

## ENCOURAGING COLLABORATIVE INTERACTION IN EFL LEARNERS WITH VIDEO ROLE-PLAYS

### MOTIVANDO LA INTERACCIÓN COLABORATIVA EN ESTUDIANTES DE ILE CON VÍDEOS REPRESENTATIVOS

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#### **Abstract:**

This case study has focused on implementing active learning strategies in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) higher education classroom to promote the enhancement of communicative, collaborative and ICT skills, which are specifically contextualised by learners when creating situational video role-plays adapted to their professional fields: Social Work and Telecommunications Engineering. Fifty-two video role-plays, created by teams, were examined after having planned the methodology, the competences and the evaluation criteria to succeed in the performance of this oral task. The findings reveal that students' interactions, field contexts, and needs have been improved by adapting learning to within and without communicative class scenarios (ubiquitous learning) that, on occasions, have been supported by ICT.

**Keywords:** Collaborative ubiquitous learning, EFL, ICT, motivation, video role-plays.

#### **Resumen:**

Este estudio se centra en la implementación de estrategias activas de aprendizaje en el aula de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (ILE) de educación superior para mejorar las habilidades comunicativas, colaborativas y digitales que contextualizan los propios estudiantes a la hora de crear vídeos representativos (role-plays) adaptados a su ámbito profesional: Trabajo Social e Ingeniería de Telecomunicaciones. Tras planificar la metodología, las competencias y los criterios de evaluación asociados con esta tarea oral, se analizaron cincuenta y dos vídeos. Los resultados demuestran que las interacciones entre los estudiantes, los contextos especializados y sus necesidades han mejorado el proceso de aprendizaje a través de escenarios que suceden dentro y fuera del aula (aprendizaje ubicuo), y que, con frecuencia, se apoyan de las TIC.

**Palabras clave:** Aprendizaje colaborativo ubicuo, ILE, motivación, TIC, video role-plays.

## Introduction

The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) has established to share common approaches in European tertiary institutions so that qualifications could be standardised among the participating countries (Font-Mayolas & Masferrer, 2010; Middlehurst & Teixeira, 2012). Accordingly, EHEA programmes have especially focused on individual and team abilities the learner can perform during their degrees so that tasks can respond to the competences assessed. There has been a significant pedagogical movement to respond to these goals as it is the case of increasing the number of self-regulated activities and cooperative and collaborative learning tasks that underline the importance of providing constant feedback to ensure the continuous assessment model (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Díaz-Méndez & Gummesson, 2012). Once Spanish universities began to personalise their programmes to the minimum standards proposed by the Bologna Process, the adaptation is still a work in progress. It regularly requires role changes between students and instructors, innovative pedagogical strategies, revision and transformation of learning methodologies, adequate tasks and assessment criteria (Barrio et al., 2015; Cañado, 2012; Crespo-Fernández, 2013; Espinosa Martín, 2014; Martínez-Lirola & Crespo-Fernández, 2013).

It is a fact that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a communicative ability promoted worldwide (Pennycook, 1995; Smith, 2015). Most native Spanish tertiary education learners are encouraged to succeed in the adequate performance of EFL skills when understanding and communicating messages in English (García-Sánchez, 2012; Goodwin et al., 2015; Martín-Santana & García-Sánchez, 2014; Vurdien, 2013). The current educational transformation we are living in ought to address the combination of knowledge building, communication, and ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) competences, so that higher education participants use some technological resources to create, share, and produce their knowledge acquisition and their critical thoughts by means of satisfactory language competence and ICT skills.

Based on active learning methods, this study focuses on engaging EFL students to communicate knowledge by means of creating video role-plays. This task provides participants with the enhancement of several competences: creativity, interaction, teamwork, organisation, planning, delivering, video recording, use of ICT tools, and use of the English language adapted to their professional fields. The research questions of this study, therefore, are:

1. Can video role-plays enhance communicative, collaborative and ICT skills in EFL higher education learners?
2. What are the implications/strategies used to build an EFL video role-play in a ubiquitous learning environment?

## Literature review: Active learning in higher education

There has been a considerable number of scholars, who have applied active learning strategies in higher education communities in order to foster responsibility and independent learning by means of student response systems (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; García-Sánchez, 2014). Moreover, some researchers have insisted on increasing the number of class debates, oral presentations, cooperative and collaborative learning activities to improve not only the acquisition of new knowledge but students' critical thinking, oral interaction and therefore, their learning results (Balsam & Tomie, 2014; Bygate et al., 2013, García-Sánchez, 2015). This would

imply, on the one hand, responding to students' needs, and, on the other hand, pushing learners to become problem-solvers and more qualified 21<sup>st</sup> century citizens.

