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**Students' attitudes toward EFL classes and their performance through Microsoft Teams app**

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**“EFL students’ attitudes toward English classes through Microsoft Teams and the effect on their performance in class”**

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## **DEDICATORY**

This thesis is dedicated to my lovely wife Mariana Olmos Hernández for all her support and words of encouragement and advice in my professional and personal life. This paper is also dedicated to me for all the personal and professional work I have done until now that is building my personal and professional growth. To my family members that at a point in my life have helped and encouraged me to work hard; and to my dear professor and advisor of this project Mtra. Sandra Juárez Pacheco that enlightened me with her academic knowledge and valuable advice.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The current scenery that EFL students are facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic took many students from face-to-face classes to online ones. Therefore, the aim of this study is to explore into the EFL students' attitudes towards taking classes through Microsoft Teams and how these attitudes impact their language performance. The study sample involved 55 EFL students who are currently being prepared to become English teachers. The methodology follows a quantitative approach using the descriptive method employing a survey containing 16 positive and negative items using a Likert-scale and 1 open-ended questions designed in a web-based tool called Google Forms shared via online which was the mean for the data collection procedure. The study's results shows that Although most of the respondents' position is neutral towards positive attitudes using Microsoft Teams, they do not have negative attitudes towards the application. Moreover, participants found it easy and they feel comfortable using Microsoft Teams where they have seen improvements in their language performance in aspects such as: pronunciation, speaking, written production, among others. Also, there were some drawbacks like: internet issues, teachers and students lack of experience using the app, and distractors in their current physical environment where students take online classes that may affect students' language performance.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

Currently, distance education has become an important issue due to the pandemic of COVID-19. Many education levels that usually have face-to-face education have been forced to move to the online mode, which is an uncommon way of instructional environment for teachers and students (Serhan, 2020). Thus, several platforms and applications have been adopted as a means of communication between students and teachers such as: Telegram, WhatsApp, Google Classroom and Zoom, etc. (Singh et al., 2020). This phenomenon has encouraged teachers to rethink about English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning practice through the use of those platforms. As it is shown in Singh et al.'s (2020) study, it is suggested technology as a means of communication, thus it will be fundamental in terms of facilitating students' learning process in a distance learning environment. It would allow improvements in English teaching practices with the aim to enhance students' abilities in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning field.

Fortunately, EFL students have a positive perspective towards the internet. For instance, they see the use of internet as a global source of information, a quick way to instruct knowledge, a site which allows people to get close relationships, an effective piece of equipment used for training, a way to increase cultural exchanging experimenting excitement, and a way that makes life easy (Aydin, 2007). However, the exposure of students to a Virtual Language Environment is causing troubles because they are accustomed to using apps and gadgets for communication and entertainment rather than for academic purposes

(Herrera, 2017). These aspects might cause learners positive or negative attitudes towards learning EFL under certain circumstances that technology brings. Although there are many platforms and apps that facilitate the language learning process and many educators have adopted them due to the lockdown, the switch was not an easy task especially for students. According to a recent research done by Serhan (2020) that is called transitioning from Face-to-Face to Remote Learning.

The change of direction from face-to-face learning to online scenarios impact the students' development in the EFL field. As a result, students' attitudes have been affected positively or negatively. Thus, there is a need for teachers to investigate the factors that may cause positive or negative attitudes on students that are learning in a virtual environment. Therefore, this chapter is presenting firstly the rationale for the topic selection. Secondly, this chapter is presenting the significance of the study where its importance is established. Thirdly, there are the context's features of the study. Fourthly, it is stated the main purpose. Fifthly, based on the aim of this research, there is a description of the objectives. Sixthly, there are the research questions to be answered at the end of this research project. Lastly, there is a brief conclusion of the overall chapter.

### **1.1 Rationale for the topic selection**

According to Greece (2010) students' attitudes towards English classes are broadly accepted as an indicator of success. Learners who have positive attitudes usually show a considerable level of motivation, enthusiasm to participate, and a great language performance in class. Nowadays, due to the changes that are brought by the pandemic and the switch from face-to-face to remote learning play an important role in EFL learning and students' attitudes. The

idea of working in the field of attitudes is still a matter of discussion that should be researched due to the new challenges that EFL learning classes have caused on students' attitudes.

## **1.2 Significance of the study**

Elyildirim & Ashton (2006) state that attitudes have complex social, cultural, and psychological features. Those attitudes are the ones that influence students when facing many situations in language learning. For instance, students who have positive attitudes have quicker progress and willingness to do their best to learn a language. As it can be seen, students' attitudes affect their performance when learning EFL.

According to Rojabi's (2020) study about exploring EFL students' perception of online learning via Microsoft Teams suggests to go beyond students' perceptions like exploring the field of students' attitudes towards the use of the app. Therefore, this study is useful for EFL teachers to explore students' attitudes and performance and compare them with this study. Also, EFL teachers may improve their teaching practice by being aware of their students' attitudes and their performance. Also, this study can help students to identify the attitudes that they might have when facing EFL online courses. Particularly, this study can provide the opportunity for students to choose the ones that may impact their performance positively. EFL students' accomplishments in learning English depends on students' mental capabilities as well as their attitude towards EFL learning (Syukur, 2016). Finally, in the case of EFL institutions, this study might show them the role of students' attitudes in the EFL online learning process since students sometimes do not give importance to online courses (Erarslan & Topkaya, 2017). Consequently, institutions could change some educational policies, course contents in order to allow students to reach their academic goals.

### **1.3 Context of the research**

This study is carried out at a public university in the state of Puebla which is called BUAP. The target population is a group of university students that have the different EFL subjects as part of their degree curricula at LEI. They usually have had face-to-face classes that changed to the online mode due to the pandemic of COVID-19. As a result, the school administrators decided to use the application of Microsoft Teams to develop their synchronous classes.

### **1.4 The Aim of the study**

The purpose of this study is to identify the positive and negative attitudes of students that directly or indirectly impact their language performance when taking classes through Microsoft Teams at LEI.

### **1.5 Objectives**

To apply an attitude questionnaire to EFL students at LEI.

To analyze the data in order to recognize the attitude of students in their EFL classes.

To analyze how those attitudes may affect the students' language performance in their EFL class in a positive or negative way.

### **1.6 Research questions**

In order to develop this study, the following research questions aimed to be answered.

1. What are the EFL students' attitudes at LEI in their EFL classes through Microsoft Teams app?

2. To what extent, these students' attitudes may affect students' language performance in their EFL class at LEI?

### **1.7 Conclusion**

The current situation that EFL students are facing due to the lockdown of COVID-19 pandemic took many students from face-to-face classes to virtual ones. Therefore, this chapter was presenting a summary of this study description. Basically, elemental information such as rationale, context and significance were established in order to take the readers to the general standpoint of it. The following chapter is presenting all the literature review needed for this research project.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

The current study aims to identify EFL students' attitudes towards EFL classes through Microsoft Teams app and the impact of them on students' performance in class. Thus, this chapter is presenting all the literature review topics needed. Firstly, it describes EFL learning and EFL learning in Mexico because it is necessary to define and contextualize EFL learning. After that, the definition of attitudes in the EFL learning process is established; this section also presents its components such as conative, affective and cognitive aspects of attitudes, they are extensively described. Consequently, the common attitudes over objects in language learning such as: attitudes towards self, the target language, speakers of the language (peers in particular), the teacher and the classroom environment are widely illustrated to have a panorama. Then, the possible effects of EFL students' attitudes on EFL learning are established. Finally, it presents the online learning concept, the different resources in this type of learning mode, and the description of Microsoft teams as an EFL resource.

#### **2.1 English Foreign Language (EFL) learning**

In order to have a clear idea about what EFL learning is, it is important to describe it. According to Brown (2000), learning EFL is basically the process of learning English with a limit of opportunities to use the language such as the setting, for instance, learning English in Mexico. Those opportunities can be achieved through having contact with the current trend towards immigrant communities that move to large cities or different English-based media resources such as: television, the internet, and the motion picture industry (Brown, 2000).

Moreover, Ellis (1994) defines EFL learning as the process which takes place just in the classroom; here, English does not play an important role in the population of a particular place out of the class. Therefore, the EFL learning process is usually taught broadly in schools where English is not the mother tongue.

Due to the fact that English is not an essential language in the national or social learner's life (Broughton et al., 2002), learning English as a foreign language implies working hard. According to TESOL International Association (2017), EFL learners think that English seems to be not useful in students' lives; and secondly, they rarely have an opportunity to apply the abilities they get when learning the language. Thus, it is concluded that EFL learning is a hard process where students often learn English in school among other languages or subjects with limited opportunities to practice it. For instance, the practice can be in the current EFL class like a spoken English group or different resources like the internet, TV, or websites.

### **2.1.1 EFL learning in Mexico**

According to the British Council (2015), it is estimated that in Mexico around 23.9 million people learn English, which is about 21% of the population of the country. This number refers to students learning English through different possible ways: public or private education at all different levels such as basic, intermediate or higher education. On the one hand regarding public education in Mexico, Borjian (2008 cited in Borjian, 2015) describes EFL teaching as basic since students mainly learn vocabulary and basic structures. For instance, a qualitative study done in Mexico City shows that 95.9% of learners coming from public institutions did not pass an English linguistic competence exam when entering to higher education (González Robles, Vivaldo Lima, and Castillo Morales, 2004 cited in Basurto & Gregory, 2016). Thus,

EFL learning from public education tends to be elementary and poor when facing English proficiency tests. On the other hand EFL learning in private or bilingual schools, parents believe that there are qualified teachers that bring students strong foundations in academic and proficient aspects of EFL (Borjian, 2015). Moreover, in Mota's (2006) study, it is generally suggested that private academic institutions not only offer wide English curricula schedules but also the curricula quality seems to be better than the one from the public system. Therefore, EFL learning at a private education system is likely to be considered as a quality option to learn the language because of the qualified instruction, time, and programs offered by these types of institutions (Mota, 2006; Borjian, 2015).

## **2.2 Language learning attitudes**

Richards & Schmidt (2010) states that language attitudes may have an effect on Foreign Language learning and these attitudes are defined as the expression of positive and negative feelings that students have towards their own or other languages. These feelings may show learners impressions of difficulty or ease when learning; also, they show the way an individual feels about the speakers of that language. Moreover, Brown (2000) states that attitudes are developed early in life, and they are the results of other people's attitudes such as parents or peers. These attitudes build the individual's perception of their own, others, and the cultural aspects around them. Additionally, Baker (1988 cited in Ellis, 1994) attitudes can be learnt and modified as time goes by since they are coming from the cognitive and affective side of a person. Thus, they influence an individual to react positively or negatively towards something. As a result, attitudes towards a language can be described as *positive* or *negative* regarding students' knowledge, beliefs, and emotions in EFL learning.

