University EFL Students’ Experiences when Facing Blended Learning Environments

René Alejandro Munar Quiroga
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Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas
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René Alejandro Munar Quiroga

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Thesis Director: Yeraldine Aldana Gutierrez

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Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas

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Note of Acceptance:

Thesis Director: ______________________________

Yeraldine Aldana Gutierrez

Juror: ______________________________
Name:

Juror: ______________________________
Name:
Acuerdo 19 de 1988 del Consejo Superior Universitario

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Abstract

This qualitative research classified as descriptive and interpretive from noncanonical understanding about educational research aimed at analyzing university EFL students’ academic life stories regarding their experiences during the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one. This study was developed in a private university in Bogotá, Colombia. Participants were five EFL university students attending a fourth level English course. Data collection methods were written narratives and semi-structured interviews. Data analysis led us to the construction of three categories and subcategories namely, the *genesis of teaching processes, critical voices around EFL and digital technology*, together with *the transition from Stone Age to knowledge society*. Findings suggest that social presence, teacher’s role, ethics behind blended learning, identity in the knowledge society and digital exile might be further dimensions of EFL learning experience to consider. Interestingly, learners seemed to challenge the usual or generalizing premises about different moments of the learning transition. This means dependent on teachers in both learning environments, traditional and blended, their perceptions about EFL books and online platforms might vary depending whether they are digital natives or immigrants. Planned obsolescence affects directly learners who take courses on blended learning.

**Key words**: blended learning, experiences, life stories, ethics and ICTs.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

In technology construction throughout the development of humanity, different tensions may appear (Blake, 2013). This study attempts to identify some of them from a local environment where university students’ academic experiences in technology transition are explored. From an inductive method, we dissect our students’ experiences towards local interpretations of this phenomenon. As a result, three distinctive categories emerged from our participants’ narratives. It is worth mentioning this study does not strictly frame emerging categories into already established theoretical foundations, but it is flexible when connecting participants’ voices as belonging to local communities and authors’ contributions too.

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education has been increasing since the last decades around the world. Nowadays, the introduction of alternative technologies such as online platforms, websites, online tutorials, blogs, and video conferencing, among others has provoked transformations of traditional manners to teach a foreign language using the marker, the board and the tape recorder. The combination of these two methodologies, as Khan (2005) states, the traditional face-to-face instruction and the videoconferencing and online instruction, has resulted in another approach called: blended learning. This concept has become familiar among learners all over the world in this era where the information society emerges and remarkable technology changes have taken place.

The blended learning environment has become institutionalized at the university for English students from multidisciplinary undergraduate programs. The implementation of this approach in the English courses as an institutional demand and students’ experiences displayed to me in informal conversations at the university represented a situation calling my attention. It was one of
the principal reasons why I got intrigued to conduct this study. The transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one seemed to cause some learners’ attitudes and reactions that deserve attention in the field. As Salaberry (2001) affirms, learners all over the world have noticed this transition from a traditional language-learning environment to another one with advanced technological resources through particular attitudes and reactions about it. For instance, students’ seemed to display enthusiasm for the course, enjoyment in the laboratory exercises and desire to attend the class in that study. In the case of the present research, I expect to understand students’ experiences with no interest in favoring either traditional or blended learning environments, but findings are grounded on data to listen to students’ voices once experiencing this transition.

This study is presented in five chapters. Chapter one addresses introduction, the statement of the problem, research question, research objectives and justification. The second chapter presents the literature review, state of the art together with theoretical constructs supporting this study. The third chapter outlines the research design, type of study, the context of study, participants, researcher’s role, data collection instruments and procedures. The fourth chapter addresses the data analysis framework, procedures, presentation and definition of categories. Finally, chapter five presents the conclusions, limitations and implications for further pedagogical and research practice.

**Contextualization**

This study took place at a private university located at Villa del Prado neighborhood in Bogotá. This university offers some undergraduate programs such as food, mechatronics, civil and industrial engineering, law, accounting, among others.
There are about three thousand learners studying in the morning and at night. The English institute has 30 teachers. There are three types of English courses: blended, full attendance, and online. The students use the book American Big Picture and work with an online platform provided by a publishing house. The population chosen belonged to a group of English level IV. These students were young adults. Some of them were professionals from other fields and all of them studied in the morning and afternoon.

**Statement of the Problem**

Problematizing a phenomenon in research implies an informed experience and contact to the target scenario. Thus, the problem I identified emerged in my job setting where the blended learning methodology was implemented as a demand at the university. Thus, students have had to adapt themselves to this learning methodology, and not only in terms of cognitive processes, but also sociocultural practices related to distant learning, integration of multiple informational channels to seemingly less complex actions such as registration, manipulation and assessment of the online platform. A critical reflection beyond an instrumental perspective about these technologies connected as a methodology and use through students’ experiences exploration remains an important issue to inquiry upon.

Every learner has specific experiences in the transition from an analogical to a blended environment in terms of the understanding and use of these technological tools integration and the resulting cultural mediation (Martín-Barbero, 2009) in the academic context. Aspects including students’ beliefs, expectations and learning preferences may be connected to their experiences, given that “all behavior is governed by beliefs and experience” (Cotterall, 1995, p. 196-197). Thus, technology transition from only printed to the combination of these ones with digital learning
seems to provoke students’ perceptions and behaviors that may influence the inclusion of the virtual (Lévy, 1999) in an English blended learning environment (Sharma, 2010).

Regarding the aforementioned phenomenon and considering my main concern about students’ experiences in the transition to blended learning environments, I decided to apply a semi-structured interview to understand more the phenomenon. The interview (annex 1) was carried out to address six English high level students who had experienced the pre and after the blended learning demand by the institution. This interview was guided through ten questions to get information about their experiences regarding the transition to blended learning environments in different areas of knowledge such as English. Field notes were also taken during some classes of two hours.

Findings in this initial exploration of the problem revealed that most of the students constructed their definitions on what blended learning was by remaking factors in their analogous and digital possibilities such as time. This was considered as flexible in the blended learning, because it let them do the activities at different moments during the day. One of the students in the course told me this factor was very important for them. Nergiz (2013) expresses that blended learning combines face-to-face and online learning for time and space different treatment. As a consequence, time and space acquire another conception, because there is not a short time to fulfill a task but time and space are both more flexible. In addition, learners were aware that working in a blended learning environment demanded from them further specific characteristics such as being curious, disciplined, responsible, honest, strict, autonomous, independent and organized. These different voices from students founded on their experiences during this transition may be relevant for further decisions methodologically and conceptually speaking about these technological roles in language education not only in this institution, but in other ones.
On the one hand, some learners considered that blended learning was useful to work out their skills. They also highlighted their opportunities to interact easily with people who are far away. Garrison (2011) states that blended learning “is an approach to educational redesign that can enhance, extend learning and offer designs that efficiently manage large classes. It represents a distinct design methodology that transcends the conventional classroom paradigm.” (p.7).

Some of the participants also claimed they felt comfortable working on language learning platforms, because they could work at their own pace. They could look up for information and practice their language skills through activities in order to arrive in class with some previous knowledge and interact with their partners. Indeed, Reeves and Nass (1996, p.5) consider that interactions through new media, computer or television are social and natural, similar to interactions in real life. That might be why we currently see students holding few printed books but many technological devices such as cell phones, tablets, laptops and others, in which information is stored and where learners can communicate and search for information easily. Learners’ experiences seem various as technological scenarios transform as well.

On the other hand, some learners claimed that this technological integration is expensive, time consuming and it is difficult to understand the activities and the access to the platform, because they were not able to manage digital technology. It seems to occur mainly with adults who are not digital natives and have to learn a new language, apart from English simultaneously, i.e. the technological one. This means Language and Digital literacy processes seem to come together in my students’ experiences preliminarily explored in this problematization. In this sense, Motteram (2013) asserts, “internet literacy, online communication skills and ICT skills are an important part of language teaching” (p.82). As a result, these adult learners need teachers who help them in the process to develop confidence in technological aspects.
An answer from the interview showed that working on language learning platforms had an emotional effect on the participants too. Some learners did not know how to manage technology and felt stressed. In this regard, Napier, Dekhane and Smith (2011) state that learners who are not technically competent might feel frustrated in blended learning courses. Moreover, working alone for some of them was too boring and they could not concentrate at all, because there were too many external factors such as television, people, cell phones that affected their work negatively. This constituted an interesting factor in the problematization here, because another factor to consider in the exploration and understanding of students’ experiences in this technological transition for their English learning.

Some students from the university expressed that there were times when they consciously got the activities on the platform done by others because it was the easiest way to obtain high grades and save time at once. To this regard, when revising students’ percentage of the activities proposed in the platform, most students had high marks, but when they had to take the test face to face, their results differed to what was expected.

Most participants also thought learning in the classroom with peers and the teacher was better that studying only in the online platform, because of interaction. This was because the process in class was more dynamic for them and there were communicative activities to foster the speaking skill and provide immediate feedback. What is interesting here for me is these students’ voices challenge the common idea about short distances in digital media make us closer. Additionally, these students’ perceptions remained me about Vygotsky’s (1978) claim on learners’ active processes in the construction of meaning by means of interaction.

The aforementioned experiences are caused somehow by changes at the university aimed at implementing blended learning environment. Face-to-face classes used to be of four hours but
now they last two hours now. Students had to buy a book that has a code for logging in at the online platform and thus, to be able to do the activities and exercises assigned. The curriculum was guided by the contents of the book and teachers have periodically received training to learn how to use the platform. Outcomes reported by students when using ICT showed their attitudes and multiple reflections on possible pros and cons of the environment.

The transition from a learning environment to an alternative one, at times, abruptly imposed, generated a myriad of reactions among students. Since listening to English university learners’ voices is relevant to know their experiences in an attempt to apply institutional-imposed- innovations and changes for the language class, I consider it necessary to go in depth in the exploration of students’ learning experiences while passing from English analogous environments to blended ones. As a result, I posed the following research question:

**Research question**

What do English university students’ academic experiences reveal about their transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one?

**General objective**

To understand EFL university students’ academic life stories regarding their experiences in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one.

**Specific Objective**

To comprehend EFL university students’ learning experiences in a traditional and a blended environment.

To comprehend English university students’ journey in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one.
Justification

Technology has been changing through time as accompanying human beings in their process of passing through history (Blake, 2013). Technology has been created for developing new ways to fulfill human needs. In this sense, technological development has reached all the fields, including education. This study addresses the transition from analogous to integration of different types of technology as the digital ones in the English class through a methodological form: the Blended language learning.

Software and new technologies in fact are not new but they have also been developing through time and every stage has had a specific approach. To this regard, Blake (2013) takes into consideration the three stages of CALL (Computer-assisted Language Learning) elaborated by Kern and Warschauer (2000). Thus, in the 70’s when the structural CALL appeared was focused on the behaviorist theory of learning, moving ten years later in the 80’s to a communicative CALL focused on the cognitive constructivist learning, then in the twenty-first century an integrative learning focused on the sociocultural theories of learning.

However, in all this trajectory technology had not had an impact so strong in education, until blended learning appeared. This approach, adapted in some institutions, is the one in which learners study a part of the course face-to-face in the classroom with a teacher who guides the class, and the other part using an online platform.

Other researchers such as Osguthorpe and Graham (2003) after some studies determined that there are three types of mixing in a blended course: 1. learning activities, 2. students, and 3. instructors. These researchers also considered that blended learning environments might vary according to the pedagogical richness, access to knowledge, social interaction, personal agency, cost effectiveness, and ease of revision.
Consequently, learners have to accommodate themselves to these new technologies because they are in the educative context, where those technologies have been used for searching information, writing academic texts, explaining topics, doing homework and plenty of academic purposes.

However, learners’ voices are important in the learning-teaching process and the construction of knowledge because students participate actively on it, in fact without them, there would not be school. Their voices become indispensable to build a solid frame at universities in terms of policies, philosophy, and profile. In some institutions, their voices are not heard, because there are some interests that do not allow learners change some rules imposed by principals, committees, and/or advisors. A fair academic institution should be constructed based on sharing ideas and arguments from learners, faculty and administrative staff, in order to favor processes, which will be guided to guarantee benefit to the whole community.

