



THE ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH COMMUNICATION
SKILLS THROUGH A CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM
TO THE UNITED STATES AS A TRAINING STRATEGY FOR
A TOURISM AND HOTEL MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONAL

Presented by

ANGIE CATHERINE RODRÍGUEZ

Professor

GUILLERMO IGNACIO CAPERA

ADMINISTRACIÓN TURÍSTICA Y HOTELERA

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA Y TECNOLÓGICA DE COLOMBIA

DUITAMA BOYACÁ.

2016.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to first thank my parents, Flor Marina and Hernando; also, my siblings and all my family, for their incredible support during my project. Even though it was not easy to be away from them, they gave me the strength I needed when I moved abroad for the very first time.

I would also like to thank to my host family, who welcomed me as a part of their family, and always took care of me. For their patience and understanding, and the amazing experiences we shared throughout this exchange program. Katherine, Benjamin, Sam and Elaina will always be in my heart.

I would like to thank Shane McGrotty for his love and companionship throughout this process. Having your courage and motivation was very important for me. When I felt overwhelmed, you were always there to help me out in any way you could, thank you.

Finally, the completion of this project could not have been possible without the assistance of Professor Guillermo Capera, who directed my path throughout this venture.

Thank you so much everyone!

Table of contents.

INTRODUCTION.....	1
OBJECTIVES	4
General	4
Specific:.....	4
CHAPTER 1	6
CULTURAL IMMERSION.....	6
1. Definition of Cultural immersion.	6
1.2 Globalization.	8
1.3 Exchanges Programs.	11
1.4 Student Exchange Program	12
Year-long exchange:	13
1.5 Short- Stay Exchange.	13
1.6 Au pair program	14
ACHIEVING A TOTAL IMMERSION IN AN ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRY AS A STRATEGY TO LEARN AND IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH SKILLS.	16
1.7. STAGES.....	16
1.7.1 Before traveling.	16
1.7.2 Trip to United States.....	17
1.7.3 Living with a host family	18
1.7.4 Meeting locals and participants of the program alike. ...	19
1.7.5 Learning the language	19
1.7.6 Studying the language at an Institute or University.	20
1.7.7 Traveling	21

CHAPTER 2.....	22
THE LEARNING OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE THROUGH AND EXCHANGE PROGRAM.....	22
2. CLASSES TAKEN AT AN INSTITUTE OR UNIVERSITY.....	22
2.1 Bridge College.....	23
2.2 Colorado School of English.....	26
CHAPTER 3.....	28
LEARNING EVERY DAY IN DIFFERENT SCENARIOS.....	28
Justification.....	28
Objectives.....	29
General.....	29
Specifics.....	29
Methodology.....	30
Results.....	32
3.1 Gender.....	32
3.2 Age.....	32
3.3 Time spent within the program.....	32
3.4 Amount of years spent studying English before traveling to the USA.....	33
3.5 Major strength in the English language before traveling to the USA.....	33
3.6 The way participants feel about their English skills during their first few months (1-3 months) in the USA.....	34
3.7 Amount of time needed to learn the language.....	34
3.8 Tools used to learn the language besides speaking to natives.....	34
3.9 Amount of time used to study English by their own means.....	35

3.10	Situations that best describe the participants regarding to the will to speak their home language.....	35
3.11	Does speaking their home language affects the learning of the English language?.....	36
3.12	Recommending to live abroad as a way to improve a language	37
3.13	Survey’s Conclusions.....	38
CHAPTER 4.....		41
GETTING TO KNOW BOULDER COLORADO.....		41
4.	Boulder Colorado	41
4.1	History	43
4.1.1	Gold seekers.	43
4.1.2	Hippie movement.....	44
4.1.3	Healthy life style and caring about the environment.....	45
4.1.4	Healthy lifestyle timeline in Boulder.	46
4.1.5	What is Boulder known for? Records.	49
4.2	TOURISTC PLACES IN BOULDER.....	52
4.2.1	Pearl Street.....	52
4.2.2	Chautauqua Park.	56
4.2.3.	Boulder Creek Path.....	59
4.2.4	University Of Colorado Cu. Museum Of Natural History. 61	
4.2.5	Brewing Companies.....	63
4.2.6	Flagstaff Mountain.	65
4.2.7	El Dorado Canyon State Park.....	66
4.2.8	Coors Center.....	68
4.2.9	Boulder Trail System.....	71
4.3	EVENTS AND FESTIVALS.....	72

4.3.1 Bolder Boulder.....	73
4.3.2 The farmers Market.....	75
4.3.3 Colorado Shakespeare Festival.....	76
4.4 GETTING INVOLVED WITH THE COMMUNITY AND CULTURE.	78
4.4.1 Roger Briggs.....	83
4.4.2 An interview with Roger Briggs.	84
4.4.3 Considerations from the author.....	85
CONCLUSIONS	
RECOMMENDATIONS	
REFERENCES	
ANNEXES	