Brown (2000) states that second language students take advantage of positive attitudes. He mentions that several studies carried out by Gardner and Lambert (1972) aiming to explore effects of attitudes on language learning concludes that positive students' attitudes build motivation. Additionally, Brown (2000) also claims that other experts such as Oiler, Hudson, Liu, Cluhara, Baca and Vigil's studies focus on the relationship between attitudes and success that shows positive learners' attitudes raise in language proficiency. Moreover, Ellis (1994) asserts that second language learning can be improved by having positive attitudes towards aspects such as the language, the speakers and the culture of it and negative attitudes may obstruct learning. This does not necessarily have to be this way, nevertheless, when students have powerful purposes for learning a language, negative attitudes effects may lead students to accomplish learning successfully. In other words, EFL students' positive attitudes may ease English language learning whereas negative attitudes can make language learning complicated or difficult to succeed.

On the one hand, according to Brown (2000) *positive attitudes* are demonstrated when students may show personal interest in the people and culture of a language to learn. For instance, a wish to understand its speakers and comprehend their feelings can be taken as expressions of positive attitudes as shown in Gardner and Lambert's (1972) studies results. Briefly Gardner and Lambert's (1972) study, demonstrated that a group of English-speaking Canadians showed to have positive attitudes towards the target language which was French. During this study, language professors guided students to integrative orientation to learn French while considering French people and culture. Additionally, Syukur (2016) points out that a positive attitude is a strong resource which encourages enthusiasm, increases self-esteem, and brings a good environment for learning. On the other hand, *negative attitudes*

can be seen when students devalue and not appreciate the language due to the misconceptions due to the lack of real information about aspects of a language like the culture and its speakers, etc.(Brown, 2000). Furthermore in Zainol et al.'s (2012) study conclusions, it is stated that negative attitudes result from students' poor awareness of how important it is to study English and the fact that learning it as an obligatory subject at school. Thus, negative or positive attitudes in EFL is a position that students have towards the learning process influenced by the lack of knowledge, interest and importance towards language.

Before going further in this study, it is important to know that although attitudes influence an individual to act, attitudes and action are not strongly related (Baker, 1988 cited in Ellis, 1994). Nevertheless, Ajzen (1989) states that attitudes have an effect on behavior in a dynamic and directive way. Thus, attitudes can be shown through behavior even if the relationship is not very strong. The following information demonstrates how the components of attitudes are arranged into the three main components: cognitive, conative and affective (Handing et al. 1954 cited in Gardner, 1985).

### **2.2.1 Cognitive components of attitudes**

According to Ajzen (1989) the components that built this part of attitudes are seen in the type of reactions that shows how someone perceives something based on the information and beliefs the individual links towards certain characteristics or attributes that an object or situation has. Moreover, in the case of language learning, these features of attitude contain the information that language students have about the knowledge they get and understand from the language learning process (Abidin and at., 2012). In fact, cognitive aspects of attitudes in EFL learning shown by students' reactions are mainly the knowledge and beliefs they have and obtain from the language.

### **2.2.2 Conative components of attitudes**

These features of attitude refers to the inclinations, intentions, commitments and actions that someone wants to perform towards an object. It can be observed through people expressing what they want, intent, and decide to do depending on the circumstances (Ajzen, 1989). Additionally, Gardner (1985) and Syukur (2016) point out that this component refers to the individual tendency to act in terms of behaviour towards the situation in a particular form. So, these characteristics of the attitude are mainly the EFL students' intentions, plans, actions they wish to show through behavior in their EFL learning process.

### **2.2.3 Affective components of attitudes**

Ajzen (1989) also stated that the affective components of attitude are presented in the responses where feelings are involved. These affective responses can be classified into verbal for instance, words that express affection or rejection, and non-verbal the ones presented through body language showing favorable or unfavorable acceptance. Moreover, in the process of language learning Feng and Chen (2009) mention that feelings are part of the emotional field since the learning process is an emotional one, the effectiveness of classroom activities can be affected by them. Thus, feelings in the form of verbal a non-verbal expressions of acceptance or rejection toward learning English are the elements that build features of attitudes.

## **2.3 Attitudes towards elements in the EFL learning environment**

Due to the fact that students' surroundings have an effect on attitudes and they have a great influence on learning languages, Richard (1988) and Ellis (1994) propose the following types

of attitudes: *attitudes towards self, the target language* and the target language speakers, the teacher and the classroom environment which are extensively described in the further section.

### **2.3.1 Attitude toward self**

Richard (1988) relates self-esteem and/or self-confidence as the attitudes towards self. This author mentions that both aspects would change according to the situation or task they do. This attitude may change as the learner performs in a variety of situations. For instance, someone who may have a positive attitude towards self is because of his or her good performance (Oller, 1981 cited in Richard 1988). Moreover, Brown (2000) points out that it is a necessity of some percentage of self-esteem, self-confidence, knowledge of yourself, and self-efficacy for cognitive or affective activities to perform successfully while learning a language. To sum up, attitude towards self can be defined as the way learners perceive themselves when learning EFL and the correlation with their self-esteem. Self-confidence and beliefs in their own language skills may help students to accomplish any activity in a successful way within their EFL class.

### **2.3.2 Attitudes towards the target language**

According to Richard (1988) stereotyping in a negative way often causes negative reactions and raises negative attitudes towards the target language. For instance, lots of students only want to complete the English courses as required, but in the end they do not really want to learn the language (TESOL International Association, 2017). On the other hand, Syukur (2016) suggests that a good beginning to learn the language is through having a positive attitude towards the language, which means giving the importance of knowing the language and enjoying using it. Therefore, attitudes towards English as the target language implies

positive and negative attitudes which are determined by the degree of importance and appreciation that students have when they face the learning process.

### **2.3.3 Attitudes towards the target language speakers**

When language learners begin their language learning process, having negative attitudes towards the people using that language will ensure having poor progress in their language learning progress (Syukur, 2016). Supporting, Richard (1988) claims that stereotyping usually represents a wide paper in this type of attitude. According to Brown (2000) a stereotype designates features to people just because of their cultural background traits. This stereotype may be accurate when describing a member of a group, however, impressive when defining a specific person. Moreover, stereotyping may generate or keep social distancing and social barriers among students that obstacles communication and learning (Saville-Troike, 1978 cited in Richard, 1988). Therefore, when negative stereotypes are attributed to second language students, they may become internalized and could undermine attempts at language acquisition (Richard, 1988). To sum up, these kinds of attitudes refer to the ones EFL students have towards the English speakers in general, stereotyping is usually presented when negative attitudes towards them rise during the learning process.

### **2.3.4 Attitudes towards the teacher**

Syukur (2016) states that one main issue for students to have positive attitudes towards the teachers is by showing respect to them rather than bad feelings like: students ignoring the class, pretending to pay attention but not carrying out the task, trying to sleep or encouraging the peers to misbehave, etcetera in order to avoid bad experiences when the teaching practice is being carried out. Since teachers' personality and their role model influence students'



attitudes towards English language learning, students are likely to imitate teachers in terms of attitudes and behavior. Therefore, teachers should have positive attitudes while teaching the language (Prastiwi, 2018). Thus, attitudes described here are perceptions EFL students have towards the teacher of the class determined by their own teachers' attitudes and the students' way of expressing their respect or the lack of it while taking classes.

### **2.3.5 Attitudes toward the classroom environment**

Due to the fact that students' attitudes are affected by the things around them (Prastiwi, 2018), Tsiplakides and Keramida, 2010 suggest creating a type of *classroom community* where learners can experience freedom using the foreign language to communicate. This implies to bear in mind that errors are part of the learning language process and they should be seen as something that is natural (Dornyei (2001: 42 cited in Tsiplakides and Keramida, 2010). Otherwise, communication apprehension is likely to appear which means students' lack of participation using the language they are learning (Tsiplakides and Keramida, 2010) because in the classroom environment where disrespect is shown among participants directly or indirectly. Troubles are probable to appear (Richard, 1988). Additionally, Syukur, 2016 states that students' attitudes towards school in general evolve a degree of students' level of responsibility which comes as the learner identifies the purpose why they attend school. Therefore, they should be aware of their duties like developing assignments, carrying out the class activities, promoting participation, etc. So, EFL students' attitudes towards the learning environment is how the learners perceive things around them in the EFL environment. Definitely, the classroom community atmosphere would encourage students to take part in class activities, there is where students show their degree of responsibilities towards the school.

## **2.4 Online learning**

Online learning or online education are the words commonly employed when referring to distance education at higher educational levels (Simonson, Zvacek, & Smaldino, 2015). According to Reegan (1995) distance education and training emerge from separating the instructor and student where a technological manner allows learners to avoid travelling to a specific location. They also set time to meet the assigned educator with the purpose of receiving training or education. Likewise, Simonson (2009, 2010 cited in Simonson, Zvacek, & Smaldino, 2015) states that distance education is a formal educational and institutional program where communication through a telecommunication system can be done with the learning community along with resources needed for learning. Thus, online learning is an institutional educational program formally developed which enables interaction between teachers and students at a distance. It also allows access to some resources related to the course via telecommunication systems where EFL courses may be carried out.

### **2.4.1 Online learning resources**

Because of telecommunication systems improvements and its universally growing, telecommunication systems can be considered the central component of modern online learning (Simonson, Zvacek, & Smaldino, 2015). Currently, modern distance learning courses are based on the use of web-based course management systems which can be proprietary and open-source systems. There, students can find digital materials such as readings, recorded classes, e-mail, debate forums, chat communities, and online assessment (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2016). For instance, a Learning Management System (LMS) software package and e-learning platforms are becoming popular in language learning and teaching. They are employed to make online learning easier (Basal, 2016). Therefore, the

main resources that facilitate online learning courses in today's world are LMS software and E-learning platforms which can be used in EFL online courses such as Microsoft Teams app, Moodle, Zoom which were recently analyzed in Ngoc and Phung's (2021) study about EFL students perceptions in respect of challenges they face regarding their own language learning and Zoom and WhatsApp in Suadi's (2021) study regarding the use of those apps in ELT classes. However, the current research carried out here is considering the use of Microsoft Teams as a resource in online learning.

#### **2.4.2 Microsoft Teams as an EFL resource**

According to Microsoft (2021) Teams, an intelligent communication app from Microsoft 365 and Office 365 is the result of an upgrade for Skype for Business Online which at last will replace Skype. Microsoft Teams was launched to market on the 12th of September, 2016 and from that date to the current version there have been many improvements where the last version is 4.9.12.0 and was released on the 28th of July, 2021 (Microsoft, 2021). As previously stated Microsoft Teams is the main platform considered for this study. It is considered an innovative platform that contains particular characteristics that allow EFL teachers to manage a greater interaction and build a good learning atmosphere in online learning (Rojabi, 2020). It promotes teamwork where people are able to meet and work collectively in real time to accomplish tasks. Also, this application allows users to have meetings to share and work on editing files even if it is with other apps and services. What is more, it allows individuals to experiment with informal chats, make quick adjustments on assignments, work with team documents, and cooperate with others in the construction of a final product (Microsoft, 2021). As the app offers two ways of interaction synchronous and asynchronous one, EFL students can benefit from them (Di Pietro et al., 2020 cited in Sayeh

& Razkane, 2021). Specifically, the asynchronous format course content can be uploaded in different ways such as video, PowerPoint presentations, videos, word documents, pdf, etc., while the synchronous way can be thought live streaming, video conferencing and chats, these let students work in both ways (Sayeh & Razkane, 2021). Therefore, Microsoft Teams can be considered a channel for EFL students to continue their learning process in online courses.