Knowing learners’ academic experiences will contribute to analyze the impact this methodology, blended learning, has been having in universities. Blended learning is a neologism, a new expression that has invaded students and teachers’ speech, because it is new in the academic context. Nowadays, it is necessary to know how to manage this technology, no matter the subject students have to face. Sometimes, the usage of the online platforms, software and hardware is more challenging that the disciplinary study itself. These tools adapted to education are relegating the books, which people used to work with. Photocopies, notebooks, folders, textbooks and products made of paper in the educative context are becoming old fashioned in some contexts.

In order to answer the research question it was necessary to listen to learners’ voice carefully through their narratives and analyze their experiences by means of academic life stories.
Some relevant findings were found by this study in the field of applied linguistics. Besides, it afforded interesting data about information and communication technologies (ICTs) specifically, blended learning, how it works, what the advantages and disadvantages are, what new roles should be adapted by students and teachers, as well as a critical point of view about the uses institutions have given to this methodology. By means of the findings, this study allowed to comprehend academic contexts where transitions from traditional learning environments to a blended one occurred. This study is useful and worth for learners, teachers or people interested in topics such as learners’ academic experiences and blended learning.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

The present section has to do with the theoretical foundations of this study. In this manner, I discuss some research works carried out in the field about experiences and technology integration, firstly. Afterwards, two concepts are re-elaborated as constructs namely, technology transition and integration in blended learning together with students’ academic life experiences in the learning process. In doing so, some authors are involved in a dialogue for each construct by expressing how they are particularly re-defined in this research. My theoretical background is framed within the constructivist theory from its sociocultural trend and the Applied Linguistics (AL) field. That is why this theoretical discussion remains holistic and interdisciplinary.

Background

Some national and international studies refer to blended learning in EFL contexts. Most of these studies have focused on the instrumental dimension of technology integration, i.e. instructional plans and resources as in the educative technology (Litwin, 2005; Jimenez, 2017), but a few of them address the critical dimension of technology in education, i.e. learner’s perceptions, feelings and their overall experience within imposed didactics founded on technology integration in the EFL class. The following studies show the work different scholars have carried out in relation to the topic above mentioned: students’ experiences and technology.

Kern (2015) in a comparison between traditional learning environments and blended one in terms of time in the learning process, course grades and enjoyment of the course, observed learners enjoyed more the blended course than the traditional classes; consequently, they would like to take other courses in a blended learning environment. In this regard, Zhang (2012) found EFL learners preferred blended learning rather than traditional learning, because the former
fostered their autonomy, enhanced their confidence and improved their collaborative work. Similarly, pedagogical practices with computer mediated communication tools in the traditional instruction were effective (Seet, 2010). In the same line, and according to So and Brush (2007), learners with higher level of collaborative learning were more satisfied with the blended course than those who had lower levels of collaborative learning. Furthermore, learners who perceived higher levels of social presence had higher perceptions of collaborative learning.

Some studies have focused on emotions regarding online learning (Hara & Kling, 2003; Rovai & Wighting, 2005), other researches distinguished how positive and negative emotions hinder or enhance virtual learning (Allan & Lawless, 2003; Conrad, 2002; O’Regan, 2003); (Järvenoja & Järvelä, 2005; Wosnitza & Volet, 2005). In addition, some studies identified how students’ emotional experiences influence their manifestations in online learning.

These studies enlightened my research concern, since EFL students’ perceptions and attitudes reflected that teachers are necessary in online interactions, afforded me with insight about some characteristics found in the comparison between traditional and blended environments. For instance, the fact blended teaching helped students to learn more effectively, to enjoy in that learning environment, and to manage time to do their assignments. In addition, it is quite meaningful some studies reflected learners experience some psychological aspects such as, emotions, feelings in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one.

In their national study Ochoa and Roberto (2011), presented Khan’s blended learning model and its components: institutional, pedagogical, technological, interface design, evaluation, management, resource support, and ethical, and how they have been shown in some studies. Additionally, the researchers suggested some considerations to bear in mind in the design, implementation and evaluation of this learning environment. They concluded that through blended
learning courses, students could develop their autonomy; nevertheless, they should receive training first in the use of technological aspects before the implementation of the EFL process. However, autonomy in blended learning was conditioned by getting some good grades or points; it means learners do not act as independent learners at all (Cantor, 2008). Throughout a study by Munar (2018), findings suggest that teenagers use ICTs more to entertain themselves rather than for academic processes; however, if there is a strategic and planned use of ICTs in the academic context, it can create new learning opportunities for learners in and out of the classroom. In addition, students in spite of having knowledge about the use of virtual technology require guidance from teachers. Bedoya (2012), holds the idea teachers are very important in their learning process. In fact, when learners work online, at times feel alone because a tutor is not there to guide them or to solve their doubts.

In terms of transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one, Contreras, Gonzalez and Fuentes (2011) argued some aspects such as methodology, time, space, and teachers’ and learners’ roles; suffer a transformation in a process of adaptation. In this regard, language policies have some effects on learners’ perceptions and how their identities might have some changes due to their experiences as EFL learners (Bernal, 2007).

The previous studies were quite meaningful because in my study I focused on understanding learner’s experiences in the transition from a traditional to a blended learning environment. The findings led me to acknowledge mainly that in a transition there are changes that involve not only students but also teachers, methodologies and whole institutions. In addition, the results enlightened my research concern, since the form in which learners’ academic experiences reveal their identities and positioning as EFL learners. Such perceptions evidenced how some learners identified themselves as autonomous learners and were responsible in their
learning process. Additionally, some of them became critical in the new learning environment and made their voices be heard. Moreover, it was interesting to know how those identities were transformed by a continuous shaping and reshaping process due to the involvement in the learning process.

**Theoretical constructs**

This section discusses two constructs that represent a theoretical ground of this study. For understanding them, the macro theory is defined first, followed by the dialogue between a myriad of authors to re-elaborate concepts into constructs. These are in turn: technology transition and integration in blended learning for EFL together with students’ academic life experiences in the English learning.

My macro theory is the constructivism from its sociocultural trend, represented by Vygotsky (1978). In his theory of psychology and activity, Vygotsky states that human mind is mediated and individuals rely on tools and labor activities to change the circumstances in the world we live in. Vygotsky (1978) adds those physical and symbolic tools constructed by human cultures support the development of relationships among individuals. These tools or artifacts are passed from generation to generation and they are transformed as human needs change too. For example, the board as a type of technology in the class may imply a type of interaction centered on the subject (teacher) presenting a topic to the audience as students (Harmer, 2007). In contrast, digital technology may allow for diverse interactional patterns, as in the case of the Web 2.0 and mobile learning (Blake, 2013; Motteram, 2013).

Along these lines, Vygotsky in his social constructivist theory considers that tools are social objects, because they have a mediating role in how people interact and react to the world. Tools can be external such as machines as computers, instruments as the board or artifacts as students’
learning products and internal such as laws, signs, methods and language. The former tools are physical or technical and they help us to handle physical objects while altering the process of adaptation and determining the form of labor operations. The latter tools are psychological and they are employed to influence others and then alter the structure of mental functions.

Therefore, I conclude this theory affords me with insights on how external tools such as computers and online platforms together with internal tools as language are both articulated in people’s lives and their everyday activities. Consequently, they influence our subjectivities due to the fact that everybody is immersed in a socio-cultural milieu.

**Technology transition and integration in blended learning**

Through history, technology development has followed its own time and has produced some reactions in society. As Crystal (2006) explains, the arrival of printing in the fifteenth century was relevant and it caused some reactions and perceptions. However, these reactions were negative mainly by the Church that considered printing could have evil effects. When the telegraph, the telephone, and broadcasting technology appeared 400 years later, society had a positive perception about this novelty in technology. Nevertheless, it was thought that they might promote crime and undermine society.

In the 1960s, the internet was first used as a network for military experiments in communication in the USA and nowadays it has spread worldwide. The internet was the beginning of Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL), which has had a relevant role in the foreign language teaching and learning process. Kern and Warschauer (2000, cited in Blake, 2013) organize CALL development in three periods: Structural, from 1970s to 1980s; communicative, from 1980s to 1990s and integrative, since the twenty-first century.
Many people have considered it as the most important breakthrough in technology. To this concern, I have seen in my experience as an EFL student and a teacher that internet has helped us to have more contact and access with the target language mainly to learners who have not travelled abroad where English is spoken. In contrast, others have considered internet a distractor that is causing some problems in terms of dependence, security, privacy, among others. For instance, we as teachers from universities have had some situations in which learners during the classes use their mobile phones to chat, play, check their e-mails, facebook and social web sites, consequently it interrupts their attention to the explanations.

Connectivism is a learning theory for the digital era proposed by Siemens (2005) that emphasizes the role of social and cultural context in how and where learning occurs. One of the tenets of this theory resides on the precepts that learning happens within and across the networks and these ones are connections among entities. For instance, computer networks and social networks have as a principle that entities, individuals, systems and nodes connect among them to make an integrated whole. Learning occurs within an individual but also within and across the networks.

It is observable in this study the connections among EFL learners, machines specifically computers, online platforms and language. Whether learners can adapt themselves to the nodes it is likely that they learn more because as Siemens (2005) states, “connectivism sees knowledge as a network and learning as a process of pattern recognition.” (p. 4). Connections are important in the process of adaptation and whether the entities are able to make a great number of connections, they will become more adaptive.

Siemens (2005, p. 5) proposes some principles of connectivism:

- Learning is a process of connecting specialized nodes or information sources.
• Learning may reside in non-human appliances.
• Nurturing and maintaining connections are necessary to facilitate continual learning.
• Decision-making is in itself a learning process. Choosing what to learn and the meaning of incoming information is seen through the lens of a shifting reality. While there is a right answer now, it may be wrong tomorrow due to alterations in the information climate affecting the decision.
• Up-to-date-knowledge is the intent of all connectivism learning activities.
• Ability to see connections between fields, ideas, and concepts is a core skill.

Having seen connectivism as a theory of the digital era, it is necessary to apply the above tenets Siemens proposed by means of a methodology. Therefore, blended learning appears as an approach of this knowledge society that takes those principles regarding networks, nodes, connections and tries to adapt them into the academy.

What does blended learning refer to? Nowadays, there is a learning environment called blended learning which has had impact on education. Blended learning is the combination of face-to-face or traditional instruction and online learning (Staker and Horn, 2012). It has become familiar mainly to learners around the world, because this is the era of information society in which remarkable changes have been happening with technology. Consequently, it is understandable that education is involved in different ways of learning and teaching. For instance, we have the post method pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu, 2003) and ICT in education, which emerge as possible alternatives to the previous didactic changes. It also implies that new roles have arisen for teachers and students of schools, colleges and universities. Staker and Horn (2012) state learners and teachers need to fulfill other roles and functions such as accountability, active
participation working on different activities and skills by means of diverse approaches and new online tools.

**Alternatives of blended learning application.** Blended learning is relatively new in Colombian institutions and it has been imposed by some universities. Indeed, this learning environment takes place with no reflection upon its use (Blake, 2013). In fact, learners or academic community are not informed in advance about the implementation of this new approach and what it implies in terms of time, cost and other aspects.

Staker and Horn (2012) supported on their studies in different places around the world, propose four versions of blended learning: rotation, flex model, self-blend and enriched virtual. Similarly, Valiathan (2002), cited in Contreras, González and Fuentes (2011), classified blended learning models in three categories: Model based on abilities, model based on attitudes and model based on competences. In this study, we focused on Staker and Horn (2012) versions related to some methodologies used in the EFL courses at the university.

In the first version, rotation, learners move among several learning modalities according to teacher’s choice, and one of these places has online equipment. Within the rotation version, there are four models: station, lab, flipped, and individual. In station model, students into the same classroom, visit different learning stations in groups, there, they develop some instructions planned by the teacher. This model is appropriate to work projects, written assignment and small-group instruction. The second model, lab, involves students who rotate, different from the station model, amongst several classrooms in the institution, and one of these is a computer lab where learners have to develop some online tasks. In the lab model, teachers give the instructions face-to-face. In the third model, flipped rotation, teachers give students some instruction face-to-face into the institutions during the school day and then learners after class have online instruction to
develop out of the establishment (at home, café internet). This model gives learners opportunities to control their own time, learning pace and place to work. Finally, in the individual rotation model, every student has individualized and particular instruction online as well as tutor support. According to learners’ results, they can rotate to a new learning module. In other words, when they achieve the goals from the learning level, they will pass to a new one and conversely, if they do not get the score or fulfill the task, they have to stay in the same lesson.

In the second version of blended learning, flex model, learners receive almost all the instruction through internet taking some individualized modules and moving through the course with the support of tutors. This support is given in small groups, through projects or tutoring. Face-to-face encounters might vary according to teacher’s specification.