Meaningful learning often corresponds with students' intrinsic motivation, which is linked to participants' internal wishes and engaging significant tasks (de Brabander & Martens, 2014) rather than to learners' academic obligations, needs or results (extrinsic motivation). Other experiments intended to assess the ICT ability during the performance of educational team-work tasks have proved to enhance not only the target knowledge and skills, but also, students' motivation, both intrinsically and extrinsically (Dörnyei, 1997, 2001; Kukulska-Hulme, 2012; Huiping & Hornby, 2014; Kim & Pekrum, 2014; Sears & Pai, 2013). It is advantageous to count on technological advances, which can positively provide successful educational-oriented tools for the variety of learning environments one can design for the digital age we are immersed in (Beetham & Sharpe, 2013; Laurillard, 2013).

Implementing collaborative ubiquitous learning environments (CULE) that combine onsite with online tasks anywhere and at any time is equally the subject of much discussion in current research (Burbules, 2009; Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Huang, et al., 2011; Wong et al., 2015). While cooperative learning establishes that a goal is achieved by everyone's similar contribution (an online glossary, for example), collaborative learning implies the sum of different individual co-dependent activities that each team participant will previously do so that they are shared, discussed, merged and organised (García-Sánchez, 2015). Collaborative learning is similar to creating a jigsaw puzzle among different mutually supporting participants who aim to accomplish a common objective (a video role-play with different roles for each member, for instance). Without the responsible participation of each member in the task process, the collaborative puzzle will not be complete. Wang also adds that collaborative learning requires cautious planning, and students' roles need to be specifically defined so that the team goal is achieved (2014, p. 17). A CULE fosters constructive discussions, critical thinking and interactions that often entail accessing online information, sharing multimedia content and building knowledge from any place and at any time due to an Internet connection. Present students' use of mobile devices for learning purposes has changed the traditional space of the classroom for a more participatory and creative ubiquitous learning environment that allows the tablet, the mobile phone or the laptop to serve the community with access to global information, exchange of views and knowledge, and the creation of multimedia materials, for instance.

Ogata and Yano (2004) have identified five characteristics of ubiquitous learning, often supported by technological tools and Wi-Fi connection: permanency, accessibility, immediacy, interactivity and situated instructional activities. These flexible features need to correspond with adequate resources and tasks that should go beyond the educational institution. Ubiquitous learning is, therefore, a conceptualisation that no longer separates divisions such as work/game or access to/creation of information, for instance (Burbules, 2009; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). A CULE further knowledge acquisition when adding activities that happen outside the classroom, either individually or in groups, on a face-to-face format or in connection with the blended learning community when posting, sharing, exchanging or building information. Ubiquitous learners are contributors of knowledge, which is shaped inside and outside the walls of a classroom (Hofer & Owings-Swan, 2005; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). Ubiquitous learners are used to activities that would answer their needs, to immediate and constant access to information, and to frequent peer-to-peer interaction that will happen in various onsite and online spaces.

Because ubiquitous learning is a current pedagogical approach focused on the learner, the course design should add innovative learning strategies that link knowledge with competences and assessment (Bachman, 2002; Cañado, 2012; Lizzio & Wilson, 2013). This fusion of knowledge

building, competences and evaluation would result in allowing learners to participate in self-regulated learning, and in cooperative and collaborative learning both online and in class.

#### *Guiding students with video role-plays*

The use of role-plays in the EFL classroom has been a common practice among instructors in order to enhance a variety of language skills that allow students to be closer to the foreign language environment (Aliakbari & Jamalvandi, 2010; Sasaki, 1998; Wright, 1980). The creation and design of role-playing participate in active learning methodologies that equally encourage the communicative competence (CC), motivation and collaborative learning abilities. Role-plays provide small teams with opportunities to exchange information discuss options and reflect on the meaning they are both building and performing. The central objective of a video role-play is the combination of social language function, purpose and use to construct meaningful situations that may also respond to adequate pronunciation and satisfactory performance of the sociolinguistic context generated. Moreover, if role-plays, created and acted out by small teams, are shared with the rest of the educational community, the results can be supportive since students can learn from other real-life situations and their language in use.