## **2.5 EFL language students' performance**

According to Brown (2000), performance in the field of language learning involves the production and comprehension of a linguistic act which implies the use of listening, reading, speaking and writing skills. Also, performance is certainly seen as a solid manifestation or an act of accomplishment of competence, where competence regarding languages implies knowledge of a system of a language. That is, the information about grammar rules, vocabulary, entire features of a language and the way of how those elements match each other (Brown, 2000). Furthermore, performance in EFL is defined as the learner's use of the language regarding the knowledge that he or she has about it. Creating and interpreting sentences are indicators of the learner competence where grammatically judgments are measured (Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, 2010). To sum up, EFL students' performance is seen through the use of grammar, vocabulary and the language skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking: those are indicators of the students' performance when learning English.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

In order to explore the students' attitudes towards the use of Microsoft Teams in their online courses and see how those attitudes affect their language performance, this chapter is presenting the methodology where the method and approach of this study are established. Also, the context where the current study takes place and participants' features are widely described. Moreover, the information about the instrument for the data collection and procedure considered in the overall research design are extensively detailed. Finally, this chapter describes the way the data collection is organized in the data analysis section.

#### **3.1 Methodology**

This study follows a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is defined as an inquiry where the researcher explains the meaning of the data taking into account their own reflections and information from previous studies (Creswell, 2012). Moreover, Leavy (2014 in Leavy, 2017) states that qualitative research is about creating meaning from inductive approaches which implies making inferences; all of this in order to develop new knowledge where investigators can examine, acquire knowledge of social situation, break down the meaning that people attribute to a situation or to create wide comprehension regarding social life (Leavy, 2014 in Leavy 2017). Additionally Neville (2007) asserts that the nature of qualitative research is through a subjective way which encompasses reflections and

examinations in research intangible matters such as attitudes. Thus, this approach is useful when exploring, describing, or explaining are the main goals of a researcher (Leavy, 2017).

Also, this research is developed through a descriptive methodology that shows a detailed illustration of a situation, social environment, or the way two or more concepts, ideas, or people are connected (Lawrence, 2014). Here, the research results provide an accurate and detailed panorama of the topic in question or the answer to the study question (Lawrence, 2014). Moreover, Leavy (2017) states that descriptive research produces a wide description bringing specific information, conditions, meanings of social life usually from the people's perceptions involved in it. Therefore, this methodology allows this study to explore EFL students' attitudes towards taking classes through Microsoft Teams application and establish how those attitudes affect their performance when taking classes via this application.

### **3.2 Context**

The current study takes place at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP) which is a public and autonomous university located in the state of Puebla Mexico. The university started in the middle of the XVI century founded in 1578 by a religious group which at first it was called "Colegio del Espíritu Santo" and the current name was given on the 2nd of April, 1987 by the State Congress due to the science and culture development presence in the state of Puebla (BUAP, n.d.). This university considered one of the best universities in the country, its commitment is to encourage students to be integral, critical and reflective professionals able to develop, modify, rebuild, innovate and apply knowledge

in a quality and social relevance way at high school education, bachelor's degrees, and postgraduate studies (BUAP, n. d.).

In terms of Bachelor's degree, the university offers them into these four main areas: *Economic-Administrative, Engineering and Exact Sciences, Natural and Health Sciences and Social Science and Humanities* where this last area is divided into 8 faculties in which the language faculty is one of them. The origins of the faculty of languages started as early as the university foundation because since those times, there have been given language courses, however, it was officially created and separated from the faculty of philosophy in 1995 and moved to the current location in the colonia Humboldt Puebla city in 2002 (Huerta Bortolotti, 2005 in Ochoa Gutiérrez, 2016 ). This faculty offers two bachelor's degrees, one about French teaching and the other about English teaching. This last one is called in Spanish *Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés (LEI)* which is where this study is taking place.

In order to have a better view of the language faculty, it is also important to mention that this faculty encompasses more programs such as: an open university program about teaching English called LAEL-I and a Masters in Language teaching called MEI. Additionally, in its facilities students can find different places like: a center of languages CELE for BUAP students and CEU for external learners where language courses are given at different levels. There are also The Houses of English, German, and French where specialized courses to certify those languages are carried out, and a certification department called CIA where students can make a process to get an international language certificate. What is more, the school involves language labs called CAA where students can use the resources to practice their language skills. Finally, a continuous education department is also in the faculty, where students can continue their professional growth (BUAP, n.d.). Finally,

it is important to take into account that the student population is composed of different types of academic profiles and different aspects which are described nextly.

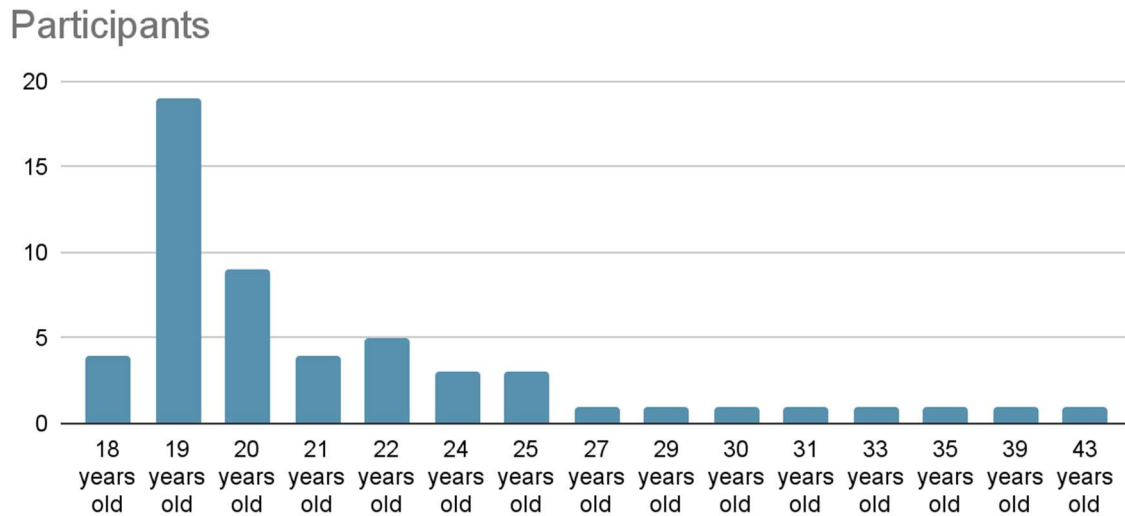
### **3.3 Participants**

The participants of this study had to fulfil an admission profile from BUAP where it is stated that student candidates should have knowledge about Spanish language and culture in general. Moreover, students should possess certain skills such as: the ability to learn languages, the capability to be analytical and the aptitude to work alone and collaboratively in order to reach autonomy. On the other hand, the graduation profile asserts that the professional is a competent English teacher that presents several qualifications like (B2) English level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. These BA's students also need to have knowledge of Anglophone culture, and the ability to continue growing in the personal and professional field (BUAP, n.d.). Specifically, the sample of participants in this study are 42 female and 13 male students from the Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés (LEI) at the faculty of languages BUAP. According to BUAP (n.d.) they will be able to use the language at B2 level according to the Common European Framework and capable of developing their professional growth. Once they finish their studies, they will have the opportunity to obtain their degree as English teachers in public and private schools from basic levels to higher educational levels of education nationally and internationally (BUAP, n.d.).

In Graph 1, participants' ages are shown. They are generally from 18 to 43 years old. Particularly, 5 out of 55 participants are 18 years old. The highest number of participants are 19 who are 19 years old. Then, there are 9 participants who are 20 years old, 4 that are 21



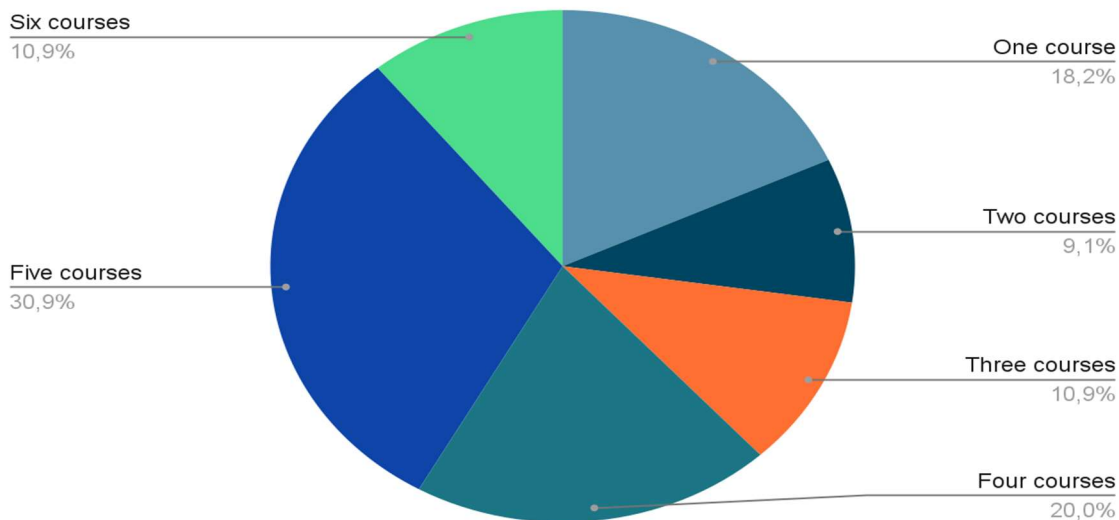
years old, 5 students who are 22 years old and 4 people that are 24 and 25 years old each. Finally, there are only 1 participant for each age in the case of 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 35, 39 and 43 years old. Specific information is displayed below:



*Graph 1. Participants' age*

Moreover, these participants are currently taking or have been taking more than 1 course through Microsoft Teams app, which are part of their curricular or extracurricular classes to become EFL teachers. As it is shown in Graph 2, taking five courses through Microsoft Teams app is having more participants rather than the ones taking two courses.