Within the third version of blended learning, self-blend or self-mixed model, students take part of the class in traditional learning environments with a teacher in the classroom and the other part is an online lesson that can be done in or outside the institution and after school day. Learners take these online courses to complement the topics studied in the traditional instruction.

The fourth version of blended learning is enriched virtual where students take all the lessons in a virtual environment and periodically have some tutoring and exams with teachers. This meeting takes place at the institution in which learners have the opportunity to ask teachers questions about the content of the lessons, clear doubts and according to the curriculum take the corresponding tests.

The above mentioned Blended learning versions proposed by Staker and Horn (2012) might be suitable to different contexts and needs. However, institutions have to create an infrastructure thought to take advantage of this learning methodology and not only in terms of technological aspects but also, in teachers and learners training to this new learning environment. Clark (2001)
supports this idea, since the designing a blended course goes further than introducing technological equipment into traditional learning environments. Instead, it involves a completely instructional redesign. To this regard, blended learning implementation should convey a process in which piloting might be a stage to prove if this approach is relevant and suitable in the institution.

Similarly, Khan (2005) suggests a model for blended learning, not in terms of methodologies as those in Staker and Horn’s proposals, but rather aspects addressing to the implementation of blended learning in an institution. The author posits eight components: institutional, technological, pedagogical, interface design, evaluation, management, resource support and ethical.

![Khan’s Octagonal Framework](image)

*Figure 1: The Blended Learning Model (Khan, 2005)*

For purposes of understanding, Khan’s framework components have been grouped in three sets. Firstly, I explain institutional, pedagogical and evaluation components. Secondly, the
technological, interface design and resource support are presented. Finally, the third set includes the ethical component.

To start the first set, administrative staff support is important to implement blended learning environments, because this implementation initially requires investment and a budget to create a frame regarding some aspects such as technological equipment, facilities and teachers. After having the infrastructure ready, teachers and students need training on the use of the new Learning Management System (LMS). In this regard, Poon (2009), during her study, identified that availability of resources was the most relevant factor for success in blended learning environment, along with time, effort and expertise. The researcher also concluded that training is essential for teachers in the transitions from a traditional instruction to a blended one.

I consider, some situations might arise regarding the previous aspects; on one hand, some institutions pretend to create a successful blended learning environment but do not invest enough in technological equipment, such as computers and internet with a powerful bandwidth; as a result, it is likely the course will have some problems. For instance, whether there are not enough computers or internet does not work effectively, it might generate discomfort in learners and some discipline problems. Consequently, students will not achieve the aims proposed. This is similar to the findings of El Mansour and Mupinga (2007) as well as Usta and Ozdemir (2007), who found respectively that technology problems regarding internet connection hindered the learning process in blended environment, consequently learners’ perception about the EFL course was negative.

On the other hand, whether some teachers are not qualified in ICTs or have not been trained in the use of a software or platform, it might generate some feelings, emotions in both, teachers and learners. When a technical or technological problem appears, and teachers do not know how to manage it, they could become stressed, anxious and demotivated because they are not able to
solve it. Ochoa and Roberto (2011) supported the previous situation when they state, “due to the availability of technology that teachers have nowadays, they use it even though in some cases they do not know how to use it or if they do, it is without a learning focus in mind.” (p. 162). Likewise, Napier, Dekhane and Smith (2010) agreed with the idea that adequate training is necessary for teachers who are facing the transition from teaching traditional instruction to a blended one.

Regarding the pedagogical aspect, it is relevant because blended learning is not related only to technological equipment but the approach, techniques and strategies in the learning and teaching process. According to Dudeney and Hockly (2007), some components are relevant in the pedagogical implementation, such as the delivery mode, task design, materials, learners’ and teachers’ roles, tutors, assessment and evaluation. In fact, evaluation is necessary in order to revise if all the aspects related to blended learning implementation are working, otherwise, it is necessary to make adjustments and improve the wrong aspects.

In regards to the second set about Khans’ framework, I consider the resources teachers require to plan and carry out online and face-to-face classes such as computers, internet, in general, LMS, need to be meshed among them and with methodology because blended learning should be thought as a unit and not as elements in isolation and separated. Interface design is a key component because through this one learners might be captivated in the EFL activities. A webpage with a myriad of exercises or sentences is not as attractive as dynamic webpages in which there is movement, sound and hyperlinks that make learners active participants in the learning process. Therefore, it is a relevant resource support regarding maintenance of equipment to make it work effectively. Moreover, online support for students who need to solve some academic and technological problems in the process is required. Teachers support is indispensable in a blended learning environment.
Finally, the last set is related to *ethics*, according to Khan (2005), it has to do mainly with misuse of intellectual property and plagiarism. When searching for some studies about blended learning, I could find that the ethical component has not been tackled in blended learning experiences research studies as it does happen with the other components by Khan (2005). Findings in the diagnosis stage indicated some learners did not do the activities by themselves, but instead they asked others to solve the exercises. That fact allowed me to keep this component in mind in the present discussion around blended learning experiences. According to Ochoa and Roberto (2011), learners created false identities within online platforms and got others to do their assignments. It happened because they did not have enough time to do the exercises as well as lack of interest in the subject.

Acting ethically has to do with decision making regarding what is morally “good” or “bad” taking into account that it differs from individuals and societies all over the world. Nevertheless, in ICTs there are some universal actions which are not allowed such as plagiarism, illegal uploading, downloading, copying, stealing and misuse of intellectual property (Mishra, 2007). According to Kitchener (1984), acting ethically involves professionals in making difficult decisions due to the fact they are poorly prepared. The intuitive level and the critical evaluative level are beginning of the process of ethical decision making (Kitchener, 1984). Hill, Glaser, and Harden (1995) denote the level of critical evaluation as a cognitive level of ethical reasoning. This level is perilous to the ethical decision making process due to its limitations and barriers.

To overcome those barriers and limitations Hill, Glaser, and Harden (1995), designed a model to illustrate some components of making decision. Their model proposed has seven stages: 1. recognition of a problem, 2. definition of the problem, 3. Developing solutions, 4. choosing a
solution, 5. reviewing the process, 6. implementing and evaluating the decision, and 7. continued reflection.

After discussing Khan’s components in blended learning, we move to the advantages and disadvantages in this learning environment. This aspect is relevant to the construct in study, technology transition and integration of blended learning in the EFL class, because it affords with insights on how learners, faculty and academic community in general perceive this learning environment.

As for advantages, time and space acquire another conception because these are more flexible. Online learning contributes to group cohesion and encourages learners to participate in the activities because it develops a good feeling of belonging to a group. In some cases students show themselves as they are because they do not feel intimidated or less than when they are in a face-to-face lesson. Communication can be longer than in a classroom encounter because of the class time can go beyond. Garrison (2008) considers that the asynchronous tools such as discussion groups, blogs or learning management system, make a written activity less stressful and motivates learners to take intellectual risks. Blended courses support students in developing their autonomy, self-assessment and individualization, besides learning or complementing their ICTs (information and communication technologies) literacy skills. However, that autonomy should not be taken for granted because in fact some learners are not autonomous at all. Some students do not do the activities by themselves. Instead, they ask other people to solve these ones because they argue that do not know how to do the exercises or simply they are not interested in doing the tasks.

Regarding the disadvantages in the blended learning, Garrison (2008) states the need in financial, human and technical resources demands investment. Budget in most institutions is not enough in order to get the equipment required to implement blended learning. In addition, it is not
only about investment; as Littlejohn and Pebler (2007) say that creating those courses is time-consuming and teachers have to get some technical training in order to know how to manage that innovation. This technical training is offered to teachers but most of the time not to students who at times have difficulties in order to manage the online platform. Some tutors take for granted learners know how to utilize the platform but some of them are not skillful on ICTs.

The previous construct, technology transition and integration in blended learning, should be understood in this research as the meshing of various technological components regarding traditional instruction and blended learning. These tools have become part of our lives and have changed our behavior patterns, lifestyles and thinking. As Vygotsky (1978) posits, human mind is mediated and the symbolic and physical tools in which humans depend on might change the world where we live in. Blended learning as a learning environment should be seen as well as a new lifestyle that goes beyond the mortar and bricks, campus and involves not only learners but also their families, friends and many other individuals.

**Transitional learning experiences in EFL**

Cambridge dictionary defines experience as “the process of getting knowledge or skill from doing, seeing, or feeling things”. There are many experiences people have in their lives such as physical, emotional, social, cultural, among many others. In this study, experience is mainly related to learning. In this regard, the *glossary of education reform* defines learning experience as:

Any interaction, course, program, or other experience in which learning takes place, whether it occurs in traditional academic settings (schools, classrooms) or nontraditional settings (outside-of-school locations, outdoor environments), or whether it includes traditional educational interactions (students learning from teachers and professors) or
nontraditional interactions (students learning through games and interactive software applications). (Glossary of education reform, n.d)

Some scholars differ in their insights about the conceptualizations on the term: experience. On one hand, Dewey (1963) says that traditional education comprises experiences, though for him these ones are irrelevant because they are not focused on society or students’ needs. Traditional education just centers on curricula implementation and do not mesh the defective past experiences to the present and future situations. In contrast, Eldeeb (2013) considers, firstly, that traditional education experiences in his personal case has been meaningful and those ones have not hindered his interest in learning. A study conducted by Bedoya (2012) supports Eldeeb’s insights since she found learners considered that taking English courses in a traditional environment is much better and interesting than online courses.

Dewey (1963) also posits that traditional education depends on objectives and methods imposed from the past and taught in a passive form to learners who do not participate actively in the process, consequently students feel demotivated to continue learning. Nevertheless, Eldeeb (2013) disagrees about the previous statement because he states that lack of motivation does not arise only in the traditional learning but it is also observable in recent education or progressive education, in Dewey’s words. With regard to imposition in education, Liu, Chang, Yang and Sun (2011), Hongboontri (2014) together with Belcher (2006) stated it is relevant to know what students want and like when learning English because their voices are not heard, mainly in language field.

In this regard, I consider firstly, it means power is perpetuated on teachers who impose the syllabus and do not negotiate with students about what should be taught and what strategies might be appropriate to achieve the goals and the evaluation process. Secondly, even whether it seems
contradictory, teachers’ role is relevant regarding motivation because they are who design, plan and create strategies to carry out in the classes.

Experience from psychological perspective is classified in two types (Alleydog, 1998 - 2018). The first one is objective experience that refers to concrete actions, which are perceptible and palpable to others. The second one is subjective experience related to emotional and cognitive effect due to a human experience, which is a mental phenomenon that cannot be measured or presents evidence in the physical milieu.

Regarding the above experiences, in the diagnosis stage of this study some learners reported particular emotions when they interacted with online platforms. Some of them felt stress in that interaction because they were not expertise in technology, besides they felt alone working online specifically when some problems and doubts arose.

In connection with experience from a psychological perspective, an aspect that called my attention in Dewey’s theory of experience is related to the importance he gives to the formation of attitudes, positive or negative, it means subjective experience. Disciplinary content and concepts are relevant to learners but what they might carry to future has to do with their attitudes, which will lead them to make decisions. Therefore, experiences are meshed in time, past, present and future because a specific attitude formed might enhance or diminish students’ interest in learning in future. In this context, a fact that may determine whether learners continue taking an EFL course in blended learning might be the experience gotten nowadays in that learning environment.

In contrast to traditional education, Dewey (1963) posits the concept of progressive education that is a social experience that relies on acquisition of skills and the modification of emotional and intellectual habits and attitudes. In this progressive approach teachers’ role is relevant due to the
fact recognition of experiences might conduct to permit learners’ personal growth, arousal of curiosity and certain extent of freedom. In this regard, a “progressive” teacher is the one who tries to realize that experience of blended learning for students who are digital natives differs from digital immigrants who have to adapt themselves to this new learning environment.

In this regard, it is important to highlight two principles by which experience emerges: continuity and interaction. The former has to do with the effect past experiences have with the future ones. These experiences can be positive and the influence in future can be rich and promising. These experiences also can be negative and the influence thereby dismal and mis-educative. A constructive experience provides ‘a desire to go on learning’ (1938:48), or a positive continuity.