In an EFL collaborative ubiquitous learning environment, video role-plays are significantly relevant since students are creating unique pieces of work that would include the setting and the protagonists, the story and the dialogues, and the conclusion or the solution to a problem/situation. With video role-plays, learners are deliberately performing the scenes a few times until they finally feel satisfied with their product (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). They are shaping language forms, lexical structures, sentences and intonation patterns in their dialogues, while other peers can play their video and learn from the content produced.

The hypothesis of this research states that planned and customised video role-plays will promote confidence, motivation, EFL language performance, and group interactions while students are preparing their collaborative work. The video role-play could improve current learners' motivation since specific situations can be satisfactorily recorded, shared and played all over again until students see their professional or real-life scenarios projected (Burenkova et al., 2015; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Furthermore, the appropriate use of video role-plays cannot only enhance creativity and space for building self-assurance, but it can also promote the necessary interaction among the team members, inside and outside the classroom (Hwang et al., 2008). With the design and production of the video role-play, learners are engaged in exchanging arguments, knowledge, patterns and opinions that would help to shape the final settings they all previously agreed to perform. This experiential picture serves to facilitate EFL communicative skills, which would pursue interaction, collaboration, a combination of human resources (interpersonal and intrapersonal skills), real life situations and technology for the creation of students' exclusive role-plays. The ICT-based video role-play should, therefore, be set in a collaborative ubiquitous learning environment that happens anywhere and at any time that suits the group. Besides, to successfully design this task, learners should be provided not only with the instructions and the tools but also with the rubrics for the assessment so that they can meet the goals of the proposed activity.

## Methodology

This research met the challenge of integrating some active learning methodologies, set in a collaborative ubiquitous learning environment (CULE) in higher education, for two contextualised groups attending different degrees: the Degree in Social Work and the Degree in Telecommunications Engineering at the Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain. The EFL subjects of this study consisted of six European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which comprised a full semester of fifteen weeks, sixty face-to-face hours and ninety outside hours of independent, cooperative and collaborative work. These two subjects combined general language skills (EFL) with the compulsory field content of their professional background (English for Specific Purposes, ESP): Social Work and Telecommunications Engineering.

There were two groups corresponding to two different academic years (2013-2014; 2014-2015) in “English Applied to Social Work” (EASW). A total number of 163 EASW students (81 in the first year + 82 in the second), whose age was between 19 and 54, took part in this research. After the positive pilot experience in Social Work, the video role-play task was implemented in the telecommunications field in 2015 to conduct this comparative analysis. In the case of the compulsory subject “Communicative Competences in English” (CCE), offered in the fourth year of the Degree in Telecommunications Engineering, there was one group of 50 students during the year 2014-2015.

The Action Research method was the analytical framework of this study (Elliot, 1991). The data were coded and explored by means of a reasoned qualitative and quantitative methodology that observed students’ behaviours and their active learning progress while performing communicative, linguistic, collaborative, and ICT skills (inside and outside class) during the design, development and production of their video role-plays. A short anonymous survey of three questions was administered at the end of these courses to determine significant details about students’ reflections regarding their learning strategies and product outcomes.

## Design of the collaborative ULE

The video role-play was the task that responded to anticipating possible problems students might have faced in their professional fields, being Social Work and Telecommunications Engineering, or in any real-life context that they could have encountered in the future using EFL. The additional components in this research were the ICT skills, which students were performing when creating their video, and the collaborative abilities to produce their video with their team, and exchange their work with the rest of participants by means of the course forum designed for this purpose.

It is important to address that the instructions set for the role-play task were linked to the academic oral presentation each group had to deliver in class. This formal communication was based on a core topic of the course (EASW or CCE) selected by the established teams. Every day 2-3 groups of 4-5 students each delivered their formal presentation in class in 10-12 minutes (2-3 minutes per person), followed by a brief video role-play (3-5 minutes) that they would play immediately after ending their academic presentation. The research content of their synchronous communication was combined with the creative video role-play, which shared the same core topic (i.e. Child Protection). While the presentation was supported by a combination of programmes and formats (*PowerPoint*, *Prezi* or a poster), the role-play was recorded on a video clip, and posted on the course platform only after learners had presented their work in the classroom first. There was an intentional connection between the physical and the online learning environments, in order to promote interaction and reflection, and peer-to-peer constructive feedback among teams (ubiquitous learning).