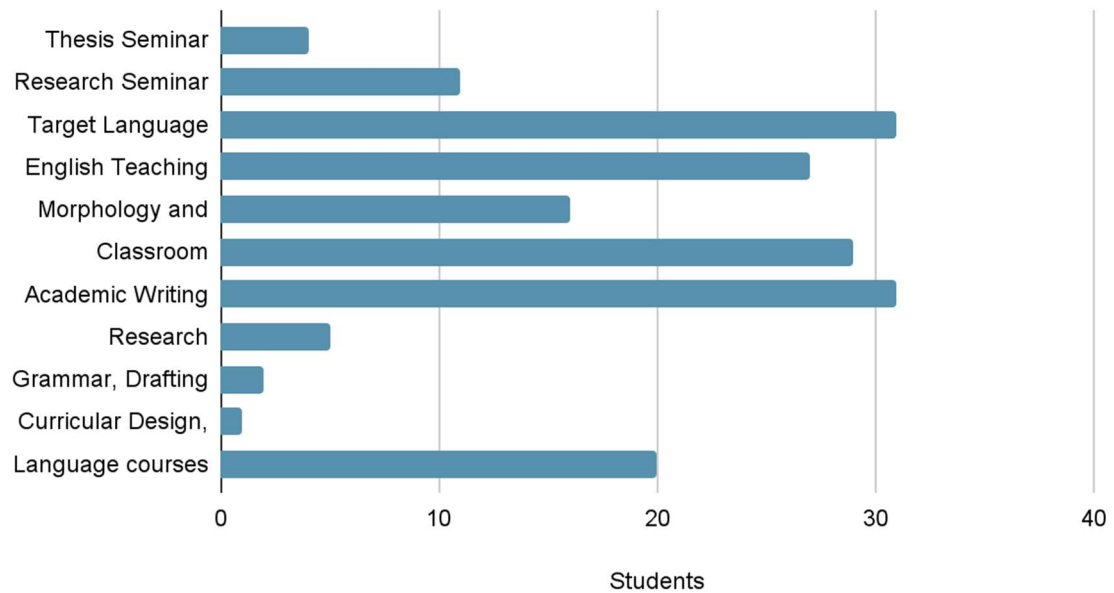
## Courses taken through Microsoft Teams



Graph 2. Courses taken through Microsoft Teams

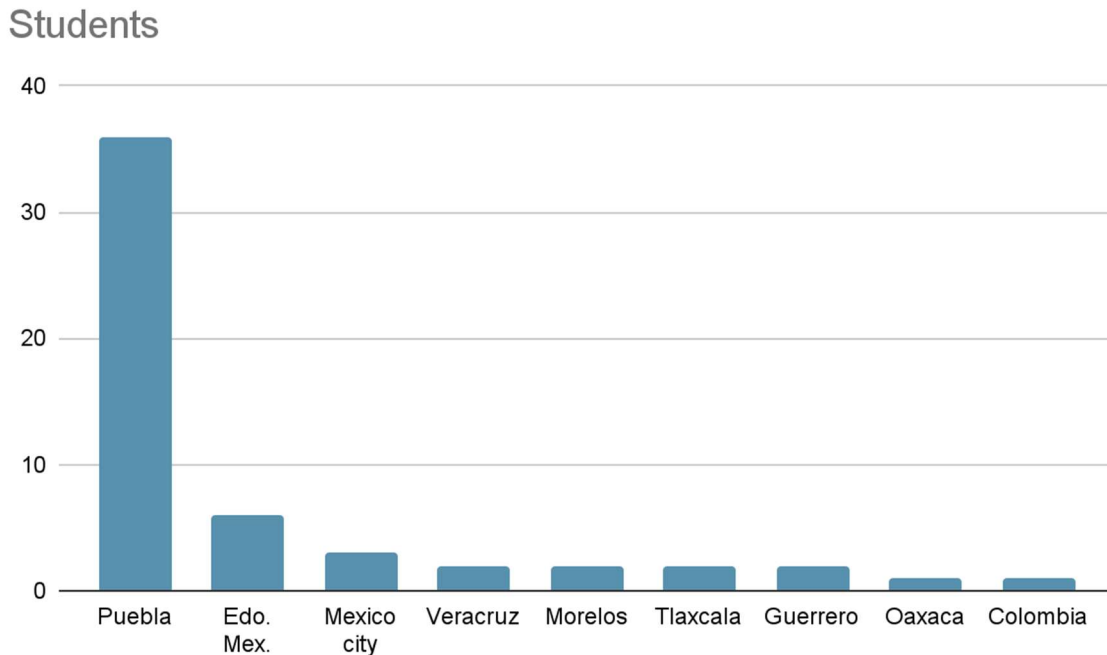
The type of ELT courses and the amount of participants taking those courses via Microsoft Teams app are presented in the following Graph 3. *Target Languages* and *Academic Writing* are the subjects that 31 students are taking, which is the highest number. It is followed by *Classroom Observation* which is taken by 29 participants and *English Teaching Methodology* where 27 people attending to this class seem to be the subjects with the highest number of students. In contrast, the *Curricular Design* course is only taken by one student. Then, *Extracurricular Language Courses* such as English, French, Italian, Japanese and German are taken by 20. In *Morphology and Syntax* there are 16 students, meanwhile in the *Research seminar* there are 11 students. The *Research Methodology* class has 5 students; and finally, there are only 2 students taking *Grammar and Drafting classes* as shown below.

## Type of subjects taken through Microsoft Teams



*Graph 3. Type of subjects taken Through Microsoft Teams*

Finally, to demonstrate where this study's participants are coming from, Graph 4 is showing the results. The highest number of participants are from the State of Puebla: 37; in contrast, there are 6 participants from Mexico state (Edo. Mex.) and 3 participants from Mexico City which is the biggest city in the Mexican country. Veracruz, Tlaxcala and Guerrero have 2 students from each of them. Meanwhile, only 1 student is from Oaxaca and 1 more from Colombia which is a foreign country.



*Graph 4. Places where students are from*

### **3.4 Instrument**

The current instrument to carry out this study is a survey because this tool is usually used for gathering information from a wide population about peoples ‘attitudes, beliefs, points of view, etc. through systematized questions which permits analyzing the data statistically (Leavy, 2017). In order to be more specific, the survey employed is a cross-sectional one due to the fact that it allows the investigator to collect the data at one point in time in order to investigate the current people’s thinking about issues such as attitudes (Creswell, 2012).

To be more specific, this survey is an adapted and modified instrument from Tran’s (2021) study about EFL students’ attitudes towards the benefits of Microsoft Teams in online learning classes. The current version of it is divided into three parts. Firstly, it contains general questions in order to know more about the students’ features such as: age, gender, places they are coming from, the amount of subjects taken through Microsoft Teams and the

name of those subjects are required. Secondly, it contains 16 closed-ended items, that is, the participant has a limited choice to answer, and in this case the options are in a Likert scale where the options are: agree, neutral and disagree to determine the degree of agreement of participants (Burns, 2009). The first 8 are positive items regarding the positive attitudes and positive effect on EFL students' language performance; meanwhile, the other 8 closed-ended negative items are about negative attitudes and the negative effect on EFL students' language performance. Lastly, there is one open-ended question where participants are invited to describe extensively the knowledge-beliefs, intentions-plans and feelings they have towards their language performance in classes taken by the means of Microsoft Teams app (See Appendixes A, A1).

### **3.5 Overall Research Design**

Due to the current conditions because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey was spread using the Google forms application. The app enables the user to build instant surveys and examine them without the necessity of using special software; and once the respondents send the results, they are organized into charts to have a concrete report (Google, 2021). This web-based tool is employed to build forms in order to gather data which can be sent through mail, messages, web pages, blogs, and by sharing the link (Sivakumar, 2019). Thus, this instrument was shared with pre-service EFL teachers. The first step to start the application was to adapt and modify the instrument from Tran's (2021) study. Later, the advisor of this study and the researcher of this study invited students to be participants for this study. Researchers explained the purpose and a brief description of this study to participants; also they explained the way they needed to answer it. This process was repeated in about five classes with the intention to increase the number of participants' responses. Later on, in order to get more

respondents, the instrument was posted on the social networking site Facebook in a specific group called 'Facultad de Lenguas' specifying the type of participants needed. Finally, the process lasted around a week to wait for students' answers because some of them did not answer the survey immediately. In the end, 55 participants' responses were the total number gathered from both processes.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

In order to show a detailed picture of the panorama of students' attitudes and their impact on their language performance when taking classes through Microsoft Teams, the principles of a descriptive methodology (Lawrence, 2014 and Leavy, 2017) affirms that the data collected was synthesized, and categorized using two tables with detailed description (See Chapter 4). The first table shows the 8 positive items regarding positive attitudes and the scale used (disagree, neutral and agree) with the total number of participants that chose each of them along with its respective percentage. Subsequently, the second table displays the 8 negative statements about negative attitudes and the scale mentioned before and the respondents' answers and percentages in the same way as the first table. Finally, students' responses from the last open-ended questions were categorized into the three main features of attitudes regarding *knowledge-beliefs*, *intentions-plans*, and *feelings* towards their language performance in classes taken via Microsoft Teams in order to analyze and interpret the results of this research project.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

As it was necessary to determine a research methodology to develop this study, this chapter was showing an extensive description about the appropriate method and approach along with

a wide description of the context and respondents for this study. It also established the overall research design and the data analysis where it was shown the data collection procedure and the way it was organized to present the results. Thus, the following chapter is presenting the results and the interpretation of the data gathered previously in order to answer the research questions.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter is presenting the obtained results about students' positive and negative attitudes towards the use of Microsoft Teams and the impact on their language performance. Firstly, the students' responses regarding positive and negative attitudes are described and interpreted. Secondly, the research questions are answered based on results obtained and interpretation from participants' responses. Consequently, a discussion section is established where conclusions are made regarding research questions results. Finally, there is a general conclusion about the overall chapter.

#### 4.1 Obtained Results

The obtained results from this study will be presented in two main sections: Positive (Table 1) and Negative (Table 2) attitudes towards EFL learning through the use of Microsoft Teams (MT). In Table 1, it is presented eight items that were requiring information from the participants regarding the positive attitudes that they might have towards their language performance when learning EFL through Microsoft Teams app. On the other hand, Table 2 is showing the percentages and amount of participants about their point of view in accordance with the negative attitudes towards their language performance working through Microsoft Teams app. The following information is presenting each item and its description and the extensive interpretation. Finally, a third section is presenting the results of an open question regarding conative, cognitive and affective attitudes as well.