Interaction is related to the context and influence teachers have in learners’ experiences. The relationship between the learner and the groups is relevant. Hence, teacher’s role in a new environment is relevant. Although, it is not possible to change the previous experiences, to have a comfortable environment in class might help learners to create a new and positive experience about that context. I consider, a teacher who gives feedback and know students pace and capacities does not behave as a judge whose main objective is put grade for each activity done, but rather become a guide who addresses the process and tries to generate learners confidence in a new learning environment. This behavior has impact on the learner’s current and future learning.

Consequently, experiences are close related to narratives. In this study, academic life stories from learners reveal their experiences in their past, present and expectations or imaginary worlds regarding learning experiences in a blended environment. Thus, some concepts and discussions among scholars about narratives are presented to embrace the aforementioned construct.
Connelly and Clandinin (2000) pose that when we talk to other people about ourselves we are telling life stories. In other words, when people narrate their experiences, are using language as a means to show their personality and identity. Narratives, in words of Norton and Early (2011), have a close relation to language because it is as a social practice in which people negotiate their identities and tell their experiences. Narrating is also a way through which humans explore their own feelings, thoughts and intentions to be aware of their social behavior (McEwan & Egan, 1995). Everybody has many experiences in their lives and might be of different types; social, subjective, objective among others, but in this study learning experiences acquire importance since it is pretended to understand EFL university students’ academic life stories regarding their experiences in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one.

Ochs and Caps (1996), states that narratives have three specific objectives or purposes. Firstly, narratives are close related to self. Also supported by Quintero (2016), who takes into consideration stories as the representation of experiences and the self. Life stories cannot be separated from the self because they are like mirrors which disclose who we are; as a matter of fact, these stories go beyond owing to the fact that those narrations reveal, at times, the most hidden feelings, thoughts and memories. Secondly, narratives give humans the sense of their past and future as principles of their life process. Monereo and Pozo (2014) states that narratives make connections among learning past experiences, with recognition of ourselves as learners in the recent contexts and are planned towards the future through imaginary learning experiences. Thirdly, the personal narratives have two dimensions: temporality and point of view. In the former, narratives represent a temporal change from one state of events to another, and in the latter, humans render codes, lexicons and grammars in a different way according to their own understanding.
Transition is a relevant aspect in this study. Hence, a discussion among some authors and scholars is proposed. Scholssberg’s theory of transition with its corresponding traits and tenets is used to generate this rapport with the construct, transitional learning experiences in EFL.

Schlossberg (1981) stated a transition as “any event or non-event that results in a change in assumptions about oneself and the world and thus requires a corresponding change in one’s behavior and relationships” (p.4). According to the above definition, a situation or event changes and it conveys some shifts in the agents, conditions, context that are affected by those phenomena. Narrowing this definition to the purpose of this study, I consider, the event has to do with the imposition of a new learning methodology called blended learning at the university. Thus, it has conveyed some assumptions, roles, relationships and routines in university learners.

Schlossberg (1981) proposes three types of transitions: anticipated, unanticipated and non-event. Anticipated transitions are planned and offer people the chance to prepare themselves to the coming events. Unanticipated transitions are unpredictable and individuals do not have neither time nor resources to consider options to face that change. The last type of transition is non-event, which is a shift people expect for coming but it does not happen. Regarding the situation at the university where this study was carried out, an unanticipated transition occurred there because learners were not asked about this new policy in which they had to change their roles, assume more expenses, and face a new learning environment.

Schlossberg (1981) stated that learners face three phases in a transition: moving in, moving through and moving out. Moving in has to do with facing the shift; it is required to leave a recognized context and going to a new phase. Moving through involves to follow the moving in process; hence the student needs to manage new skills, complete new tasks and make challenging decisions. Moving out is the end of a series of transitions and expect what is coming. How
learners perceive transition and the impact on their lives is the most relevant aspect in the process. Participants of this study regarding the above phases might be in two of them depending on their identities. Digital natives are in the moving in phase while digital immigrants are in the moving through phase. Some studies related to transition have shown some implications in participants due to the change they had to face. These transitions have affected their life and personality. (Brandtstädter, Wentura, & Rothermund, 1999; McAdams, Josselson, & Lieblich, 2001).
Chapter 3

Research Design

In this chapter, the reader finds a description of the research framework addressed to answer the following research question: What do English university students’ academic experiences reveal about their transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one? The chapter presents the type of study, the context of study participants, the research roles, and the instruments.

Type of study

A qualitative descriptive and interpretive study was used to dissect EFL university students’ narratives regarding their experiences in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one. Cresswell (2009) posits that “qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p. 4). Likewise, Johnson and Christensen (2008) state that “qualitative research is used when little is known about a topic or phenomenon or when one wants to discover or learn more about it. It is commonly used to understand people’s experiences and to express their perspectives” (p. 33). Similarly, Merriam (1998) claims that a descriptive and interpretive study is useful to interpret learner’s experiences, how they construct their narratives and the meaning those experiences convey.

Taking into account this perspective, specifically, experiences interpretation, human issues, and social representations, the election of a qualitative descriptive and interpretive study was appropriate because led me to dissect learners’ life stories through those lenses. The main concern is to understand the phenomenon within the local context by listening to participants’ voice.
Merriam (1998) states individuals use their words to describe phenomena. In regards to the descriptive and interpretive nature of this qualitative study, participants’, by means of interviews, provided data regarding transitions from a learning environment to another in a natural context, their university. This data was inductively dissected to find participants’ contexts, structure of their academic lives as well as repetitive actions, intentions, views or feelings (Charmaz, 2006) to be interpreted later on and discussed based on some studies.

**Setting or context of study Participants**

This study is carried out at a private university located at Villa del Prado neighborhood in Bogotá. This university offers some undergraduate programs such as food, mechatronics, civil and industrial engineering, law, accounting, veterinary medicine and animal science. The mission of the university focuses on educating people committed to knowledge, environmental sustainability, entrepreneurship culture and regional development. This university also offers extension courses and some certificate programs.

Regarding language policies, learners have to take six English levels as a requirement for graduation. There are about three thousand students in the morning and at night. The English institute has 30 teachers. There are three types of English courses; blended, full attendance, and online. The students use the book American Big Picture and work with an online platform provided by a publishing house. Teachers have trainings periodically in order to know how to use the platform. The syllabus is designed strictly with the contents of the book.

This university decided to implement blended learning in the English courses two years ago. Nevertheless, learners were not informed about that change and as a result this situation generated learners’ reactions in pro and against that new learning approach. Chomsky (2014) states it is relevant universities become more democratic in which students’, teachers’ and educative
community participate in the construction and functioning of the university. It is because some universities have become in enterprises aimed at achieving just economic benefits, mainly in this neoliberal times (Chomsky, 2014).

In this study, five EFL university students attending a fourth level course of English participated. The selection of these participants was purposive sampling. According to Ritchie, Lewis, and Elam (2003), the aim of this type of sampling is “to ensure that all the key constituents of relevance to the subject matter are covered and to ensure that, within the key criteria, some diversity is included so that the impact of the characteristic concerned can be explored” (p.79). The reason, it was required participants who had experienced learning English in both environments, traditional and blended. These students were aged from 23 to 45. Some of them were professionals from fields related to law and engineering; all of them studied in the morning and afternoon. The participants took two hours face-to-face classes every week at two different campuses, and part of the instruction was taken through an online platform.

Participants in the study were informed about the objectives of this research. They knew it was an academic study aimed at understanding EFL students’ academic life stories regarding their experiences in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one. They were informed about the semi-structured interviews and the academic life stories they had to write. Thus, they signed a consent form in which they accepted to participate in this study. (see appendix A).

**Researcher’s role**

The researcher’s role in this study was non-participant. It is because I tried to comprehend the phenomenon without intervening actively. In this sense, the objective was to maintain the neutrality and objectivity trying to become an unbiased researcher. Therefore, participants were
more open and willing to give their point of view and answers to the questions of the semi-structure interview because they felt comfortable and free. Liu and Maitlis (2010), state that in a non-participant observation, situations can be captured in a more dynamic manner better than through other methods.

**Instruments**

For the purpose of this study I used two instruments for data collection: narratives, through academic life stories and semi-structured interviews. Participants wrote about their experiences through academic life stories in three specific moments: when they studied English in the traditional learning environments, when they had contact with blended learning, and lastly, the imaginary worlds or expectations regarding learning English in a blended environment. The experiences of participants were expressed in lived and told stories of individuals. Narratives were collected from written academic life stories, which refer to the interaction, events, experiences which occurs in academic settings and are chronologically connected (Czarniawska 2004). Furthermore, these stories might talk about learners’ past, present and future (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The written academic life stories were important in my study because through them learners’ voice was heard. They wrote about their academic experiences with no restriction and giving their perception about the situations lived. The participants wrote the texts in Spanish to have more detailed information.

The second instrument was a semi-structured interview carried out with the participants in order to know their experiences related to the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one. Denscombe (2007) declares that interview is an appropriate method for researchers to get insights form individuals’ experiences, emotions, feelings and opinions. This form of
interview is flexible and a dialogue with the participants might ensure following a line of discussion (Edwards & Holland, 2013). For this reason, I chose semi-structured interview to achieve my research objectives and accomplish my research question because I try to understand EFL university students’ academic life stories regarding their experiences in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one.

**Piloting**

At the very beginning of this research, I designed the instructions for the narratives and the questions for the interviews in English. I did the piloting stage with some learners with similar characteristics to the participants from the study. Learners aged similarly, taking English classes at the university and who had studied English in both environments, traditional and blended.

After giving learners the text with the instructions to write their academic life stories, learners asked me frequently to explain them what they had to do because they did not understand some English sentences, phrases and words. Besides, they wrote their experiences with short phrases or words in English. Regarding the semi-structured interviews, just few students could answer the questions in English but using isolated words and sentences. I wanted to get their narratives in English but students did not have enough competence in the target language to do it; hence, I decided to tell them to finish the narrative in Spanish.

As I observed, to get fruitful narratives it is better students to write in Spanish as well as for the semi-structures interviews to speak in the mother tongue because in this way learners can express more widely and are not restricted because of the language. As I am interested in working with narratives the more information I get, the better.
Consequently, I designed both, the instructions to the academic life stories and the questions for the semi-structured interview in Spanish. I did the piloting with the same students and the feedback was much better.

**Procedures**

Participants of the study were asked to write three texts regarding their academic experiences. They wrote the texts in Spanish language in order to express all their insights and not being limited for language competence. In the first life story they were invited to write about their experiences as EFL learners in a traditional environment, it means, before any contact with online platforms or blended learning taking into account some aspects such as methodology, resources, feelings, teachers and classmates interaction, values, achievements and other aspects they considered relevant. In the second narrative, they were asked to write about their recent experience as EFL learners in a blended environment, it means, interacting with online platforms. They should describe how their experience was due to the transition from the traditional environment to the blended one and the aspects suggested above. In the third life story, they should write about their expectations about learning English in future through blended learning taking into account the above aspects.

This semi-structured interview was aimed at consolidating data from narratives. This was designed with open-ended questions in Spanish. (Appendix C). Each individual interview took about 25 minutes and was recorded by using a mobile. As a semi-structured interview is flexible, I tried to begin the interview with a kind attitude to reduce some feelings of stress or pressure from the participant. During the process of the interview, I could observe they felt comfortable and had good attitude.
Chapter 4

Data Analysis

The current section shows the findings based on data collection obtained from five EFL university students who were the participants of this research. The chapter presents the data management strategies followed by the data analysis approach (grounded theory). Moreover, the three final categories of this study are explained below with the application of methodological triangulation.

This study aimed to analyze EFL university students’ academic life stories regarding their experiences in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one. This chapter presents the findings in connection to the research question: What do EFL university students’ narratives reveal about their transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one?

It is essential to present the procedures from the application of the interviews until the development of the grounded theory stages in order to contextualize the analysis of this descriptive and interpretive study. To begin with, it must be said that data collected from narratives and interviews were managed through different strategies. Firstly, participants wrote a text (narrative) about their academic life experiences all over three specific contexts and situations related to their past learning English experiences without blended methodologies, their present path based on blended learning and their expectations with regard to these methodologies and environments. Secondly, I designed a semi-structured interview to complement and expand data from participants’ academic background.

The academic life experiences, in turn, were transcribed and numbered as the first data management strategies. Coding was also applied to data, the interview and the written life stories. The code was created numbering line by line of each text, using the initial letters of students’ first
and last name to maintain his/her privacy in this study, and, finally, numbering the three texts to identify the moment of the narratives. Thus, the researcher used a specific code to determine the lines, the texts and the participants of each academic life story and interview to go back and forth through the evidence. For instance, the code: 1nm1 stands for the line number, participants’ name initial letters and the number of the text.