On the day set for the oral tasks, the presenting teams would have brought their *PowerPoint/Prezi* presentation, their video and their individual evaluation criteria printed out so that they could complete the self-assessment column for these two oral tasks. Students had access to the evaluation criteria for both, the oral presentation and role-play by downloading the self-assessment documents posted on the course platform in week 5 of the semester (Figure 1). This was a long-term period for students to plan their tasks since they knew that their oral activities would be planned for the 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> week range. The evaluation criteria followed for both oral tasks were explained in class so that learners understood the different items they were meant to accomplish with these two oral exercises, which had a significant value of 20% added to the summative assessment of their courses.

<b>EVALUATION CRITERIA: Role-play (10%)</b>			
		Self	Teacher
Body language	1	_____	_____
Role-play situation + presentation (creativity)	2.5	_____	_____
Fluency & interaction	1	_____	_____
Vocabulary & content	2	_____	_____
Grammar & use of English	2	_____	_____
Pronunciation, intonation	1.5	_____	_____
<b>TOTAL</b>			

Figure 1. Evaluation criteria for the video role-plays.

### Phases

The courses planned for EASW and CCE provided participants with exercises dealing with reading, writing and use of English activities, examples, vocabulary, thoughts, discussions, and reflections. Active onsite contributions and online participation were key actions in the design of these subjects since students were informed of the importance of expressing themselves in English and of understanding each other when providing messages. There was an emphasis on both correct spelling and pronunciation. The use of multimedia material and external links that promoted further critical thinking and the enhancement of English language skills at B1 / B1+ levels were also added to the virtual platform to improve independent, cooperative and collaborative learning. Moreover, the basis of dealing with interaction and communication in EFL were especially conveyed from the first day of the course when students were asked to have an active participation in the lessons and on the *Moodle* platform. The following phases were designed to guide learners during the course.

- Phase 1: An active interactive ULE was established. First, students were given input about the course content, the virtual platform, and its corresponding sections. This input had to do with the EFL language goals together with the ESP content, aims, tasks and assessment criteria. Students knew about the importance of accessing the virtual platform to follow up further practice or to watch new multimedia material. Second, the core content associated with EASW and CCE, and some strategies to improve their communicative skills were offered. Finally, there were also some output exercises by means of dialogues, discussion forums, written exercises and questions happening in the classroom and on the virtual learning environment (VLE).
- Phase 2: Cooperative and collaborative learning methods were fostered to underline the dynamics of teamwork. There was also some ICT training on video production,

examples and resources to access information and on the organisation and delivery of their academic presentations<sup>1</sup>.

- Phase 3: Students were suggested creating their video role-plays by means of using any camera (their Smartphone ones, for example), and by uploading the video to *YouTube*. The video link was then posted on the course platform for the rest of the participants to share the work done. Once posted, constructive feedback among peers would be exchanged, following the rubric indicators.

### *Video Role-plays*

A total number of 40 videos were created by groups of 3-5 students and examined after the two years of this study in EASW. The participants of CCE produced 12 video role-plays in the academic year 2014-15. All the video role-plays shared the *YouTube* platform as an uploading repository. Consequently, the videos were saved as “hidden” instead of “public” so that the *YouTube* link could be limited to the class members and posted on the course platform for further feedback comments. The virtual platforms of EASW and CCE were based on *Moodle* and did not allow massive data documents. This is the reason why *YouTube* was recommended as an external repository for students to register and upload their video role-plays.

The role-plays were meant to produce active learning scenarios among the participants since everyone had to be involved in the video scenes. The instructions presented to produce role-plays indicated that students had to find a situation applied to their specific field or to any other real life context, have a problem and find a solution. Although the edition and recording of the videos happened outside the classroom, students had to share their opinions, organise the tasks and deliver the final achievements as a consolidated team (inside and outside class). Two 50-minute sessions were also offered to the groups of this study so that participants could be guided and work on the design and creation of their role-plays.

## **Results and discussion**

### *Communicative, collaborative and ICT skills*

Despite some differences in EFL language competence, the 52 role-plays analysed have been supported by a previous design of a specific context, adequate dialogues, the performance of explicit roles and the recording of the video. All in all, these learners have dealt with the three considerations of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): understanding, speaking and writing at an intermediate level (B1 / B1+). Following the descriptors of B1 level these students represented experiences and portrayed their own opinions of the topics proposed in their dialogues. The video role-play has also provided participants with the presentation of clear narration and detailed dialogues on a wide range of subjects related to their professional field: Social Work and Telecommunications Engineering (B2 level for spoken production). Although the spoken production and the spoken interaction were the key abilities of the assessment of the video role-play, the results suggest that students have also searched information, written stories, listened to other groups’ role-plays and understood the situations recorded from a range of B1 to B2 levels of CEFR.