#### 4.1.1 Positive attitudes results

Items	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1. I found learning through Microsoft Teams convenient since I can read the comments in the chat box and I can identify language mistakes that improves my <b>grammar</b> knowledge.	23 41.8%	27 49.1%	5 9.1%
2. I can recognize some mistakes from my classmates' oral participation in the Microsoft Teams class and I have better <b>speaking production</b> .	6 10.9%	26 47.3%	23 41.8%
3. I feel comfortable having classes though Microsoft Teams because <b>reading</b> the task's instructions helps me to develop the activities required in the course.	2 3.6%	15 27.3%	38 69.1%
4. I can correct my response easily by using the “edit” function in Microsoft Teams, so I see improvements in my <b>writing</b> papers.	6 10.9%	26 47.3%	23 41.8%

5. I can re-watch the recorded lectures anytime and anywhere in Microsoft Teams, so I have better <b>listening</b> comprehension.	4 7.3%	25 45.5%	26 47.3%
6. I can receive frequent and timely <b>feedback</b> from the teacher on my response(s) and assignment(s) through Microsoft Teams. I turn in more quality oral and written assignments every time.	4 7.3%	18 32.7%	33 60%
7. I can study in accordance with my learning pace because I can pause or rewind the video clips many times after the meeting on Microsoft Teams. Consequently, my <b>understanding</b> of English is increasing, and I have better notes in my tasks.	4 7.3%	26 47.3%	25 45.5%
8. I think that when taking classes through Microsoft teams, I have learnt more <b>vocabulary</b> in EFL than in face-to-face classes	13 23.6%	35 63.6%	7 12.7%

*Table1. Students' positive attitudes towards the use of Microsoft Teams in Online classes and the effects in students' language performance.*

*Item 1.* This first item regarding students' reading ability to identify language mistakes of other classmates when they read comments in the chat box in the Microsoft Team app help them to improve their **grammar knowledge**. The result shows that twenty-three out of fifty-five participants, representing 41.8% disagreed with this idea, whereas twenty-seven participants, which are 49.1% of the population, chose a neutral position. Only five people, which is the 9.1%, just agreed about this item. The highest position of participants is *neutral* and these respondents may not be sure about having improvements in their grammar knowledge only by paying attention to grammar mistakes when reading and identifying grammar classmates' mistakes messages in the chat box. According to Akbari (2014) the nature of reading as a receptive language skill is mainly used to understand texts or messages where grammar understanding has less importance than other aspects such as vocabulary, previous information, or reading strategies. Therefore, it may lead students to adopt this position regarding this item.

*Item 2.* Six participants (10.9%) disagreed with this statement while twenty-six of them which is the 47.3% selected the neutral position and the twenty-three out of fifty-five (41.8%) interviewed people showed the agreement about the ability to recognize some mistakes from their classmates' oral production through the Microsoft Teams app in class. As a result, they had better **speaking production**. Concluding, the majority of participants have a *neutral* position. These students may not be sure about their better speaking production performance only by identifying mistakes in their speaking classmates, because Brown (2000) states that speaking production performance not only implies listening and speaking connections to see improvements, it is also due in part to speaking tasks to be carried out by students in the language classroom class (Brown, 2000). Thus, these EFL students may have

this view as speaking production improvements encompasses a wide variety of elements to see improvements.

*Items 3.* According to the results from this item, only two interviewed people (10.9%) disagreed. Fifteen participants (27.5%) chose the neutral category and thirty-eight of them (69.1%) agreed that they feel comfortable having classes through Microsoft Teams because **reading** instructions helps them to develop the activities required in their courses. It can be pointed out that most of the participants *agreed* on this statement since usually language students have issues to develop appropriate reading comprehension. One of the primary strategies to develop it is to identify the purpose when reading (Brown, 2000). Thus, these EFL participants may find it easy to identify the main purpose of the tasks to deliver by reading and understanding instructions.

*Item 4.* In the statement: *I can correct my response easily by using the “edit” function in Microsoft Teams, so I see improvements in my **writing** papers.* Six participants (10.9%) out of fifty-five disagreed, whereas twenty-six (47.3%) seemed to be neutral and twenty-three representing 41.8% agreed about this statement. The highest position in this item is *neutral* and it might be because editing is only one stage from the writing process. According to Brown (2000), the writing process involves *rewriting, drafting, revising and editing* to have a final version of a writing paper. Therefore, the whole process may lead students to have improvements in writing papers, not only editing as presented in this item.

*Item 5.* Four participants (7.3%) disagreed with this item while twenty-five participants (45.5%) had the neutral position. Also, twenty-six (47.3%) out of fifty-five participants agreed with the statement about *having better **listening comprehension** which*

*comes from the ability to re-watch the recorded lectures anytime and anywhere in Microsoft Teams.* The *agreed* category is the highest. This result may be because those lectures recorded may be considered a listening self-study resource for students where such material may turn into a task oriented activity where students use the information to perform a task. It is similar to the one suggested in the principles of developing speaking materials from Celce-Murcia & McIntosh (1971). Thus, EFL students may see improvements in their listening comprehension because of this re-watch listening material available in this platform.

*Item 6.* Only Four participants out of fifty-five, that is the 7.3% disagreed. Eighteen participants, who represented 32.7%, had a neutral position. Moreover, thirty-three students (60%) agreed on the following item: ***Feedback they receive from their teachers on their responses and assignments through Microsoft Teams made them turn in more quality and written assignments.*** The highest score is in the *agree* category. It might be because of the importance students give to teachers' feedback and the way they may use it to make improvements in their written papers. It is usually employed as one of the strategies and skills applied in the drafting and revising stages in the writing process (Brown, 2000). Also, feedback is a key element in the students' learning process because it helps to identify important aspects to improve in their language skills (Klimova, 2015). Consequently, these EFL participants' writing tasks can be improved and considered quality outcomes from their classes though MT.

*Item 7.* In this statement: *I can study in accordance with my learning pace because I can pause or rewind the video clips many times after the meeting on Microsoft Teams. Consequently, my **understanding** of English is increasing, and I have better notes in my tasks.* Four participants representing 7.3% disagreed. Twenty-six (47.3%) students chose the

neutral option and twenty-five out of fifty-five, which is 45.5%, agreed on this item. There is only one student difference between neutral and agreed participants' positions where the *neutral* one is the highest in this item. It can be claimed that, although there are advantages like autonomy and proactivity which is stimulated by the use of video materials on language students learning (Bajrami & Ismaili, 2016) most of the participants do not relate any benefit from their video material class in Microsoft Team. Some authors agree on the fact that the correct use of audiovisual material, in terms of the right time and place, contribute to language EFL learning process as suggested by Rivers (1981 in Bajrami & Ismaili, 2016).

*Item 8.* In this last positive attitude item where students think that, *when taking classes through Microsoft Teams, they have learnt more vocabulary in EFL than in face-to-face classes*, Table 1 shown that 13 students (23.6%) chose the disagree option while 35 participants (63.6%) selected the neutral one and only 7 (12.7%) out of fifty-five people agreed on this fact. The tendency is the neutral position which may be due to the fact that vocabulary learning tends to be more implicit or in an incidental way rather than in an instructional form (Celce-Murcia & McIntosh, 1979). That is why these students may think that there is no increase of their vocabulary neither through online classes in MT nor face-to-face modality.

#### 4.1.2 Negative attitudes results

Items	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
9. It is difficult for me to see any progress on my <b>language skills</b> by using Microsoft Team.	16 29.1%	26 47.3%	13 23.6%
10. I have limited opportunities to participate in the discussion in Microsoft Teams but when I do, it is hard for me to <b>speak</b> easily.	18 32.7%	22 40%	15 27.3%
11. I lose my concentration gradually in a long-lasting teaching session (2 hours) through Microsoft Teams that my <b>listening</b> comprehension deteriorates.	10 18.2%	19 34.5%	26 47.3
12. My <b>knowledge</b> acquisition deteriorates in Microsoft Teams that at the end I have bad grades on my assignments	27 49.1%	23 41.8%	5 9.1%

13. I feel exhausted when continuously looking at the screen at the Microsoft Teams resources that <b>reading</b> practice is difficult.	10 18.2%	17 30.9%	28 50.9%
14. I am sometimes interrupted by the unstable network connection that I get lost in the Microsoft Teams class and it is difficult for me to communicate by <b>writing</b> messages using English.	5 9.1%	22 40%	28 50.9%
15. Tests thought Microsoft Teams show my poor <b>grammar</b> use.	20 36.4%	30 54.5%	5 9.1%
16. I think <b>feedback</b> on my writing/speaking work in the Microsoft Teams class does not help me to have better writing/speaking skills.	19 34.5%	25 45.5%	11 20%

Table 2 Students' negative attitudes towards the use of Microsoft Teams in Online classes and the effects in students' language performance.

Item 9. In this first item regarding negative attitudes, sixteen people representing 29.1% disagreed about thinking that 'It is difficult for me to see any progress on my **language skills** by using Microsoft Team'. Whereas twenty-six which is the 47.3% have a neutral perception,



only thirteen (23.6%) out of fifty-five people agreed on this idea. Almost half of students have a *neutral* position that is the highest participants' perspectives of this item. It might be due to the fact that one belief about learners' progress in language development is that learning languages is not only developed due to the current context where students, teachers and the target language are involved but also it encompasses students' individual cognitive process (Inverness Research, 2015). Therefore, these EFL participants may not be sure about finding difficulties and not seeing improvements in their language skill because not only using the app could affect it but also their own mental capabilities.

*Item 10.* In the statement '*I have limited opportunities to participate in the discussion in Microsoft Teams but when I do, it is hard for me to **speak** easily*', the amount of disagreement is shaped by eighteen students, that is 32.7%. The neutral position is built of twenty-two participants representing 40%; and fifteen out of fifty-five participants (that is 27.3%) showed agreement about this statement. According to Brown (2000) speaking interaction where there are no interlocutors makes the speaking process difficult and would steal one of the valuable components that is creativity in oral dialogues in negotiation or even stealing the speaking skills. Therefore, The *neutral* position of participants which is the highest in this item might be because of the degree of interaction students get from their oral performance in their classes though Microsoft Teams; in reality they are not sure if it is hard for them to speak easily when they have oral participation.

*Item 11* shows that ten participants out of fifty-five (18.2%) totally disagreed about losing concentration in a gradual way in a long-lasting teaching session (2 hours) thought by Microsoft Teams that their **listening comprehension** deteriorates; meanwhile, nineteen participants (34.5%) adopted a neutral position. Finally, twenty-six (47.3%) manifested their

agreement which is the highest percentage in this statement. Hasan (2000) states that one of most important conflicts in listening comprehension, besides unfamiliar words and complicated grammatical structures, is the duration of the spoken periods. Thus, these EFL students consider long listening periods as an affecting factor when taking classes through MT.

*Item 12.* This item is about the way students perceive their **knowledge** acquisition since they affect their scores in their assignments. Twenty-seven (49.1%) people disagreed while twenty-three (41.8%) of them chose the neutral position; and only five (9.1%) out of fifty-five agreed on this idea. The highest students' position is in *disagreement*. Although grades are evidence of students' performance and are commonly part of the summative assessment (Brown, 2000), these participants might not relate their grades to their knowledge acquisition through Microsoft Teams where they might not see deterioration.

*Item 13.* In this statement it was found that ten participants, representing the 18.2%, showed disagreement while seventeen (30.9%) had a neutral point of view. Also, twenty-eight out of fifty-five participants (50.9%) agreed about feeling exhausted when continuously looking at the screen at the Microsoft Teams resources. Therefore, most of them find **reading** practices difficult. The majority of this population *agreed* with this statement because they may relate their reading experiences when reading does not facilitate students' comprehension and it leads students to be in the vicious circle of a weak reader proposed by Nuttall model (1996 in Bui & Macalister' (2021). This paper claims that students are probable to have a low speed in reading due to low interest in the text; thus, they read less than expected. Therefore, these EFL students may find reading tedious and they may experience tiredness when having this kind of reading practice through this app.