The data analysis approach draws mainly on the epistemological principles of grounded theory proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1990). During grounded theory application, I worked with data by extracting, dissecting and regrouping some patterns from the narratives and interviews. These patterns could be identified after several readings of data, shaping and reshaping codes to consolidate them and, consequently, to establish the categories and subcategories.

Strauss and Corbin defined three processes for analyzing data: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. A table with three columns was designed to analyze the data. The first column of this table gathered the data that was obtained after analyzing, identifying and labeling some common patterns, it is known as the open coding stage. Strauss and Corbin (1990) assert that open coding is the process of “breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data” (p. 61). In this stage, information gathered was compared and analyzed in order to get major categories of information. However, these codes were provisional, because it constituted the first glance to data towards new patterns related to possibly emerging categories.

The second column named as the axial code allowed to synthesize and group the data under preliminary labels. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), axial coding has to do with the relation between categories and subcategories and their corresponding properties and dimensions. I took the patterns and keywords found in the open coding stage, looked for repetition and formed
groups taking into account their similarities and properties. I decided to use color coding to identify these groups.

The third column or selective coding led to find categories and subcategories that could be reconstructed in a continuous process of analysis addressed to answer the research question. At this stage, it is important to see how these categories and sub-categories are connected to each other without being forced to fit in a specific group.

**Methodological triangulation**

The process carried out to give credibility to the data was methodological triangulation. According to Denzin (1978) along with Cohen, Manion and Morisson (2007), research data collection methods can be triangulated for validity purposes. In the case of this study, participants wrote their experiences through academic life stories or narratives as a data collection instrument. Simultaneously, I collated these data with information found through semi-structured interviews.

**Findings**

The participants wrote about their experiences in the three moments mentioned above and these written academic life stories were analyzed using grounded theory. The analysis allowed for the construction of three categories and subcategories, namely genesis of the teaching process, critical voices around EFL and digital technology, and transition from Stone Age to knowledge society. These categories are explained as follows, based on graphic in figure 2, which displays them and the existing connection to each other.
Genesis of the teaching process

In this section, I account for the first category supported by three subcategories emerging from data namely, teacher’s role in traditional environments, resources in a traditional environments, finally, perceptions and feelings in a traditional learning process.

From a canonical interpretation of education, teaching has been characterized by a teacher in a classroom, using some resources like the blackboard and the chalk. In this regard, Khan (2005) declares this traditional instruction is a closed system confined to a classroom, textbooks and school. Additionally, some EFL methodologies only focused on grammar and passive students as
recipients of knowledge are evident. Repetitive exercises and no interaction is predominant in this learning stage, being teachers the focus of the class. Nevertheless, in traditional learning environments, some EFL teachers use methods such as communicative approach, task based learning (Harmer, 2001) in which learners are involved in the process.

**Teacher’s role in traditional environments.** How students feel and learn in the academic process might be considered as a unit to measure whether teachers are doing correctly their work. Teacher’s tasks and some characteristics are associated to the roles they should accomplish in the teaching process. In this study, the participants described some characteristics of their teachers in the learning process within their previous experiences in the traditional environments. The following characteristics are the ones participants perceived as inappropriate to foreign language learning. In the traditional learning environments, some teachers focus on the book contents, plan grammar and vocabulary-driven classes, the instruction is given in their native language, feedback is not provided and students are passive in the learning process. According to Kumaravadivelu (2003), teachers who carried out these actions in class are called passive technicians because their focus on teaching is based on the content knowledge that is transmitted to learners. As a result, teacher-student interaction becomes limited and poor attitudes arise, as one of our participants revealed when talking about her academic experience (excerpt 1).

**Excerpt 1**

1c1 “Bueno en mi experiencia antes de utilizar algún tipo de plataforma o acceso a dispositivos móviles o
2c1 internet era muy básico demasiado para mi gusto en el cual me se aprendí nada, porque el docente solo
3c1 se limitaba a dar una copia con los verbos y nos decía que los tradujéramos y nos aprendiéramos esos
4c1 mismos verbos en inglés y español, la clase se tornaba aburrida ya que estábamos en el puesto con la hoja
5c1 de los verbos un diccionario y el docente sentado en el escritorio mandando a callar cuando había mucho
6c1 ruido es decir no servía para nada aprender solo verbos y el verbo to be. El docente era callado pero
7c1 respetuoso pero no enseñaba nada para mi concepto.” [sic].
In this academic life story, the participant’s experience showed that she did not feel motivated in the learning process, since the teacher was not interacting with students and the activities proposed were not challenging. Vygotsky (1978) states students’ role in learning should be active because they can construct meaning. To be sat on the chair does not generate the space to be active in the class. (Excerpt 1, lines 5c1-6c1). In other words, this participant seemed to show awareness of her own learning process through her active reflection around teachers-students relationships in linear learning activities applied (Excerpt 1).

Although some students are autonomous as well as independent learners, the teacher in the traditional environments is crucial. Contreras (2011) commented in his study that teachers are essential in the learning process and they are necessary when a new stage or change in education emerges.

Thus, an instruction in traditional learning environments relies on EFL teachers’ role. Some intrinsic factors such as personality, beliefs, background and others influence highly the development of a class. Schumann and Schumann (1977) cited in Ellis (1999) consider that personal and general factors influence the learning of a foreign language. When teachers’ attitude in class is negative, for example in the previous narrative in the line (7c11), students react through behaviors such as laziness, boredom, demotivation and even anger.

Conversely, in the following excerpt the participant showed another side of teacher’s role in the traditional learning environments. The teacher represented someone who tries to engage students in the process with a variety of strategies to get them involved. This teacher’s role might be partly, related to the strand of thought stated by Kumaravadivelu (2003) known as, teachers as reflective practitioners. Reflection-on-action occur before and after the class, and reflection-in-action
during the class, both help the reflective practitioner teachers to face the situations in their everyday teaching practice (Schon, 1983). In this regard, teachers or faculty should “take responsibility for his or her own professional development” (Zeichner and Liston, 1996, p.1). The participant recognizes the teacher’s effort for trying to prepare activities intended to get students’ attention.

*Excerpt 2*

1.“La primera experiencia obtenida con el inglés fue en primaria cuando el método de enseñanza era por medio de textos y actividades lúdicas, donde el profesor intentaba explicar los temas de una manera práctica la cual todo mundo entendiera y su aprendizaje fuera fácil pues a esa edad la distracción es algo que se consigue con mucha facilidad”

   (Participant 1 NM– text 1, academic written life story, October 2017)

These written academic stories reveal the way in which students felt in the learning process, how they lived it and how they had a subjective and objective view about their teachers and their learning process. We as teachers should take into account the importance of our job and the power that exists behind this because our attitudes and behaviors might influence students’ ones, either in a positive or negative way.

*Resources in traditional environments.*

Students in recent times are digital natives, according to Prensky (2001), other authors such as Piscitelli (2009) call them, “Y generation”, and “multimedia generation” is the name Morduchowicz (2012) gives to these learners. The former author states that digital natives are those people who were born since 1990 and are fond of new technologies; they enjoy spending time on computers, tablets and mobiles use as well as playing video games. Therefore, our students nowadays think and process information differently in contrast to digital immigrants who were
born before digital natives. They like working more with hyperlinked activities that have images, sound and movement. In contrast, language teachers in traditional instruction use typical resources such as textbooks and the board. However, these resources seem to be boring for some students as it is seen in the excerpts 3 and 4. They like the textbooks but only at a certain extent, because learners consider there should be something more attractive, in terms of content, activities, and visual images, to catch them in the learning process.

*Excerpt 3*

E2lg21 El libro es chévere pero igual, no se que implementarle, no sé, a veces yo siento que es E2lg22 muy monótono, [sic].

( Participant 3 LG—text 2, academic written life story, October 2017)

*Excerpt 4*

E2kr23… uno con el libro, pues no sé, da un poco más de… monotonía.

( Participant 5 KR—text 2, academic written life story, October 2017)

*Perceptions and feelings in a traditional learning process.* When students are involved in a learning process they perceive and experience the situations surrounding that context. According to the events they live in class everyday some perceptions and feelings arise due to the interaction with teachers and classmates. Participants in this study, perceive and show in their academic life stories that internal aspects such as likes, interests, motivation, as well as external regarding teachers’ behavior and learning strategies coexist in their academic lives.

Students who like learning English as a foreign language do and participate in the activities, but conversely, the ones who do not like the subject just do the work to get a grade, as excerpt 5 illustrates. It means motivation plays an important role in the learning process. On this respect, Harmer (2001) declares motivation is “some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something” (p.51). The author holds the idea motivation is a relevant
aspect in the learning process and if demotivation exists, learners will not do the necessary effort to achieve any goal.

Richards and Edward (2000) suggest there are two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic. They claim, “the most basic distinction is between intrinsic motivation which refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, and extrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome” (p. 55.)

Excerpt 5

E1ec21 Pues la verdad como uno estaba estudiando en esa época, uno no hacía muchas preguntas
E1ec22 y como que no se prestaba mucho interés a eso. Más que todo en ese tiempo no era tanto
E1ec23 aprender un idioma, sí, una segunda lengua, sino que era más como el requisito de sacar
E1ec24 una nota, entonces había compañeros que se esforzaban, pues habíamos otros que éramos
E1ec25 como regulares y pues en el caso mío pues no mucho.

(Participant 4 EC– text 1, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

In the traditional instruction, some participants felt bored and demotivated when learning a foreign language because of different factors. These aspects were repetitive learning strategies and lack of teacher’s feedback. It is important to motivate students in the learning process; therefore, as Harmer (2001) suggests, it is necessary to provide learners with a great variety of activities, exercises and strategies to engage them in the class. Learning, exploring and creating new things, are aspects that might call learners’ attention and consequently it may increase their motivation in the learning process. According to the excerpts 6 and 7, repetitive activities as memorization and grammar focus exercises create a boring atmosphere in class.

Excerpt 6

E1kr21 Pues digamos que si se aprendió porque en cada año, en cada curso se hacía casi lo
E2kr22 mismo, entonces la duda, o sea nunca había muchas dudas porque ya uno estaba pues.
E1kr23 Pues ya después de un tiempo ya no sentía mucha motivación porque lo que te digo era muy repetitivo y siempre las clases de inglés eran lo mismo, en séptimo, en octavo, en noveno, en todos se veía lo mismo.

(Respondent 5 KR– text 1, semi structured interview, October 2017)

**Excerpt 7**

E1ec31 Ahí está la diferencia de hoy en día, anteriormente era más que todo solo gramática, nos guiábamos por el libro que nos tocaba o por lo que el profesor en ese entonces apuntaba en el tablero. Entonces uno lo que hacía era como repetir y formar planas, si me entiende, uno apuntaba digamos. How are you? Una oración y uno lo que hacía era repetir y tratar de memorizarla.

(Respondent 4 EC– text 1, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

Students’ demotivation arises if teachers do not pay attention to their process and if there is not feedback. Bellon & Blank (1991) stated that academic feedback is a teaching behavior strongly related to achievement, it might improve learner’s enthusiasm and confidence when learning.

Students need to know if they are doing well or not in the learning process. Feedback should be given not only at the end of the process, it means the class, semester, but at any moment when it is required from students. When there is not feedback, some learners, depending on their personalities, might abandon the activities, become angry or just continue doing the activities but with certain uncomfortable feelings (excerpts 8 and 9).

**Excerpt 8**

E1cl31 La verdad nunca vimos así como que ella nos explicara lo que estábamos haciendo bien o mal, no.

(Respondent 2 CL– text 1, semi-structured interview, October 2017)
Excerpt 9

1lg1 En la primera parte el aprendizaje era más personalizado debido a que contabas con una persona que
2lg1 estaba para corregirte o volver a explicar algo confuso en el momento, así la practica con los compañeros
3lg1 se hacia más fácil… [sic].

(Participant 3 LG– text 1, academic written life story, October 2017)

Motivation is a relevant aspect in the teaching and learning process. Gardner (1979) cited in Stern (1991), sees in attitudes and motivation a main cause to get either more or less successful learning. However, motivation should not be considered just as teacher’s responsibility but both, teachers and students themselves are involved as agents to activate motivation in class to achieve, individually and collectively, particular goals.

In a nutshell, the category genesis of the teaching process and its three subcategories show learners consider interaction with teachers as necessary in the learning process. In addition, learners feel more comfortable working with laptops than using textbooks. In turn, motivation is an important aspect in the teaching and learning process.

