how participants felt, before, during and after interacting with native speakers for the first time. Participants felt more emotions during their daily interaction with native speakers, which is understandable because they had a to speak and listen English to communicate among the people they lived together. On the other hand, the comparison between their initial feelings and the final ones, there is a considerable improvement in how they felt. For example, at the beginning they felt nervous, shy, and not confident in interacting with native speakers, but at the end, they felt happy and capable of interacting with them, furthermore, some of the participants mentioned they had a life change experience.

4.8 What participants said about having struggles in listening/speaking

According to the results, all participants had struggles in listening and some of them recognized they also had struggles in speaking.

Maria recognized having struggles in listening:

“Yes, in listening because I felt like they speak fast and in speaking because I was afraid to commit mistakes”

Patricio mentioned having problems in speaking:

“Maybe I got more problems at the time of speaking because I wasn't very confident”

Angel pointed out about not being familiarized with kitchen vocabulary:

“Yes, most of them was vocabulary at that moment I didn't understand several words. I was working in the kitchen, so kitchen vocabulary was hard to get at the first time.”

Finally, Andrea was more specific by describing how she felt:

“Sure, both of them. In listening because as I mentioned before, they speak really fast, I was like I DONT UNDERSTAND ANYTHING, and in speaking because I was afraid to commit a mistake, you know like mispronouncing or not making a correct structure of a sentence.”

According to the previous quotes, it is possible to recognize that just four of the participants mentioned had problems in both listening and speaking. Two of them, Osmar and Daniela, just mentioned having struggles in understanding how they speak (listening).

4.9 The moment participants started to feel confidence at speaking English

Participants commented how they felt regarding to speak English daily, some mentioned they had confidence by passing the time, and some by how they felt around native speakers.

Patricio said regarding time:

“When I got like a month there, because I had more practice “

Andrea recognized making friends helped her to feel confident in herself:

“I made a NS friend, first I barely spoke with her, I just listening what she said, and forced myself to understand her. But she was very patience, and she really helped me to overcome my fears, so after a while I spoke not only with her but with everyone in the camp! I made a lot of friends”

Maria mentioned it was about time to understand native speakers:

“After 2 weeks when I felt like I understand what they said and also how they speak like slang and the structure of their sentences”

As participants mentioned, some of them felt they had confidence after living in the USA for weeks or months, and some others pointed out that making friends was the way they felt more confident and had practice speaking English.

4.10 Participants' description about the whole experience

Finally, participants described how they felt after living in the USA, speaking with Native Speakers, practicing the language and meeting new people. Some participants were more descriptive than others, for example:

Osmar said he felt confident:

“I feel more confident and able to keep a conversation with a native speaker”

Daniela briefly described her experience

“As I said, self-confidence increase, I met with a lot of amazing people. I knew beautiful places.

In language topic, I felt my English level increase a lot in listening and speaking.”

Maria expressed feel motivated:

“I feel more motivated to continue improving in speaking English”

Patricio indicated his feelings after his experience:

“It was very nice; at the end of my experience I was more confident in all aspects that involved speaking English and I could notice that when I came back to classes in the faculty of languages”

As was stated with the previous participants' quotes, they felt more confident, happy and capable in speaking the foreign language after their experience, being in the USA at a summer camp, working along with Native Speakers.

4.11 Discussion

Results seem emphasized in what authors say. Most of the participants had struggles in listening and many in speaking, and some in both. This is a recurrent situation because, as participants are not related to real contexts and just practicing among their classmates in a classroom, when they have a first interaction not only with the foreign language but also with

native speakers, they tend to face socio affective factors such as nervousness which is related to anxiety, or fear which is associated with self-esteem.

“Verbal communication necessitates attentive listening and comprehension of the speaker's words to effectively engage in dialogue” (Wah, 2019) if not, native speakers have issues in listening, it will represent a problem in speaking. Nonetheless, after having a whole experience in a summer camp, where foreign language is spoken, and native speakers are around, interacting with no native speakers, they have the chance that listening and speaking skills will be probably highly to increase, due to participants are involved in real contexts. They mentioned earlier that they felt more confident after their experience, for example,

Maria mentioned:

“I feel more motivated to continue improving in speaking English”

Osmar said:

“I feel more confident and able to keep a conversation with a native speaker”

Kiruthiga and Christopher (2022) stated motivation as a positive correlation between learner and language acquisition because when learner is motivated, he/she improves their

productivity and facilitate their language proficiency. So, if participants feel motivated after their experience in summer camps, their proficiency will increase.

4.12 Conclusion of Chapter IV

In this chapter the participants' results were exposed and, to make a better understanding, they were categorized following patterns that participants had in common during their stay in a summer camp. Furthermore, by making charts and concept maps, results were more comprehensive and easier to follow to have a clear idea of the participants' feelings.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

The last chapter of this research project will discuss the results of the research questions that were found through the participants' answers, relevant findings will be also considered.

Furthermore, contributions of the study, limitations, directions for further research, a general conclusion, and a reflection of the research will be included, discussed and explained. The last chapter intends to give a conclusion on general research.

5.1 Summary of the study

This study was divided into five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction of the whole study. Research questions and objectives are implied, second chapter describes the literature review, some authors are considered, and they give support to the research to justify, contrast or argue what participants say, third chapter introduces to the methodology that this study carried out, instruments is also described. Chapter fourth reports the results obtained from the instrument that was previously applied, and a short discussion is mentioned. Finally, chapter five is the last chapter of this study and the main purpose of it is to answer the research questions that guided this study.