*Item 14* Participants show their level of agreement regarding the following statement: *I am sometimes interrupted by the unstable network connection that I get lost in the Microsoft Teams class and it is difficult for me to communicate by **writing** messages using English.* Only 5 (9.1%) of them disagreed whereas twenty-two (40%) selected the neutral option. Twenty-eight (50.9%) out of fifty-five participants agreed on this claim. The *agreed* category is the highest number in this item. According to Brown (2000) characteristics of written language from a writer's view implies establishing a period of time to develop writing, orthography, complexity, in terms of avoiding redundancy, combining sentences in a syntactical and lexical way, extensive vocabulary use and formality if necessary. Also, EFL students are more likely to have obstacles when writing in English due to the lack of unfamiliar language characteristics (Ip, 2017). Therefore, due to the complexity of the writing process in EFL, students' struggle but internet issues make it more complex to achieve a correct writing process through Microsoft Teams.

*Item 15.* Regarding tests taken through Microsoft Teams showing students poor **grammar use**, twenty (36.4%) of them disagreed about this statement while thirty (54.5%) chose the neutral position; and only five (9.1%) agreed. The highest position is *neutral*. Although grammar tests whose intention is to evaluate the skill to identify or develop appropriate grammar, they do not evaluate the skill to employ the language to deliver meaning (Kitao & Kitao, 1996). Thus, these participants may see evaluations and grammar use separately and they may not feel sure about the poor grammar knowledge usage they have and the relation to the test taken in classes.

*Item 16.* In this statement, *I think **feedback** on my writing/speaking work in the Microsoft Teams class does not help me to have better writing/speaking skill*, it was found

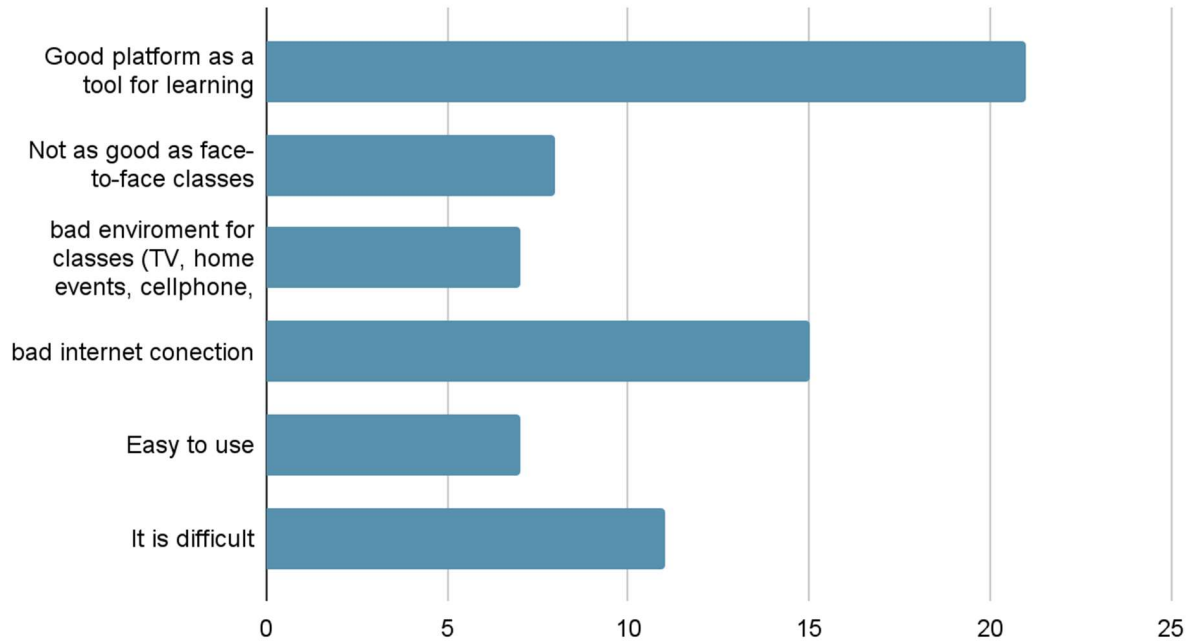
that nineteen people that is the 34.5% of the population disagreed whereas twenty-five representing the 45.5% had a neutral position; and eleven out of fifty-five that is the 20% chose the agree option. The highest position of participants is the *neutral* one. Hartshorn (2008 in Alvira, 2016) claims that effective feedback encompasses several features like the appropriate management and frequency of it, and a meaningful and timely experience to show improvements in students' writing skills; and the fact that students' frustration and disappointment result in not paying attention to feedback, the chance to have improvements in the students skills in the EFL learning process is short (Williams, 2003 in Alvira, 2016). This is probably why these EFL students have a *neutral* position. Therefore, it can be claimed that due to the complexity of feedback and the matters students face when receiving it in Microsoft Teams classes, they might not be sure if it helps to have better speaking and writing skills.

#### **4.1.3 Cognitive, conative and affective attitudes results**

After categorizing and analyzing participants' responses of the open question, the results are presented into the following categories: cognitive, conative and affective components of attitudes as follows.

## COGNITIVE ATTITUDES

### Participants' responses



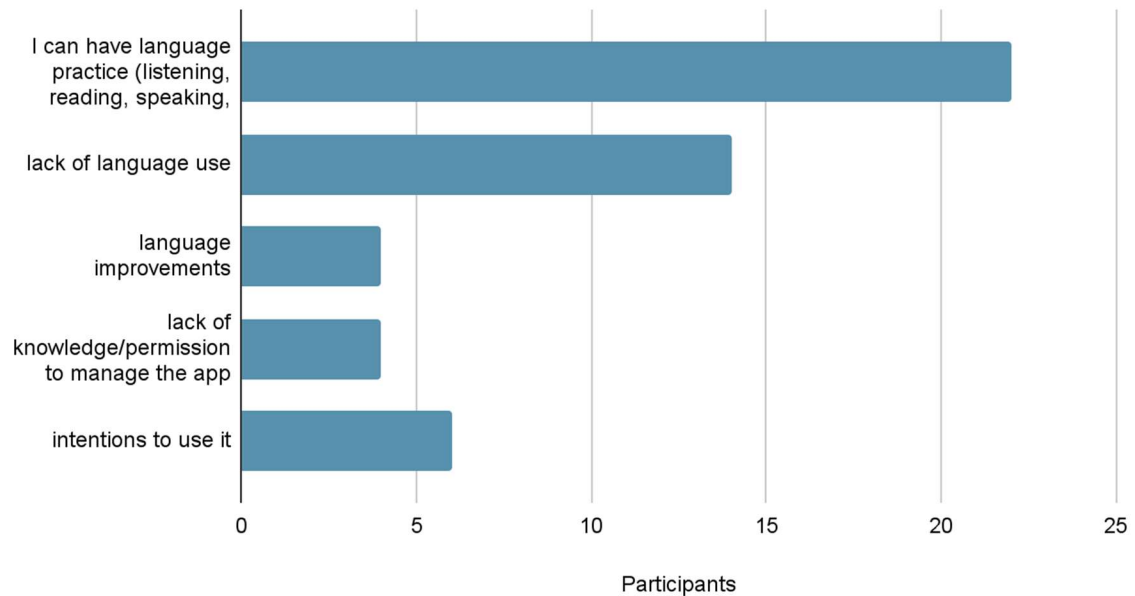
Graph 5. Knowledge-beliefs (cognitive attitudes: attributes-characteristics), towards students' language performance in classes taken through Microsoft Teams.

According to Graph 5, the cognitive (*attributes-characteristics*) attitudes that students showed towards their language performance improvement through use of Microsoft Teams are distributed as follows. There are 21 participants out of 55 that express that the app is a *good tool* for classes. However, 8 people believe that Microsoft Teams is *not as good as face-to-face classes*. Additionally, 7 people mention that there is a *bad environment* for EFL classes as there are distractions in their environment where they are currently taking classes like: TV, family activities during classes or other gadgets such as cellphones, etc. Also, as the internet is necessary to work on this app, 15 participants argue that they have *bad connectivity* issues such: poor internet connectivity quality. Finally, only 7 participants say

that the app is *easy to use* in comparison to the 11 people that express the opposite idea that the app is *difficult to operate*.

### CONATIVE ATTITUDES

Conative pieces of attitudes from participants' responses

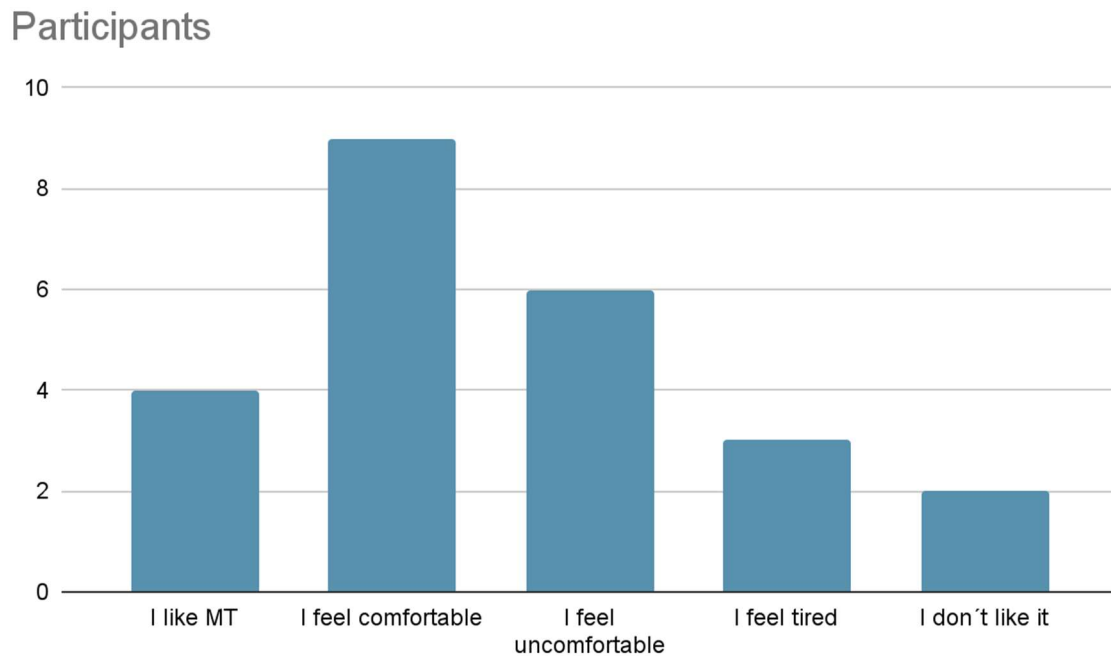


Graph 6. Intentions-plans (conative- intention- commitment) towards students' language performance in classes taken through Microsoft Teams.