Critical voices around EFL and digital technology

In this section, I account for the second category supported by three subcategories emerging from data namely, social presence in the knowledge society, didactics in online platforms, as well as advantages and disadvantages of online platforms.

Social presence in the knowledge society. In blended learning environment, specifically in the virtual instruction, learners have to face some academic and technological situations on their own, which they have to overcome in order to continue with the process. The named circumstances might just happen suddenly and it causes some reactions that vary from learner to learner. Whether learners know how to manage the online platform and do the exercises proposed, the
reaction will be positive but conversely, if they do not have that knowledge neither in the academic nor in the technological aspect, the reactions will be negative.

Thus, what the latter learners feel seems to be frustration and loneliness in the learning process. Short, Williams, and Christie (1976) together with Shen and Khalifa (2007) name this phenomenon as social presence and the former define it as the “degree of salience of the other person in the interaction and the consequent salience of the interpersonal relationships” (p. 65). The latter consider learner’s experience is involved in three dimensions: cognitive social presence, affective social presence and awareness.

Zembylas, Theodorou & Pavlakis (2008), mention that despite the less evident dynamics of emotions in distance education, students are prone to experiencing both positive and negative emotions. Zembylas et al. (2008), claim that learners in distance education experience both, positive emotions such as excitement, satisfaction and relief (excerpt 10), as well as negative ones, stress, fear and isolation (excerpt 11).

**Excerpt 10**

E2ec59Sí, es una buena opción. Porque es un profesor que a medida que uno va desarrollando la E2ec510plataforma está con uno al lado, es decir como si uno estuviera en clase directamente.

( Participant 4 EC–text 2, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

**Excerpt 11**

5nm2 el desarrollo de la plataforma toma su tiempo de realizar y más cuando eres nuevo, en ese momento aparecen 6nm2 muchas preguntas que no tienes ni idea a quien hacerlas pues solo debes cumplir con desarrollar las 7nm2 actividades bien o mal.

( Participant 1 NM – text 2, academic written life story, October 2017)

In the above experience (excerpt 11), the participant has some adverse feelings about the learning process and there are some aspects to take into account. One of them has to do with the amount of time used to solve the exercises on the platforms. It is time consuming for the learners,
who know how to manage it, and much more complicated for those who have their first contact with this virtual platform.

Another aspect, and no less important, is the fact there is not any person who guides the learners in the process (excerpt 12). Many questions emerge but there is nobody close to ask about them. Some feelings and emotions, like anger, despair, anxiety, depending on each individual, arise at that precise moment and much more when there is a due time and the platform is nearly to be closed. Therefore, they try to find somebody to help them, a friend, relative, online sources (excerpt 13), this circumstance is time consuming and also frustrating when the situation is not solved. Consequently, some learners give up and all these types of problems provoke apathy to the activities online.

*Excerpt 12*

E2nm71 Sí, pues uno en el momento va a la internet pero sí sería bueno que hubiera como un
E2nm72 profesor virtual, que este siempre para cuando una tenga una duda le pueda preguntar,
E2nm73 porque digamos en la pronunciación que supuestamente sale ahí que donde tiene el
E2nm74 acento, pues uno no sabe que significa esa letra pues sería bueno que alguien le dijera
E2nm75 esto es para esto, y para estas cosas, si sería bueno que hubiera como un profesor virtual.

( Participant 1 NM– text 2, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

*Excerpt 13*

E2kr41...bueno tengo mi novio que me ayuda porque él sabe inglés. Pues
E2kr42 algunas veces cuando él está lo llamo y él me ayuda. Y cuando estoy sola la opción es
E2kr43 abrir una pestaña nueva y buscar la palabra en el traductor.

( Participant 5 KR– text 2, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

*Didactics in online platforms.* Cummins (1998), cited in Blake (2013), expresses that some second language acquisition theorists hold teaching a foreign language is often unsuccessful, due to the fact learners receive poor input in the target language. In regards to that insufficient input,
Blake (2013) states when people use technology intelligently, it can enhance contact with the target language, mainly in the lack of study abroad. Therefore, online platforms in the academic context appear as a strategy to improve several aspects in the learning and teaching process. However, and also as Blake (2013) claims, “an activity without adequate pedagogical planning – technologically enhanced or not - will produce unsatisfactory results with students, even if it is attractive from multimedia point of view (e.g., colors, graphics, photo, video, sound)” (p.12).

Some participants in this study consider the online platform they use as a tool is useful. Nevertheless, this resource should have more interesting topics in terms of contents and design close related to learners’ likes. Excerpt 14 illustrates how topics, such as sport, entertainment and stories, are some of learners’ preferences.

**Excerpt 14**

E3kr56 El diseño, que la plataforma tenga los temas pues que a uno le interesen temas que uno pueda aprender y practicar que digamos cuando uno vaya a hablar con alguien que sea unos temas de inglés, no llegar a hablar de ahí, esos temas que van en la plataforma, sí, son muy planos. Una historia, un texto que hayan hecho de tal persona, tal futbolista, su vida, al final le dé, le genere interés, ¿no?

(Participant 5 KR– text 2, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

Gardner (1993), in his theory of the multiple intelligences states that people learn through some intelligences such as linguistic, logical mathematical, musical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal intelligence and naturalist. Based on this theory, we can observe in the excerpt 15, the participant shows strength in the visual intelligence because he would like adding images to the audio activities thus, he considers might be able to understand much better the information. The designers of online platforms should take into consideration learner’s pace and
learning styles because not all students have the same “intelligences” when learning a foreign language.

**Excerpt 15**

E3ec31 De pronto sería en los audios porque uno va a resolver la plataforma con los audios y es
E3ec32 una persona ya empezando a hablar (ta-ta-ta-ta-ta) y habla todo y uno lo que capta y uno
E3ec33 va desarrollando. ¿Qué le pondría yo al audio? visualización, la imagen, que la persona
E3ec34 que le esté hablando a uno como que uno pueda mirar la persona, y uno puede también
E3ec35 como interpretar lo que está diciendo, como que leyendo los labios, y como que le
E3ec36 muestren a uno las imágenes. Sí, no es desarrollar la actividad pero que sí que se muestre
E3ec37 la imagen de la persona con la que esté hablando y le muestre a uno imágenes pa’ que uno
E3ec38 saber exactamente cómo se va a desarrollar la plataforma. Captaría uno más las cosas. [sic].

( Participant 4 EC-- text 3, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

The excerpt 16 shows how the participant has a kind of conditioning learning and expects a stimulus when doing correctly an activity. It is also extrinsic motivation, according to Richards and Edwards (2000), because when doing something, it implies to get an outcome. Consumerism is another aspect to analyze in this narrative; the fact students are learning something which will be important for their professional lives is set aside, besides, the grade for the activity is not enough, the participant considers there should be other “prizes” or benefits more related to her interests. Consequently, another role of education is guide learners about managing consumerism.

Rio and Alvarez (1985) express, education is relevant for consumers since it might teach them to take personal control of their decisions.

**Excerpt 16**

E3lg21 Sí claro, Sería algo más interactivo que con las actividades completaran un puntaje para
E3lg22 algo. No sé, algo que los hiciera como competitivos, o sea cuantos puntos gano hoy, y se
E3lg23 van acumulando.

I: Algo como un reto.
Advantages and disadvantages of online platforms. In this third subcategory, it is important to show the main advantages and disadvantages participants of this study found when working in the online platform. When experiencing the transition from one context of learning to another, students’ life stories revealed a series of tenets around the digital platform. These students assumed and played the role of reflective users as they critically referred to the digital resource, as Blake (2013) also suggests when identifying the instrumental perspective around technology from the critical stance.

Some learners considered online platforms are tools that affect the learning process in different manners when learning a foreign language, as participants of the excerpt 17 and 18 illustrate. Similarly, during a study by Gecer and Dag (2012), students pointed out that working with the online platform allowed them to manage their own learning, become more responsible and the activity of presenting their homework online was more enjoyable. In the case of this study, participants felt their interest increased in the learning process as well as their relation with teachers and classmates.

Excerpt 17

6ec2… El aprendizaje Híbrido en inglés, Blended Learning, donde las clases son 50% son 7ec2 presenciales y el otro 50% de forma virtual, mediante plataformas online, han despertado el interés de 8ec2 estudiar, practicar y aplicar lo aprendido. Este método nuevo que han venido implementándose en varias 9ec2 universidades debe llevarse también a las instituciones Educativas, ya que el ambiente, la relación de
10ec2 docentes y estudiantes se ha mejorado en un 100%. [sic].

(Participant 4EC – text 2, academic written life story, October 2017)

**Excerpt 18**

6kr123… en cuanto a mi experiencia ratifico que he
7kr123 sentido un cambio bastante notorio en mi escritura y lectura del idioma extranjero me siento satisfecha
8kr123 con la herramienta y los conocimientos adquiridos durante este tiempo.

(Participant 5 KR – text 2, academic written life story, October 2017)

Conversely, other participants’ narratives, as in excerpt 19, showed certain difficulties when using online platforms. A relevant aspect has to do with access to some resources, such as computers and internet to carry out the activities online. DANE, Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística, (2017) reports that in 2016, 45.2% of homes had desktops, laptops or tablets, and 45.8% had access to internet. It means that many learners cannot do the activities online at home due to the lack of resources. Consequently, some questions emerge from this situation and it might manifest through social issues such as inequality and poverty in Colombia. In other words, technology use and inclusion at schools or universities may imply a socio economical dimension to be considered in methodological transitions.

These academic new changes have obliged students, indirectly, to buy laptops, cellphones and technological devices because these ones have become indispensable in the academic context. Moreover, the computers and accessories have short durability, planned obsolescence, or as Pesce (2016) also calls “short-shelf life media”. It implies students have to change periodically those devices that lead them to have more expenses, in addition to college tuition, transportation, food, academic materials and other issues. It is a social matter since education has become a privilege for few citizens instead of a right for everyone, as it should be.

**Excerpt 19**

2nm2… El trabajo en la plataforma era
Some learners may also enact to work on the online platform due to some aspects regarding didactics, lack of maintenance and registration (excerpts 20 and 21). Likewise, So and Brush (2007) found in their study that participants manifested a low expectation in a distance course in which they used a learning management system to deliver learning content because they had previously to face a disorganized course with some technical problems in the platform.

In this manner, it is relevant to take into account some studies related to material design as a strategy to transform online platform disadvantages into advantages. Thus, in this respect, Tomlinson (2011) proposes ten principles of second language acquisition intended to the development of materials for the teaching of languages, some of them are: Materials should achieve impact, they should help learners to feel at ease, these resources should help learners to develop confidence and what is being taught should be perceived by learners as relevant.

*Excerpt 20*

E2nm22 digamos que hay plataformas que no son las más didácticas para aprender inglés.

E2nm23 Entonces Digamos la que nosotros manejamos ahora es muy difícil porque esa plataforma falla por todo. Y no es como tan con ejemplos sino como llene una palabra ahí y ya, o sea no hay que analizar casi sino pongan la palabra y ya.

(Participant 1 NM – text 2, academic written life story, October 2017)

*Excerpt 21*

E3cl13 Que sean más didácticas, más amigables, y no le produzca a uno pereza hacer las actividades o ingresar.

(Participant 2 CL– text 3, semi-structured interview, October 2017)
In short, the category critical voices around EFL and digital technology and its three subcategories show firstly that learners consider necessary social presence when working online. Moreover, online platforms need to be designed with a careful pedagogical planning to engage learners in the learning process. In turn, learners from a critical perspective consider online platforms present advantages as well as disadvantages.

**Transition from Stone Age to knowledge society**

In this section, I account for the third category supported by three subcategories emerging from data namely, digital exile, identity in the knowledge society and ethics behind blended learning. Data emerged from participants’ voices in this category and the analysis provided in this section might be the major contribution to this research due to the fact that few studies have been done to this respect.

*Digital exile.* This subcategory has to do with learners’ perception and feelings emerged from the adaptation from traditional learning environments to a digital one. Digital exile also refers to some difficulties digital natives and immigrants have when facing new trends in the knowledge society.

Learners who are not fond of new technologies or have little knowledge about them consider transition from traditional learning environments to a blended or digital one as a great challenge (excerpt 22). This is similar to the findings of Napier, Dekhane and Smith (2011), in their study they observed learners who were not technically competent felt frustrated and lost in a course where multiple technologies were used. Likewise, Klein J, Moon Y, Picard RW (2002), supported the idea that some emotional states such as frustration, anxiety and anger may affect the interaction itself as well as social relationship and learning.