<sup>1</sup> Students had access to the flipped session, “A Successful Oral Presentation”, which they could watch as many times as needed, so that some practical work on oral presentation skills (1 minute talk, mock oral presentations) was consequently done in teams in the face-to-face classroom: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6MEirhNh-w>

In order to answer the first research question of this analysis, the findings suggest that the role-play task has improved not only the linguistic and communicative competences of the EFL participants but also their collaborative actions and their immersion in the contextualised learning environment. These results are supported by the following descriptive analysis of the different situations, presented by the EASW and CCE participants.

All these 52 video role-plays have followed a similar format, which predominantly consisted of creating a specific story with unique circumstances, a problem and a solution. One of the outcomes emerging from the role-play task has been the production of creative recordings, which has been developed by the total number of teams. This research has considered creativity the ability to create a unique situation with a specific context, characters, problems, solutions, vocabulary and dialogues that added ICT skills so that the final product had the form of a video. This communicative task has encompassed positions that have made these EFL learners build their confidence in communicating themselves in English while fostering their creative identity with individual, collaborative and ICT abilities (Jeffrey, 2006). Therefore, this creativity has been positively valued as a process that can respond to students' needs by allowing learners to become active knowledge builders when using adequate forms and content language skills adapted to their field contexts (Jeffrey, 2006). What it has not been easy to measure, however, is the level of creativity each group has achieved, compared to others. Likewise, the concept of *ubiquitous creativity* needs to be underlined as a growing outcome since the role-plays (see examples in Figure 2 and Table 1) were shaped after having combined in-class hours with outside work (Banaji et al., 2006, 2010):

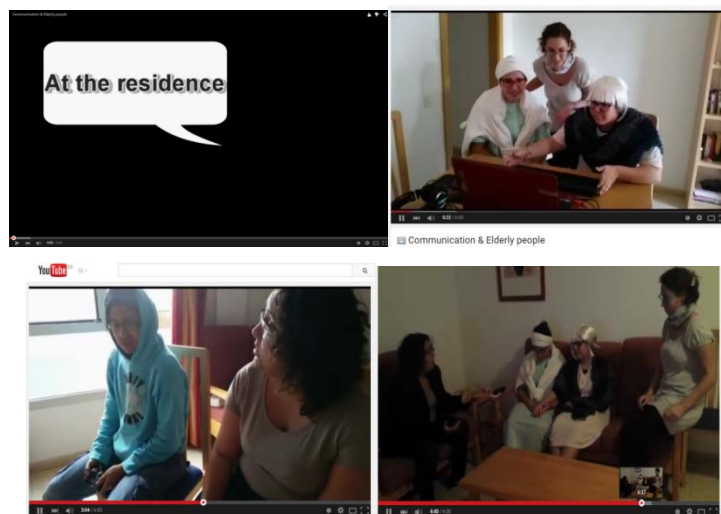



Figure 2. Snapshot samples of a role-play dealing with the elderly in EASW.

Furthermore, the results highlight that the role-play task has allowed these participants to face more real life environments that serve to be practical, cognitive and communicative. The video-role-play has put learners into different forms of verbal and non-verbal behaviour when performing their scenes. Their dialogues, their intonation patterns when using discourse markers, their vocabulary, and their body language have identified transformations they have addressed by mimicking the foreign language (Hinton, 2013).

Regarding the format of the 52 videos, they shared common features such as the use of background music to start and end their videos. They also created different scenes that made the content coherently well delivered. Another characteristic (Table 1) was the enhancement of



their language level, which was mostly expressed during the spoken production at intermediate B1+ (70%) and at advanced B2 (25%) levels of the CEFR. Only a 5% of videos performed at an inferior A2 level with inadequate performance of spoken production, unclear and incomplete messages and lack of body language performance.