In Graph 6, the conative (intentions-plans) attitudes that students present towards their language performance through the use of Microsoft Teams are established as follows. 22 participants out of 55 state that *they can practice the language through different language skills* like: reading, speaking, listening, writing and the use of vocabulary. Nevertheless, 14 argue that *they have difficulties when having language practices* at using the platform like 'not understanding what is being said or not having time to interact there in speaking practices', etc. In spite of language performance difficulties as shown before, there are 4

people who say ‘they have noticed improvements in their language performance’. Moreover, In terms of managing the app, 4 participants argue that *there is lack of knowledge/restrictions to operate the app*. Finally, there are 6 *students that have the willingness to continue using the app* for future plans.

### AFFECTIVE ATTITUDES



Graph 7. Feelings (affective-words that express affection or rejection) towards students' language performance in classes taken through Microsoft Teams.

In accordance with Graph 7, about students' attitudes in the affective side towards the Microsoft Teams use in their language performance, 4 participants out of 55 say that *they like the app*, and 9 of them *feel comfortable using it*. However, there are some drawbacks like 6 of them *feel uncomfortable* working with MT. Also, 3 students state that they *feel tired*

there. Finally, there are only 2 *students that do not like online classes* rather than the app itself.

#### 4.2 Research Questions' Answers

This section aims to answer the two research questions of this study. The first research question is:

- 1. *What are the EFL students' attitudes at LEI in their EFL classes through Microsoft Teams app?*

As it can be observed in Table 3, regarding the positive attitudes towards the use of MT, 62.5% of the participants demonstrate a neutral position towards practicing *speaking, writing, grammar, understanding of EFL shown on good grades and vocabulary*; and only 37.5% of the participants agreed on having a complete positive attitude towards practicing or having *listening, reading and feedback* in MT. Regarding the negative attitudes towards the use of MT, 50% of the participants agreed on having a negative stance towards *listening, reading, writing and grammar*. Moreover, 37.5% of them felt neutral at having negative attitudes towards *speaking, feedback, and general language use (skills when learning)*. The rest, that is the 12.5% disagreed with having a negative attitude towards the *knowledge of EFL shown on bad grades*.

Items responses about students' language performance	
positive attitudes	negative attitudes
speaking - neutral	speaking - neutral



listening - agree	listening - agree
reading - agree	reading - agree
writing - neutral	writing - agree
grammar - neutral	grammar - agree
feedback - Agree	feedback - neutral
understanding of English shown on good grades) - neutral	knowledge of English shown on bad grades - disagree
vocabulary - neutral	general language skills - neutral

Table 3. Students' positive and negative attitudes towards their language performance.

- 2. To what extent, these students' attitudes may affect students' language performance in their EFL class at LEI?

The positive and negative effects of these participants' attitudes in their language performance can be observed in Table 4 about the skills and subskills involved in the language performance which is described below.

skills and subskills of language performance	negative attitudes	positive attitudes	
grammar	9.1%	9.1%	negative/positive

speaking	27.3%	41.8%	positive
listening	47.3%	47.3%	negative/positive
reading	50%	69.1%	positive
writing	50.9%	41.8%	negative

*Table 4. Skills and sub-skills involved in the language performance which are affected by participants' positive and negative attitudes.*

If we contrast the results of the survey, we can observe that grammar skill is affected similarly by their negative or positive attitudes. Specifically, it is shown a similar 9.1% of both attitudes towards this skill. Secondly, speaking skill is more affected by positive attitudes by having a 41.8% in comparison to 27.3% of negative attitudes. Therefore, it can be said that it is likely that these students can have good performance in the speaking area. Then, listening skill presents 47.3% of positive and negative attitudes; thus, this result might depend on students' experience. Moreover, in the case of reading skill, 50% have negative attitudes while 69.1% have positive attitudes. This means that reading performance can be benefited from these types of attitudes students have, mostly positive. Finally, in writing skill there are 50% of people who have a negative attitude and 41.8% have the positive ones; the highest percentage is on the negative side. Thus, the result shows a negative impact towards writing skill when using MT.

### **4.3 Discussion**

Although the research questions of this study were already answered, this section is presenting deeper outcomes regarding participants' cognitive, conative and affective

attitudes towards the use of Microsoft Teams which were found in the classification of attitudes from students' responses in the open question. Here, participants were free to state their negative or positive position which is shown in table 5 and described below.

<b>Students' attitudes</b>	<b>Utterances of positive and negative attitudes</b>	
cognitive 84	positive- 51.1% (43) negative - 48.9% (41)	positive
conative 92	positive - 53.3% (49) negative - 46.7% (43)	positive
affective 24	positive - 50% (12) negative - 50% (12)	neutral

Table 5. Participants' cognitive, conative and affective attitudes.

Regarding *cognitive attitudes* towards MT there were found 84 utterances where 51.1% are positive in contrast to 48.9% which are negative. In the case of *conative attitudes*, there are 92 pieces of information where 53.3% indicate a positive stance while 46.7% shows a negative attitude. Finally, there are only 24 participants' utterances regarding the *affective attitudes* where there is 50% in each positive and negative side which indicate a neutral position of these participants. To sum up, it can be claimed that, regarding the previous results, cognitive and conative attitudes are mostly positive towards the use of MT in their EFL learning while the affective one is fully neutral.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

This chapter was presenting the results about students' attitudes towards the use of Microsoft Teams and the impact of them in students' language performance that were extensively described and interpreted. It also established the two research questions' answers were positive and negative attitudes were described; and the impact of those on students' language performance. At the end, in the discussion section, EFL students' attitudes and utterances were contrasted and compared. The next chapter is presenting the final conclusions of this inquiry.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter is presenting the research contributions where the summary of this research project's impact is established. Then, limitations of this research paper are described. Next, suggestions for further research studies in the field of attitude and language performance are detailed; and there are also established the researcher's personal and professional reflections about the overall research process. At the end, it is also made a final conclusion of this project.

#### **5.1 Research contributions**

As previously seen in Chapter IV of results, although students' general position is neutral about the use of language skills and sub-skills like reading, speaking, writing, listening and use of vocabulary, etc. on the Microsoft Teams app, there are some positive attitudes in the speaking and reading use that may impact their language performance in a positive way. This study's results demonstrate some participants' improvements on those language skills; therefore, this outcome can help EFL teachers who are currently using Microsoft Teams or the ones pretending to identify which are the language skills that can teach better when using it as a means to deliver their language courses. Second, this study's outcomes would be useful for EFL professors and students to identify the positive and negative attitudes effects on students' language performance. Therefore, professors and institutions would be able to work more on designing activities and tasks where students can develop the language skills more affected when using this app such as listening, writing or the use of vocabulary, etc. Third,

these study outcomes can help EFL students, who are taking classes through the app, to reflect on the bad or good experiences from this participant's sample; therefore, they can focus more on the language skills they need to improve and develop in their EFL classes. Lastly, for institutions that are using or pretended to use Microsoft Teams in their EFL courses, these study results are helping them to see a view from students experience when using it, therefore, it may help them to continue using it or make the proper adjustments to have an ideal balance to work on the different skills involved in the EFL learning process.

## **5.2 Limitations of the study**

This study is showing a general perspective of some EFL students working with Microsoft teams in their EFL courses and a general view of their language performance in the use of speaking, writing, grammar, vocabulary, listening, etc. Nevertheless, one limitation of this study is that these skills are not analyzed in detail to see specific features of each ability. The second limitation of this study is that, although the sample of participants in this research are EFL students currently using the app in their subjects at LEI degree, they are more students of this bachelor's degree who were not surveyed; thus, it could not be said that is not able to make generalizations regarding the LEI degree from BUAP neither other bachelor. And, the third limitation is only focused on university students; therefore, this study cannot ensure if teenagers or kids can have the same impact on their language performance when using MT.

## **5.3 Suggestions for further research**

As the means of gathering information in this research project was a survey, for further studies it is recommended to use a different research instrument for example interviews, observations or participants' diaries. These different instruments can help to have more accurate results from participants' extensive responses. Another suggestion is that having a

different type of participants, like teachers, can help researchers to have a different posture of identifying students' attitudes. This can help to contrast results and see what teachers identify in students' language performance when using MT; considering the teacher's perspective is important as well. Finally, it would have been possible to take a further step in the field of attitudes by implementing effective activities when students are taking classes in MT to enhance and keep the students' positive attitudes towards the language learning performance and see their impact on them. Therefore, researchers may consider implementing activities to measure students' language performance in online lessons using this platform.

#### **5.4 Reflection**

As a teacher, doing this study was a fruitful experience to work on the field of attitudes when EFL students use Microsoft Teams; now, I have a better perspective of the impact of positive and negative students attitudes on their language performance in skills like reading, speaking, listening and writing. I have the chance to work more on students' development of their language skills since it is one of the teacher's commitments when developing their teaching practice. Furthermore, this research paper was very helpful to develop my skill as an investigator. It allowed me to continue growing and developing my research abilities to go further at contributing in the field of exploring new solutions for the current issues emerging in the EFL learning and teaching field. This helped me to be better at my professional practice as an EFL teacher. Finally, on the personal side, it was very helpful for me to explore the field of attitudes as I think it would allow me to have a better perspective on the way we can perceive things, situations, people and the way we can react towards them.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

As it was shown through this thesis, the aim of this study was to identify EFL students' positive and negative attitudes towards the use of Microsoft Teams affecting students' language performance. The results showed important information established in Chapter IV and this valuable information may be helpful for teachers, students, and researchers who would like to explore the field of attitude and their impact on EFL learning performance when using Microsoft Teams with the intention to make improvements on the general language performance of students.



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## Appendix A

### Instrument

#### Survey

##### Students' attitudes toward their language performance in classes taken through Microsoft Teams

The aim of this survey is to determine EFL students' attitudes when using Microsoft Teams app for online learning and how those attitudes affect their performance. Therefore, the data collected will be very useful and essential to develop this study successfully.

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Where are you from? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How many subjects are you taking through Microsoft Teams? Which ones?: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you taking classes through Microsoft Teams application or website? \_\_\_\_\_

**Instruction: Mark the answer that best reflects your point of view about the use of Microsoft Teams in online classes.**

Items	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
<b>Positive attitudes</b>			
1. I found learning through Microsoft Teams convenient since I can read the comments in the chat box and I can identify language mistakes that improves my <b>grammar</b> knowledge.			
2. I can recognize some mistakes from my classmates <b>oral</b> participation in the Microsoft Teams class and I have better speaking production.			
3. I feel comfortable having classes through Microsoft Teams because <b>reading</b> the task's instruction helps me to develop the activities required in the course.			
4. I can correct my response easily by using the "edit" function in Microsoft Teams, so I see improvements in my <b>writing</b> papers.			
5. I can re-watch the recorded lectures anytime and anywhere in Microsoft Teams, so I have better <b>listening</b> comprehension.			
6. I can receive frequent and timely <b>feedback</b> from the teacher on my response(s) and assignment(s) through Microsoft Teams. I turn in more quality oral and written assignments every time.			