5.2 Answering the research questions

There were two objectives that were taught before carrying out this study, first, to identify the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers' interaction when they travel abroad and second one, to analyze the impact that socio-affective factors have on non-native speakers to communicate when they travel abroad. Consequently, two research questions were proposed:

RQ1: What are the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers' interaction when they travel abroad?

According to what participants said about the socio-affective factors that influence non-native speakers when they travel abroad, in this case, to the USA, nervousness that is related to anxiety and feelings such as fear and shyness related to self-esteem are the main socio-affective factors that they felt when they interacted with native speakers. As they mentioned, that was the first time they interacted with native speakers in a real context, and, as they did not have any experience before the camp, those socio-affective factors can affect how communication is developed between native and non-native speakers since participants learnt academic English and did not possess the knowledge of how English is spoken in daily life.

RQ2: How socio-affective factors in non-native speakers impact when they travel abroad and communicate in real contexts?

Results demonstrated that most of the participants felt anxious because they had never been exposed to real situations. Moreover, some of the participants agreed they felt shy to

speak for the first time with native speakers, and they even felt afraid of making mistakes, which is understandable due to the lack of practice within real contexts as they mentioned.

Furthermore, results also revealed that participants took time to feel confident, and establishing relations with their fellow workers because they had to pay special attention to specific things they were not aware before they travelling abroad (to the USA), for example, the speed native speakers use to speak, specific vocabulary, and even, the fact that daily English is not like they learned it, it is different to academic English, and can be complicated the first time they are exposed to real contexts.

5.3 Summary of key findings

Key findings revealed what participants felt when they were exposed to speak English in real contexts for the first time, they mentioned to feel nervous, shy, scared and not confident of speaking the foreign language when they had to, however, by the time they spent more time with their native worker partners, they felt capable of developing their communicative competence and establishing new relations with them. On the other hand, results also shown that listening and speaking are the most difficult abilities to be developing for them because they had not experience and everything was completely new for them, such as the accent, the speed, even the vocabulary and, in general, daily English, due to the English they learnt was academic, and the only experience they had was speaking with their classmates in the classroom at their faculties.

Nevertheless, they could overcome their fears about speaking the foreign language and achieve success in communication. In addition, participants assured that after their

experience, they felt much more confident and happier, and some mentioned they felt capable of having conversations with native speakers. As can be seen in the data analyzed, according to the six participants, they did not feel confident in their first contact with native speakers, even when they possess the knowledge about speaking English, they confessed to feel anxious and afraid of not achieving a success communication due to the lack of experience in listening and speaking, but being immersed in a real context, in this case, an American summer camp, they could not only develop their speaking and listening abilities, but also improve them.

5.4 Limitations of the study

One of the limitations of this research was to collect data because, although participants answered the questionnaire that was sent by a link through WhatsApp, some of them gave short answers which were not descriptive enough so that delay the analysis of the data.

Another limitation was the availability of the participants to answer the questionnaire, some of them took a long time to send their answers.

5.5 Directions for further research

Further research could be related to investigate possible ways to help participants, when they are learning English in academic environments, to feel more confident when speaking English and to improve their listening by exposed them to real contexts inside their academic environments. Role-play could help participants (students) to make them feel more

familiarized with English Language, and at the same time, it could help students to feel more confident and capable to face real situations.

5.6 Conclusions

The conclusion of this thesis project is that travelling abroad can be difficult when it is the first time, because as we do not have previous experience in real contexts and real situations, we could feel insecure about speaking the foreign language (English) even when we have knowledge about it. It is also important to remark, that socio-affective factors impact the way communication is developed considering how emotions affect the capability of non native speakers when they are facing real situations, for example, participants mentioned that they felt a type of fear when they had to speak to native speakers because they felt they could make mistakes. This is related to self-esteem, it is possible that they might not feel capable in keeping a conversation, even when they know they have knowledge to do it, nonetheless, being their first time, many feelings and thoughts are mixed and feel fear of speaking English.

Finally, after the whole experience, participants achieved success in communication and, in fact, all the participants improved their communication skills and felt happy and capable to keep conversations with American native speakers.

5.7 Reflection

When I decided to do this research, I was thinking about a personal situation, my first time in the USA. I thought about how I felt when I had my first interaction with native speakers and I was really nervous, and I felt like if I speak, I would make a mistake and native speakers

would not understand me, so I questioned myself about what are the socio-affective factors that affect communication between native speakers and non native speakers, and how that impact in communication, and, I found valuable information which I could reflect now.

During this project I discovered how important, and rich is to interact with native speakers and living real contexts, because only when we have those experiences, we really know how daily English is. We learnt English in a classroom, in an academic environment, but we really do not know different accents, or we do not have an extensive vocabulary, besides the fact that English students do not have practice, so having communication with native speakers in real contexts could not be as we think. However, once we have that experience, we expand our knowledge, and we improve communication skills.

Finally, doing this thesis research allowed me to learn from my participants' experiences and understand the reason for our feelings.

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APPENDIX A

SOCIO-AFFECTIVE FACTORS AND INTERACTION ABROAD

The next questionnaire will help to collect data for a research study in order to comprehend how socio-affective factors influence interaction when students go abroad to a USA Camp. All data collected will be protected and names will be changed. Thanks for your help!

1. When did you go abroad and where for the first time?
2. How long were you there?
3. How was the first time you interacted with native speakers in the USA?
4. How did you feel interacting with native speakers for the first time?
5. Why do you think you felt in that way?
6. What was the most difficult in getting used to English?
7. How did you feel you began to listen and speak English daily?
8. Did you have any struggles in listening/speaking English? Why?
9. In which moment did you start to feel confident in speaking English? Why?
10. What did you do to achieve confidence?
11. How did you feel when you overcame your first thoughts?
12. How do you feel after your experience?