*Excerpt 22*

E2c111 Para mí si fue complicado porque pues la verdad nunca había visto esa temática para la
Digital exile is also seen in learners who are digital natives, because technology is updating constantly and new concepts, commands and information appear. Consequently, it is necessary for faculty to take some time to explain them all about the updates. However, some teachers take for granted that learners know everything related to technology and forget to give them clear instructions about the usage of the online platform. It causes discontent among students when they are in the process of adapting themselves to the ICTs. Winfrey (1999) states that a positive reaction might not guarantee learning; however, a negative one unquestionably diminishes its possibility.

**Excerpt 23**

E2nm11 Pues digamos que es lo primero es más difícil uno como adaptarse a la plataforma porque
E2nm12 a mí me dijeron como esa es la plataforma y usted mira como entra y busca sus
E2nm13 actividades igual que acá. No hay una explicación previa para que uno tenga como una
E2nm14 explicación para hacer la plataforma.

(Addressee 1 NM – text 2, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

Conversely, some participants who are digital immigrants and natives, felt comfortable and satisfied with the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one because they considered face-to-face encounters with the teacher helped them to clarify some doubts found in the online platform (excerpt 24). Likewise, Jung, Choi, Lim, and Leem (2002) illustrated that learners reported high levels of satisfaction with their learning process when working in online collaborative activities.

**Excerpt 24**

1lg2 Desde que se comenzó el proceso de la manera 50% presencial y 50% virtual pues en lo personal no
2lg2 cambio mucho debido a que el contacto con el profesor no se veía afectado y estaba para resolvernos
In short, certain feelings and difficulties learners experience in the adaptation from traditional learning environments to a digital one are reduced when a tutor or a teacher is close to learners, understands their pace in technology competence, takes time to solve their doubts and lets them learn from their mistakes.

**Identities in the knowledge society.** This subcategory intends to unveil learners’ identities in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended or digital one. Norton (2013) defines identity as “the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p. 4). In this study, that relationship is the one occurs between learners and blended learning, the adaptation to a new learning environment and how they envision a future learning immerse in that digital environment.

Some learners consider age as a relevant aspect in the learning process, mainly regarding languages and ICTs. A participant who is a digital immigrant, a middle-aged man, considers at his age, it is a challenge to study. Nevertheless, the process of learning a foreign language in a blended learning environment has awoken his interest and expectations (excerpt 25). Another participant who is a digital native, aged 23 considers the adaptation to a new technology and online platforms is common to youngsters (excerpt 26).

Prensky (2011) supports the idea that digital natives process information quite different from digital immigrants due to the interaction the formers have immersed in an omnipresent environment. It is because digital natives have grown with the instantaneity of hypertexts, music, information, communication and entertainment provided by devices such as tablets, laptops,
mobiles and other electronic appliances. In opposition, digital immigrants, before knowledge society, spent too much time in the learning process since they had to look up information in tons of books, visiting libraries, writing the information in their notebooks, communicating by telephone at home or in public places. Therefore, adaptation to study a foreign language by means of online platforms is a long process some digital immigrants have to face with their own strengths and weaknesses.

**Excerpt 25**

1ec2 “¡A mi edad, nunca es tarde para aprender! Después de 25 años retomo mis estudios…”

4ec2… puedo señalar que cuando inicie esta nueva

5ec2 etapa, era prevenido con la asignatura, pues ya había tenido experiencia de ser regular en el aprendizaje

6ec2 de este idioma; El aprendizaje Híbrido en inglés, Blended Learning, donde las clases son 50% son

7ec2 presenciales y el otro 50% de forma virtual, mediante plataformas online, han despertado el interés de

8ec2 estudiar, practicar y aplicar lo aprendido.” [sic].

(Participant 4 EC – text 2, academic written life story, October 2017)

**Excerpt 26**

E2kr14 Bien, no, es muy fácil, sí, fácil de entender, o sea, es que tampoco, no tiene nada de raro.

¿Qué recursos prefieres del ambiente tradicional y del híbrido o blended?

E2kr21 Con la plataforma porque es más cómoda y porque igual ahí hora el tema de la internet y

E2kr22 esas cosas, para uno de joven es más amigable, sí, es más cómodo,

( Participant 5 KR– text 3, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

**Ethics behind blended learning.** This subcategory refers to some ethical aspects emerging from data about online platforms use and the purpose is to unveil what is behind blended learning in terms of ethics. It seems weird the association of the two terms, ICTs and ethics because the former seems to be linked only to machines, however they are close related. The dictionary
Merriam-Webster defines ethics as “the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation”. In this manner, participants of this study observed, from the ethical perspective, some actions involved in the use of online platforms.

A participant expressed that transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one is difficult for some learners; thus, attitudes of easiness, lack of honesty and responsibility emerge. Some causes of those attitudes are lack of time and interest to learn English because priorities for them are the subjects related to their degree, and English is an imposition as a requirement for graduation (excerpts 27).

**Excerpt 27**

E2kr31 Sí, yo creo que es más falta de interés, antes que todo es falta de interés y pues no valorar
E2kr32 lo bueno que es aprender inglés, lo necesario, ahorita. Y de hecho conocí acá un chico
E2kr33 que mandaba a hacer las plataformas y era por falta de interés porque yo no creo que sea
E2kr34 por tiempo. A la final el plazo que nos dio era imposible decir no tengo tiempo de hacerlo
E2kr35 porque no, o sea, no era una excusa válida. Es falta de interés.

(Participant 5 KR– text 2, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

Mishra (2010) considers internet has positive as well as negatives aspects. It provides many sources of information but people may commit plagiarism and fraud among other actions. Ochoa and Roberto (2011) found in their study that some learners forged their identities on the internet or made other people to work on their assignments. On this respect, committing fraud through online platforms seemed not only easier but also necessary for participants. This was because of time, interest, and a need for social ties in analogous settings (excerpt 28). Even when students were not aware of it, they preferred to devote more time to their families and indirectly justify fraud. It seems to be a cultural activity that has been naturalized inner academic institutions and among students in this knowledge society.
Excerpt 28

E2ec39… la persona que viva cien
E2ec310 por ciento ocupada laboralmente que tenga poco tiempo con la familia, entonces le toca a
E2ec311 uno muy pesado, entonces se puede prestar o se puede interpretar para que se busque una
E2ec312 tercera persona para que le haga esos trabajos virtuales.

(Participant 4 EC– text 2, semi-structured interview, October 2017)

Actually, some external factors might influence these types of behavior, for instance, mass media and famous people from society. On one hand, in television people, children, watch soup operas, in which heroes are the ones who commit crimes, reality shows in which competition is the main objective, movies in which violence is the principal component, cartoons where the characters behave in irreverent manners.

In short, what learners do in the academic context and mainly in online platforms might be influenced by deep seated tenets from home but with a strong influence on external patterns in society thus according to learners’ characters and personalities they assume some postures in their behaviors.
Chapter 5

Conclusions

This research study was developed to answer the question: what do EFL university students’ academic experiences reveal about their transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one? I also proposed some objectives aimed at responding the aforementioned question. The general objective was to understand EFL university students’ academic life stories regarding their experiences in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one. The specific objective was to comprehend English university students’ journey in the transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one.

After analyzing data, three categories emerged: genesis of the teaching process, critical voices around EFL and digital technology, and transition from Stone Age to knowledge society. From these categories arose some sub-categories, too. These categories and sub-categories were relevant to answer the research question.
The first category, genesis of the teaching process has three subcategories namely, teacher’s role in traditional environments, resources in traditional environments, finally, perceptions and feelings in a traditional learning process. Regarding the first sub-category, teacher’s role in traditional environments, I can conclude that learners’ attitudes and progress in class depend highly on teachers. It is because whether a teacher plans a creative class, it might lead learners to have positive attitudes to the lesson. Conversely, if a teacher does not prepare the class or the activities planned are not interesting for students they may have negative attitudes and feelings during the learning process.

Based on learners’ narratives related to the second sub-category, resources in traditional environments, I can conclude that learners’ perceptions about EFL books might vary depending whether they are digital natives or immigrants. People who were born since 1990 and are in contact with ICTs, named by Prensky (2001) digital natives, consider EFL traditional resources as boring, old fashioned because they have been in contact with new technologies since they were born. Conversely, digital immigrants consider traditional resources are interesting nevertheless, due to the arrival of ICTs feel there are other tools more innovative, modern and related to this knowledge society, which captivated them more than the traditional books.

Perceptions and feelings in a traditional learning process is the third sub-category evidenced from data. Considering students’ narratives, it could be concluded that motivation depends on learners’ interests for the disciplinary subject, in this case English. When learners like the English class, they participate and enjoy what is proposed; thus, they have an intrinsic motivation. In contrast, an extrinsic motivation is observable due to the fact students attend to the English course only because it is a requirement for graduation, thus they show low interest and participation during the learning process. Nevertheless, both types of motivation coexist in the academic
context, therefore they emerge according to the internal and external factors which might influence individuals.

Regarding the aforementioned sub-category, feedback is important in the learning process because many doubts emerge from students. Bellon & Blank (1991) who claimed that academic feedback is a teaching behavior strongly related to achievement that might improve learner’s enthusiasm and confidence when learning support this idea. Some teachers in traditional environment usually omit feedback and do not pay attention to students’ learning process; hence, some feelings of demotivation and lack of interest arise.

The second category has three subcategories namely, social presence in the knowledge society, didactics in online platforms, as well as advantages and disadvantages of online platforms. In regards to the first sub-category, social presence in the knowledge society, it can be concluded that learners who work in blended learning environments need to be in contact with their teacher and interact through the available technology tools and resources specifically designed for that purpose, it means, social presence. Whether it happens, learners will experience positive emotions as satisfaction and tranquility. Conversely, when teachers are not accompanying the process, learners might feel loneliness and frustration in that learning environment.

Concerning the second sub-category, didactics in online platforms, students’ narratives let me conclude that online platforms should be designed with readings, videos and activities close related to learners’ likes and interests, for instance, entertainment, sport, biographies of famous people. Those types of contents may engage and captivate students in the learning process. Besides, the online platform should have topics more realistic and practical that learners can use when interact in daily conversations, face-to-face or on social webs and in other contexts.
Another conclusion of the abovementioned sub-category entails the fact that students have their own particular learning styles, hence online platforms designers should create some activities, interface and features taking into account Gardner’s multiple intelligences; linguistic, logical mathematical, musical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal and naturalist intelligences. Some online platforms base their didactic strategies exclusively on repetitive grammar or vocabulary exercises, which seem to repeat the activities found in a textbook with the unique difference that learners have to type instead of writing with a pencil. Learners require varied activities with dynamic and challenging exercises that ignite their curiosity and interest.

The third sub-category occurred in this study has to do with advantages and disadvantages of online platforms. Learners’ narratives let me conclude regarding advantages, that online platforms were useful to manage their own learning, to do assignment turned enjoyable, their interest increased in the learning process and they observed progress in some language skills. Learners felt they became more responsible and autonomous, and their relation with teachers and classmates increased.

A conclusion regarding online platforms disadvantages for learners has to do with the access to computers and internet service in rural areas where some students live and there is no contact with the web. I might disclose that inclusion to new learning trends like blended learning requires also specific traits in terms of location.

It might also be concluded that planned obsolescence affects directly learners who take courses on blended learning. It occurs because learners have to buy technological equipment to do their assignments but those devices are “short-shelf life media” (Pesce, 2016); hence they have to invest money frequently to be updated. Nevertheless, some institutions focus their attention on the
results and grades students get, rather than paying attention to those socio-economic issues and trying to identify what implications convey the implementation of new methodologies that entails technological resources.

Another conclusion appearing in the previous category has to do with lack of maintenance in the online platforms. When technical problems are frequent in online platforms, it conveys learners feel uncomfortable because they are not able to do their assignments. Consequently, some learners wean the online platform with some feelings of frustration, anger and disappointment. Besides, pupils associate those technical problems with learning a foreign language and it creates some perceptions of complexity in the process of learning a language without realizing that those are exclusively technical problems.

The third category, transition from Stone Age to knowledge society has three subcategories; digital exile, identity in the knowledge society and ethics behind blended learning. Data resulted from participants’ voices in this category and the analysis provided in this section might be the major contribution to this research because few studies have been conducted in this respect.