7. I can study in accordance with my learning pace because I can pause or rewind the video clips many times after the meeting on Microsoft Teams. Consequently, my <b>understanding</b> of English is increasing, and I have better notes in my tasks.			
8. I think that when taking classes through Microsoft teams, I have learnt more <b>vocabulary</b> in EFL than in face-to-face classes			
<b>Negative attitudes</b>			
9. it is difficult for me to see any progress on my <b>language skills</b> by using Microsoft Team.			
10. I have limited opportunities to participate in the discussion in Microsoft Teams but when I do, it is hard for me to <b>speak</b> easily.			
11. I lose my concentration gradually in a long-lasting teaching session (2 hours) through Microsoft Teams that my <b>listening</b> comprehension deteriorates.			
12. My <b>knowledge</b> acquisition deteriorates in Microsoft Teams that at the end I have bad grades on my assignments			
13. I feel exhausted when continuously looking at the screen at the Microsoft teams resources that <b>reading</b> practice is difficult.			
14. I am sometimes interrupted by the unstable network connection that I get lost in the Microsoft Teams class and it is difficult for me to communicate by <b>writing</b> messages using English.			
15. Tests thought Microsoft Teams show my poor <b>grammar</b> use.			
16. I think <b>feedback</b> on my writing/speaking work in the Microsoft Teams class does not help me to have better writing/speaking skills.			

17. What are your knowledge-beliefs, intentions-plans and feelings towards your language performance in classes taken through Microsoft Teams?

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## Appendix B

### *Open Question n°17 analysis*

17. What are your knowledge-beliefs (cognitive attributes-characteristics)(U:84), intentions-plans (conative- intention- commitment) and feelings (affective-words that express affection or rejection) towards your language performance in classes taken through Microsoft Teams?

*cognitive conative affective*

Participant 1: *I think Microsoft teams is a great tool (+) as a learning- teaching platform although its use requires a little of prior instruction to get the most out of it(-).*

Participant 2: *Well, it is difficult to talk (-) about MT because I only take 1 session, however I consider that I feel more comfortable because the rest of(+) my classmates cannot see me while I speak(+) and that makes me feel free(+) and I even have time to look for the specific word vocabulary on other platforms(+).*

Participant 3: *Also, it is good to develop and improve our skills (+). I feel excited(+) because it is a good way to continue taking classes(+) and allow me having contact with our classmates and teacher(+).*

Participant 4: *In my opinion, Microsoft Teams is a good tool to use for English classes (+). I can learn(+) new vocabulary (+) from this platform, I practice writing, I listen and read others(+). I consider something important, it depends on teachers' strategies to use it(+) and students' attitudes to learn from it(+).*

Participant 5: *I think that my classes for Microsoft Teams were good(+) to develop my writing skill.(+)*

Participant 6: *I feel comfortable towards my language performance(+) in classes. I like Microsoft teams(+) as the main platform for taking classes at LEI. There's plenty of tools to work(+) with and it's FREE (+). I truly believe this platform can be used as a working tool (+) for classes even if we return to classrooms.*

Participant 7: *I find it really easy to share videos(+)*

Participant 8: *The sessions by microsoft teams are useful (+), it has many functions that help me(+), but it is not the same as the face-to-face classes (-)*

Participant 9: *I think it is a very good platform(+) to take classes, only that sometimes it is a bit slow (-), but I think it could improve(+).*

Participant 10: *i hate online lessons (-)*

Participant 11: *I feel like I can't practice my speaking much(-), but at the same time I feel more confident when I speak (+) through online classes.*

Participant 12: *Nothing*

Participant 13: *It's absolutely necessary to take more consideration in some others students(-) so that will be able to express their ideas(+)*

Participant 14: *I think that the participation is organised(+), so I can practice and be listened(+), and it'd be good(+) to talk to people when we're(+) far in order to practice more my speaking skill(+).*

Participant 15: *I feel comfortable taking classes(+)* with this platform and *I prefer it much more than others(-)*, since I take some classes through Zoom, and they always close unexpectedly. But honestly, *(-)I prefer real classes (-)*, in a *real classroom(-)*, since many times *I have a problem with my connection(-)*, and *I'm very distracted (-)from home*.

Participant 16: *I think this platform is really helpful (+)* because of its tools and because *it is exclusively for schools(+)*. The only problems are that sometimes *some teachers do not allow us to record the session(-)*, *the network connection sometimes is bad (-)* or that *some teachers or students do not know how to use the platform correctly (-)*.

Participant 17: In some cases, *I don't understand (-)* because, *I live in a rural area and I don't have good internet (+) access,(-)* which I disagree. \*

Participant 18: *For me, it's so difficult (+) because I have distractions.(-)*

Participant 19: Sometimes *the teacher has some problems with Teams so it delays the class a bit(-)*, or *there are network problems so it is difficult for me(-) to hear what is being said(-)*, but leaving that aside, *I'm fine with using Teams(+)*

Participant 20: *Sometimes it is difficult for me(-) to understand some words or phrases(-)*, *I never had a good English class in my previous grades (+)* and *I still struggle with learning the language (-)*. *My internet connection is not always good (-)*, since *where I live the signal is poor(+)*. *I get nervous (-) when I try to participate(+)* because *I don't know if what I will say is correct(-)*.

Participant 21: *They are good(+)* because *they have helped me a lot(+)*, *the bad thing here could be my bad internet (-)*.

Participant 22: *I consider that the Microsoft teams platform is a very helpful tool(+) in these times, but the instability of the internet affects us in many areas(-), such as not understanding what is heard in class due to the lack of internet and eyestra(-) in(-)*

Participant 23: *I consider that my level of English has improved(+) despite the condition in which I have received classes, sometimes it is something stressful for me (-) because it costs me a bit to produce the language(-)*

Participant 24: *Sometimes I don't express myself well when I speak(-), I have faults(-) to do so.*

Participant 25: *I think that is good for de conferences (+) but not but learning(-)*

Participant 26: *There are positive(+) and negative things (-) about learning through Microsoft teams. The positive ones are that we can review the class (+), we can interact with classmates(+). But for those who have poor internet connection(-), using Teams is difficult(-) because it requires good connection (+) and sometimes we can't participate or listen properly(-). Moreover, it is complicated(-) to be in the whole session (-) because we have lots of distractions at home (cellphone, our family, home activities, etc)(-)*

Participant 27: *I think teachers need to take into account that they have to pay attention to give feedback(-) to have good communication with students needs(+)*

Participant 28: *I feel good(+) with online classes, it is comfortable (+) and very dynamic (+) mainly by the use of technology.*

Participant 29: *I think it is an easy platform to use (+), sometimes it may have some problems(-), but I have never had any severe problem.(+)*

Participant 30: *Es una buena plataforma(+)* pero *no está enfocada en la enseñanza del inglés(-)*

Participant 31: *Is a good way to take classes(+)* during this pandemic life, even sometimes *poor connection(-)* *is the worst problem(-)*.

Participant 32: .

Participant 33: *I don't see a change in my english performance(-)*, *it hasn't improved(-)*, but is also *hasn't decreased(+)*

Participant 34: *I think they should be more dynamic(-)* so as *not to get bored (+)*

Participant 35: *Clearly, there are advantages and disadvantages, as there is so much time to analyze and understand the topic(-)*, as *there are distractors that will make it difficult(-)* for us to understand the information(-). In general, *it depend on student's motivation to continue studying(+)*.

Participant 36: *I feel that this platform is easy to use (+)* but sometimes *it doesn't work properly because of my(-)* *low quality internet(-)*

Participant 37: *I learn through Microsoft teams(+)* but *I am distracted sometimes(-)* and *I feel exhausted looking at the screen (-)*so much time

Participant 38: *I would like that the target language's teacher ask us most to the students(+)* and *leave us use vocabulary that we have found(+)*.

Participant 39: *Sometimes I want to record the class(+)* but *the teacher won't let me(-)*



Participant 40: Well, for me was a good way to learn(+) how to use thid plataforms(+) but it's so tired to be sittig all day in front of the screen(-) and we don't have to much interaction(-) and makes the class boring (-).

Participant 41: Well the way of study is easy (+)with teams.

Participant 42: At first it's complicated (-) because they are new things (-) but all good,(-) sometimes it's only the Internet the complication(+)

Participant 43: Afer a long time, I see improves positives in my comprehension(+), I can read, listen and speak(+) a better form(+).

Participant 44: I feel that I have improved a little in terms of pronunciation(+) but it is still difficult (-) for me to express myself and understand(-).

Participant 45: I like working(+) in microsoft teams, I think it is a good tool to take online classes(+) because you can do many things(+) on the platform, but if I spend too much time watching the computer(-) I get tired(-), and as the hours pass it is difficult to concentrate(-). On the other hand, if some of my classmates have connection problems(-), I can't identify if my colleagues are speaking correctly(-) because sometimes I can't hear well what they are saying.(-)

Participant 46: We can do a lot of activities online to acquire knowledge(+), but sometimes there are some problems connection(-) in which we can't do something(-). I like to use Microsoft Teams (+)in online classes.

Participant 47: Well I think that Microsoft teams is a good plataform(+) because is more confortable (+) work in our houses(+) but sometimes the red or internet is bad(-)

Participant 48: *I think team classes are neutral(-), only sometimes i find it hard(-) for me pay attention(-) because i get distracted fast (-).*

Participant 49: *I feel comfortable(-) speaking (+) in the platform because sometimes I don't turn on the camera(+). I believe that this platform is amazing(+), but also I think that not many teachers can work with it(-) 'cause they don't feel comfortable (-) using technology.(-)*

Participant 50: *It's a really good platform with feedbacks(+) and I would like to use it when I became a teacher(+). You can give an order of your class and grades(+) and that's a good point of it.(+)*

Participant 51: *I think that Microsoft Teams is a good tool (+) to take and give classes(+) and to practice the language(+), because even though it is a little bit difficult to use the platform(-) at the beginning you can get used to it(+).*

Participant 52: *my attention is less (-) than in present class but my listening and speaking doesn't deteriorate(+)*

Participant 53: *Microsoft Teams has been an useful tool(-) and I noticed I have participated more in a virtual class than in a face to face class(+). Also, teachers have more(+) freedom to use(+) any kind of material to lean on in class(+). Through this material, especially visual(+), I've been able to learn more vocabulary and correct some grammar mistakes(+)* that I usually make.

Participant 54: *I think is more difficult to pay attention (-) in classes (-) when we have many things that can distract us in the middle of the class as cellphones, T.V., games, etc.(-) another*

point, is that online classes *doesn't have the same interaction(-)* with the class *it takes more time to students(-) to answer or participate than be in a classroom(-)*.

Participant 55: Well, *I do not feel good(-)* using Microsoft because *my computer sometimes stop working (-)* and for me *it is more difficult to connect(-)*. I think that *I can improve my skills* *If the face to face classes start(+)* if not *I would give everything for improve my learning.(+)*