CCE role-plays	Sample representation	Common features
1: Which device should I buy?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Background music</li> <li>- Slides to organise video</li> <li>- Audio and visuals are often clear</li> </ul>
2: Broken mobile phone screen		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Different scenarios</li> <li>- EFL /ESP language used (B1-B2)</li> <li>- Application of questions and answers</li> </ul>
3: Job interview		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Appropriate examples</li> </ul>
4: Job interviews in the Middle Ages		

<p>5: Applying for a job</p>		
<p>6: Phone evolution</p>		
<p>7: Job interviews</p>		
<p>8: Job interviews: How to survive the employee selection</p>		
<p>9: Electronic communication in the workplace</p>		
<p>10: The e-learning video debate</p>		
<p>11: English misunderstandings</p>	 <p>Sergeant != Surgeon /'sɑ:dʒənt/ != /'sɜ:dʒən/</p>	
<p>12: Working relationships</p>		

Table 1. Snapshots of the role-plays in CCE and common features they shared.

Regarding the anonymous questionnaire, the results propose that the oral presentation and the video role-play have been considered useful to improve these students' communicative competence by 81% of the respondents, followed by 18% who chose the option "I don't know". Only one student selected "no" as his/her response to this question as seen in Figure 3.

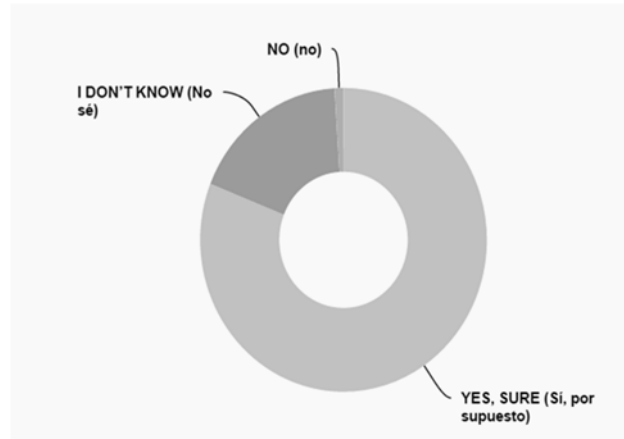


Figure 3. Students' reflection on their CC progress.

The next two questions in the survey had two intentions: 1. to collect data that responded to this research, and 2. to make students reflect on their learning progress once the fifteen-week learning period had concluded. From top to bottom, the answers to question two tentatively put forward that the skills these students thought they had best improved in their EFL courses were especially listening and speaking, which points out that learners felt especially satisfied with some of the language learning strategies (collaborative ubiquitous learning) used to improve their communicative skills. Writing, reading, grammar and vocabulary were all rated as the second sort of skills they best enjoyed, being vocabulary the least satisfactory ability for the majority of participants (98%).

The last question in the anonymous survey asked EASW and CCE students to choose two activities that they had especially enjoyed in the course. The answers of the respondents were various. Interestingly, the highest score (68%) was for the three most voted activities: the video role-play, the oral presentation and the debates. This result, somehow, positively supports a student-centred design as one that seems to be encouraging for learners so that they can express oral messages in English, build their EFL confidence and increase their intrinsic motivation. Using the foreign language in a situation that has been adapted to their professions has been considered a primary competence successfully enjoyed by these learners. These reflections prove that the initial low-confidence most students had to deliver the oral presentation and the video role-play in English has been improved by building interdependent learning teams that have supported each other towards the excitement, motivation, and anxiety of participating in these oral tasks. Compared to other educational systems and cultural backgrounds, understanding Spanish students' anxiety to perform public speaking in EFL is necessary so that the learning design gradually becomes a comfortable, interactive and competence-based scenario (Huiping & Hornby, 2014). Building an intrinsically-motivating environment from the beginning of the courses certainly helps students to grow their confident levels, their teamwork and, therefore, their EFL interactive turns (Wu et al., 2011). In this line, Kukulska-Hulme (2012) also demonstrated that higher education should integrate the advances in technology with the learners' future professions so that their motivational attitudes and job

performance needs can be addressed and responded during their learning process. Likewise, Burenkova et al. (2015) addressed how role-playing can increase students' motivation and their active participation in their learning process. The video role-play has served for these purposes since it has encouraged the performance of cognitive and non-cognitive abilities adapted to the context of Social Work and Telecommunications Engineering.

#### *Implications / strategies behind building a video role-play in EFL*

The findings report that the design of the video role-play has allowed these higher education learners to develop active learning strategies that have positively contributed in the development of their creative personality. Accordingly, not only the foreign language skills and the communicative competence have been rehearsed and improved while designing these video role-plays but the core competences that encourage lifelong learning (autonomy, collaboration and ICT skills) have been performed in these collaborative ubiquitous learning scenarios. The outcomes propose that the learning strategies that have addressed the combination of cognitive skills, team performance, and communicative competence have been successfully implemented with the adequate use of ICT tools to record and post their videos.