With respect to the first subcategory, digital exile, learner’s narratives let me conclude that learners who know how to work with ICTs consider these tools useful and interesting but students who are not competent in the use of them react negatively to their usage. Training for both learners and teachers is relevant when a blended course is implemented because there are some technological aspects that might hinder the achievement of academic goals. Winfrey (1999) declares that a positive reaction might not guarantee learning; however, a negative one unquestionably diminishes its possibility.

Other trait learners’ narratives revealed in this sub-category refer to social presence in blended learning. Thus, I conclude that learners are highly dependent on teachers in both learning
environments, traditional and blended. Lack of feedback and support from teachers arise unfavorable students’ feelings and perceptions. Teacher’s support allows learners to solve their doubts in terms of technological and language aspects, consequently, students become more confident and encouraged in the learning process. In short, to diminish learners’ difficulties in the adaptation from traditional environment to a blended one, social presence from a tutor is necessary.

The second subcategory, identity in the knowledge society, reveals an important aspect related to age in blended learning environments. Based on learners’ narratives I can determine that students have built their identities as learners according to their experiences in past, in the traditional environment, as well in present, in blended learning, and the expectations as learners in future. In consequence, learners who are digital immigrants, it means people who were born before 1990, see themselves as learners who need to adapt (themselves) to this information society in the academic milieu through knowledge of new technological tools, methodologies and roles, among other traits. As for digital immigrants, who were born after 1990, they see themselves as learners who belong to knowledge society. Thereby, adaptation to new trends in ICTs in the academic context becomes a natural process that is easier to carry out.

Learners’ experiences let me conclude that motivation also depends on students’ interests for English subject and knowledge about the use of online platforms. On one hand, learners who like studying English as a foreign language identify themselves as independent and autonomous learners, hence exists an intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, students who do not like studying English identify themselves as dependent learners who do the activities because they can get outcomes. In this case, those learners take English classes because it is a requirement for graduation therefore their commitment with the leaning process is low.
Regarding the third sub-category, ethics behind blended learning, narratives from learners let me conclude that online platforms are easy to be developed by people who are not taking the EFL course, on behalf of a student. Some reasons might cause this behavior. Firstly, lack of interest in the EFL class due to internal factors related to learners’ identities or external factors such as family, work, or academic work. Secondly, learners also revealed that lack of time is a cause that might relate to the above phenomenon. Nevertheless, learners themselves criticize that kind of situations and do not justify them.

To conclude about ethics behind blended learning, some external factors might influence learners to commit fraud or plagiarism. One of these factors may be mass media and its shows loaded of violence, crimes, competitiveness and bad manners. Another aspect has to do with famous people behaviors; in addition, misunderstanding phrases such as “malicia indígena”. All these external factors may ignite or justify learners’ bad attitudes and actions in the academic context.

Having dissected EFL university students’ experiences in three moments of their academic lives, it means, before, during and their expectations about learning English in a blended learning environment in future, the research objectives can be accomplished. Thus, it is observable learners in their transition from a learning environment to another have passed for a period of adaptation. Some learners have adapted more easily than others regarding some aspects such as: their individual skills and interest in ICTs, either if they are digital immigrants or digital natives, skills in language and their interest on it, dependence on teachers’ support, attitude and intrinsic or extrinsic motivation.

Being a teacher - researcher gave me the opportunity to see the educational context from edges, learners and teachers. It is interesting because as a researcher I could hear learners’ voice, the
voice I do not hear in my role as a teacher. In addition, I reflected whether I have not given learners the chance to express their feelings and perceptions in the academic process.

**Implications for Further Pedagogical and Research Practice**

Through this study, I have evidenced the importance of life stories, narratives and experiences as source to do research. Furthermore, these ones are important to know in depth what is happening in educational context, at least in this study. In spite of their salience, learners’ voice in the academic context is not heard because likely we have historically the genes from traditional learning in which teacher is authority and the one who leads the learning and teaching process due to his or her experience and learners are not allowed to help in that construction of education. Some feelings, perceptions that underlay on each student are hidden and just some of them take the risk to talk and let their voices to be heard. Therefore, I consider this research was relevant to hear that voice and let students reveal what they feel and let their identity emerge without any restriction.

For that reason, we as teachers should think that our “raw material” is a human being who needs our support and guidance. We as teachers are involved in learners’ experiences therefore we are connected to their past, present and future. It means that our experience in past with our learners may generate on them future decisions that can trace their lives in the academic environment and perhaps in other aspects of their lives.

Another implication more related to the role of an EFL teacher has to do with the fact that I should re-evaluate my methodologies and didactics. After analyzing learning academic life stories, I identified myself with some aspects students perceived as unfavorable to their learning process. I reflect and think that maybe it is because at times we as teachers are framed on some methodologies, techniques or strategies and do not search for more even if we know that learners
are changing and society too but we are the ones who insist in teaching with the same tools we have taught for a long time.

Memorization and repetition exercises are learning strategies generating students’ unfavorable perceptions about traditional learning environments. It is because students feel this methodology is boring and does not bring about any challenge. Besides, grammar focus, which is a trend some teachers were and are fond of, is not enough to captivate learners nowadays therefore the teaching process should require other methodologies more appropriate due to their learning styles.

Regarding blended learning environment, I found quite interesting the ethical component in Khan’s framework. In fact, it is relevant for this research because ethics in ICTs has not been studied in depth. This component should be studied much more in our society that needs precisely change some negative thoughts and principles that are rooted in many of our citizens because we have been absorbed by globalization and consumerism and we have set values aside some values, which really evidence our idiosyncrasy and culture.

As teachers, we should reflect on our role in the classroom as well as how our learners’ experiences could influence their future attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, we have to plan the face-to-face classes, integrate online activities and facilitate the blend considering our students’ needs and skills. Native technology learners like to be active in class and become part of the construction on their knowledge, so, as facilitators, it is essential that teachers foster and develop students’ creativity motivating them to materialize what they have learnt through digital content. Thus, the more students participate in the process, the more they learn.

**Limitations**

The first limitation in this study was time. It was because I had just two face-to-face hours weekly. Hence, I met with the participants of this research every week. When I was carrying out
the semi-structures interviews, I used to tell them to answer the questions after finishing the classes but some of them could not help me because they had other classes. Thus, I had to find some moments, after several times, in which we could meet to do the interviews.

Another limitation was participant’s availability in this study because some of them could not continue with the research due to their personal, academic, and work affairs. Consequently, I had to find others who wanted to help me and had time to participate in the writing of their academic life stories and the semi-structured interviews.

**Future research**

Taking into account the results of this study, I would like to propose the following research question that might be useful for future research:

What do EFL teachers narratives reveal about their transition from traditional learning environments to a blended one?

It is because narratives are important to know individuals’ experiences in past, present and expectations in future. Hence, as in this study, academic learners’ life stories revealed important aspects related to blended learning environment, a research focused on teachers might show also some interesting results which may contribute to the field of applied linguistics and ICTs.
References


Appendix A

Sample of the Narrative frame for Students

Academic life stories

El primer texto consiste en relatar su experiencia en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés antes de
utilizar las plataformas virtuales, cualquier dispositivo móvil o internet. Es decir, cuando tenían
clases únicamente con el profesor en el salón de clases y probablemente la grabadora o el
televisor. Sería interesante que escribieran sobre la experiencia en cuanto al aspecto
metodológico, de recursos o materiales de trabajo, los sentimientos y emociones que genera ese
ambiente de aprendizaje, la relación con los profesores y compañeros, los valores éticos que se
reflejan, los logros en cuanto a la parte cognitiva, y otros aspectos que considere relevantes.

El segundo texto consiste en relatar sobre su experiencia en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés
desde el primer momento en que empezó a tener las clases con el ambiente de aprendizaje híbrido,
en inglés, Blended Learning, en el cual un 50% de las clases es de manera presencial y el otro 50% de forma virtual mediante las plataformas online. Hacer énfasis en cómo sintieron la transición o cambio de un ambiente de aprendizaje a otro. Sería interesante que escribieran sobre la experiencia en cuanto al aspecto metodológico, de recursos o materiales de trabajo, los sentimientos y emociones que generan ese ambiente de aprendizaje, la relación con los profesores y compañeros, los valores éticos que se reflejan, los logros en cuanto a la parte cognitiva, y otros aspectos que considere relevantes.

El tercer texto consiste en escribir acerca de sus expectativas sobre el aprendizaje del inglés en un futuro, mediante el ambiente de aprendizaje híbrido, (Blended Learning), en el cual un 50% de las clases es de manera presencial y el otro 50% de forma virtual. Sería interesante que escribieran sobre la experiencia en cuanto al aspecto metodológico, de recursos o materiales de trabajo, los sentimientos y emociones que generan ese ambiente de aprendizaje, la relación con los profesores y compañeros, los valores éticos que se reflejan, los logros en cuanto a la parte cognitiva, y otros aspectos que considere relevantes.
Appendix B
Consent Form

Consentimiento Informado

Queridos estudiantes:

Mi nombre es Alejandro Munar, soy estudiante de la Maestría Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés de la Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas y estoy realizando una investigación sobre las narrativas que surgen de los estudiantes con respecto a la metodología mixta (blended learning) es decir, plataformas virtuales y clases presenciales. Para ello se hace necesario que un grupo de estudiantes de esta universidad, participe en diversas actividades direccionadas desde la clase de inglés con el fin de analizar dichas narrativas y así poder encontrar hallazgos que sean útiles para poder dar respuesta a la pregunta de investigación.
Por lo expuesto anteriormente, me dirijo a ustedes para solicitarles su consentimiento para que puedan hacer parte de dicho estudio. La información suministrada es confidencial y con fines académicos únicamente.

Muchas gracias,

Atentamente;

____________________
Alejandro Munar

_____ Doy el consentimiento  __________ No doy el consentimiento

___________________  __________________
Nombre  Firma
STUDENTS’ EXPERIENCES IN BLENDED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: 93
Appendix C

Entrevista semi-estructurada

Después de revisar las narrativas sobre sus experiencias académicas, hay ciertos aspectos que me llamaron la atención y quisiera por favor que pudiera contestar las siguientes preguntas con respecto a estas experiencia en el aprendizaje del inglés.

En el aprendizaje del inglés en el ambiente tradicional, es decir antes de aprender con plataformas online:

1. ¿El profesor hablaba en inglés o en español?
2. ¿El profesor era siempre el que hablaba y ustedes lo escuchaban?
3. ¿El profesor les explicaba las dudas que tenían durante el proceso?
4. ¿la clase se centraba en hacer ejercicios de gramática, o también se hacían actividades de escucha y habla como presentaciones en inglés, diálogos?
5. ¿Cómo te sentías aprendiendo mediante esta metodología?

En el aprendizaje del inglés en el ambiente híbrido o blended learning, es decir clases presenciales y trabajo con las plataformas online:

1. ¿Cuál fue el impacto de cambiar de un ambiente tradicional a uno híbrido, o blended?
2. Natalia ¿Por qué se te hizo complicado de trabajar en los textos físicos a plataformas virtuales?
3. ¿Consideras que el trabajo virtual se presta para que las actividades sean realizadas por personas diferentes a las titulares de los cursos? ¿Por qué?
4. ¿Por qué crees que hay personas que no hacen a conciencia los ejercicios?
5. ¿Qué factores influyen para que las personas no hagan los ejercicios de las plataformas?
6. ¿Qué se podría hacer para que las personas que no tienen acceso a internet en las casas pudieran llevar a cabo las actividades online?

7. ¿Cuándo desarrollas las actividades online en algún momento tienes dudas en cuanto a lo tecnológico y/o académico? ¿Crees que se necesita un tutor que acompañe el proceso?

Expectativas a futuro con el aprendizaje del inglés en el ambiente híbrido o blended learning es decir clases presenciales y trabajo con las plataformas online:

1. ¿Consideras que las instrucciones de las plataformas para realizar los ejercicios online deberían ser más claras y menos complicadas, ¿por qué?

2. ¿Si llegase a ser mejor diseñada la plataforma se podría reducir la desonestidad en la realización de las actividades online? ¿Por qué?

3. ¿Qué características añadirías o cambiarías en la plataforma online para aprender mejor con ellas?

4. ¿Qué ayudas utilizarías para la realización de las actividades en un ambiente blended?

5. ¿Qué se podría implementar para evitar que algunos de los estudiantes manden hacer las actividades de la plataforma?