It can be argued that these 52 video role-plays have followed the goals promoted by a collaborative ubiquitous learning environment. Participants have had to make interdependent connections to build meaning at the time of forming the scenes (a problem and a solution to the situations created) and while writing and performing the dialogues, which, on most occasions, needed for specific vocabulary of their specialty and frequent (inside / outside) interactions. These interactions happened in a ubiquitous learning environment as learners participated in face-to-face meetings, online interactions and online coordination arranged out of the teaching hours. Secondly, although a challenge for the vast majority of respondents, for either their low confidence in their oral language skills or, at a minor level, their ICT competence, learners have felt highly motivated to produce, collaboratively, significant work that improved their foreign language skills applied to their professions. Third, critical and creative thinking has been proposed in the instructional design of the task and in the peer-to-peer feedback they have discussed online by following the recommended rubric for this purpose. Teams gave and received feedback of the video role-plays in class and on the *Moodle* platform, addressing the importance or originality of the topic, the language performance or the fun / relevant context created. As Kalantzis and Cope (2012) have claimed, a reflective practice should be promoted in present learning methodologies so that participants have the opportunity to look into their learning process, and learn from higher standards. This constructive feedback experience contributed to enhance this reflection.

It is also suggested that individual learning progress has been achieved in this study. EASW and CCE teams somehow have been interdependent on the work of each member first and on the interactions of the team to succeed in this interactive task, while working collaboratively. The linguistic competence of this collaborative learning task describes extraordinary performances in the vast majority of scenarios. Students have paid attention to building specific field content, to interacting with each other by means of dialogues and the creation of different scenes (at home, at the workplace, at school, in the street, in a prison cell), and to acting the different roles with the right costumes and performance. Furthermore, most videos added a video title, some special effects and background music while communicating their messages in the foreign language (see Table 1).

To sum up, the 52 role-plays focused on specific topics needed by these two specialties (Social Work and Telecommunications Engineering). A score of 94% of role-plays demonstrated the responsible contribution shaped individually and collaboratively by team participants, since team coordination, individual role performance and interaction were achieved to complete this

task. The role-play was regarded as a creative task that promoted critical thinking about current topics in 96% of the cases with examples dealing with communication, the elderly, job interviews for Telecommunications Engineering, tips to control your body language in a job interview or how to integrate inmates from a Social Work perspective. The video role-play has significantly demanded a great load of preparation, revision and delivery, which have resulted in higher proficiency levels compared to the oral presentation.

## Conclusions

This article has presented a specific collaborative ubiquitous learning environment (CULE) designed for students in the Degrees of Social Work and Telecommunications Engineering. They were enrolled in an EFL course as part of their Degree so that special attention to the interactive task of the video role-play in order to enhance their communicative competence, their teamwork abilities and their ICT skills have been described in this study. These learners have benefited from suitable technological resources combined with communicative skills and contextualised collaborative learning scenarios. The final goal of exchanging meaningful messages in English, once a professional or real-life situation applied to their context has been set and solved, has been the focal outcome of this case study. Accordingly, the video role-play has been reported as a motivating task that promotes not only EFL but ESP contents, communication in the foreign language, digital skills, and collaboration among participants.

Students' response to this CULE has pursued to merge ICT competences and the creation of their EFL knowledge. Finally, active learning methodologies (ubiquitous learning, collaborative learning, interactive learning) report that there must be a coherent correspondence between instructions, competences, continuous assessment and learning products in order to have a more participatory, critical and reflective educational community. To this study, collaborative ubiquitous learning has served to foster motivation and EFL interaction by means of video role-plays.

The task of the video role-play has supported the reality of these future social workers and telecommunications engineers, who are leading their positions as active participants of their study programmes. Likewise, the data underline that a CULE encourages instructors to be careful designers of content, tasks and assessment criteria that correspond with the adequate performance of general, nuclear and specific competences of their courses (Katz, 2013; Race, 2014). The use of contextualised ubiquitous learning environments together with the practice of communicative, collaborative EFL learning tasks that are adapted to learners' realities have become the right equation to foster independent learning, collaborative learning, ICT skills, and interaction, which are strongly promoted by The European Higher Education Area.

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