TABLE OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- ILLUSTRATION 1. ANGIE RODRIGUEZ IN FRONT OF THE CAPITOL, DENVER COLORADO, FEBRUARY 2015
- ILLUSTRATION 2. AU PAIR CLASS IN COLORADO STATE CAPITOL, DENVER COLORADO.
- ILLUSTRATION 3. THE FLATIRONS AT SUNRISE. SOURCE, SNOW BRAINS. OCTOBER, 2015
- ILLUSTRATION 4. AT THE END OF THE RACE AT FOLSOM FIELD.
- ILLUSTRATION 5. SPECTACLES ARE COMMON ON PEARL STREET.
- ILLUSTRATION 6. COURT HOUSE ON PEARL STREET.
- ILLUSTRATION 7. THE BUFFALO, SYMBOL OF COLORADO UNIVERSITY
- ILLUSTRATION 8. WELCOME TO CHAUTAUQUA.
- ILLUSTRATION 9. PEOPLE HIKING AT CHAUTAUQUA, SEPTEMBER 2016
- ILLUSTRATION 10. CHAUTAUQUA DINING HALL. FLATIRON AT THE BACKGROUND.
- ILLUSTRATION 11. VIEW FROM CARPENTER PARK IN BOULDER CREEK PATH*
- ILLUSTRATION 12. BOULDER CREEK PATH IN AN AUTUMN DAY
- ILLUSTRATION 13. RACCOON MOVING AROUND BOULDER CREEK PATH
- ILLUSTRATION 14. STONE BALANCE BY ARTIST MICHAEL GRAB, BOULDER NATIVE. AT THE BOULDER CREEK FESTIVAL, MAY 2015
- ILLUSTRATION 15. BECOMING BUTTERFLIES. EXPOSITION HOLD BY MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, COLORADO UNIVERSITY, OCTOBER 2016*
- ILLUSTRATION 16. PIECES AT THE MUSEUM
- ILLUSTRATION 17. AVERY COMPANY. OPENED IN 2015, BEING TODAY ONE OF THE MOST VISITED PLACES IN BOULDER, PICTURE SOURCE, AVERY BREWING COMPANY.
- ILLUSTRATION 18. ENJOYING A BEER WITH SOME AU PAIRS AT AVERY BREWING COMPANY
- ILLUSTRATION 19. FLAGSTAFF MOUNTAIN ON WINTER.
- ILLUSTRATION 20. VIEW FROM THE CLIMBER'S ACCESS TRAIL TO THE RED GARDEN WALL. RETRIEVED FROM [HTTPS://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/ELDORADO_CANYON_STATE_PARK](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eldorado_Canyon_State_Park).
- ILLUSTRATION 21 UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO. MARCHING BAND AT A BUFFALO'S GAME
- ILLUSTRATION 22 THE BUFFALO IS AN IMPORTANT TRADITION FOR BOULDERITES. WHEN THERE IS A GAME, AT THE BEGINNING OF IT THE STAFF RELEASE A BUFFALO, WHILE ALL PEOPLE IS CHEERING UP. SEPTEMBER 201

ILLUSTRATION 23 CLIMBING ROCKS IN SAINTAS TRAIL WHICH IS ONE OF THE FAVORITES IN TOWN.

ILLUSTRATION 24 RED ROCKS A POPULAR PLACE TO VISIT. NEARBY MOUNTAIN SANITAS TRAIL. AUGUST 2016.

ILLUSTRATION 25. ENJOYING THE ENTERTAINMENT ALONG THE WAY. BOLDER BOULDER

ILLUSTRATION 26 PEOPLE CHEERING UP THE RUNNERS. IT IS OFTEN TO SEE FUNNY MESSAGES THROUGHOUT THE RACE. "CYCLING IS BETTER AND BEER IS BEST".

ILLUSTRATION 27 VEGETABLES IN THE FARMERS MARKET. SEPTEMBER 2016

ILLUSTRATION 28. COLORADO UNIVERSITY. DIGITAL IMAGE. RETRIEVED FROM [HTTP://WWW.COLORADO.EDU/THEATREDANCE/SITES/DEFAULT/FILES/STYLES/LARGE/PUBLIC/PAGE/SUPERMOON.JPG?ITOK=7V8HQU-T](http://www.colorado.edu/theatre/dance/sites/default/files/styles/large/public/page/supermoon.jpg?itok=7v8HQU-T)

ILLUSTRATION 29. CLIMBING WITH FRIENDS AT MOVEMENT CLIMBING AND FITNESS. BOULDER COLORADO, 2016

ILLUSTRATION 30. . ANGIE RODRIGUEZ AND ASHIMA SHIRAISHI WHO IS KNOWN FOR BEING ONE OF THE STRONGEST YOUNG CLIMBERS -MALE OR FEMALE- OF ALL TIME. DENVER COLORADO, 2016.

ILLUSTRATION 31. PHOTO WITH TOMMY CALDWELL WHO IS ONE OF THE BEST CLIMBERS AROUND THE WORLD AND A COLORADAN NATIVE. BOULDER COLORADO, 2016.

ILLUSTRATION 32. ROGER BRIGGS, PORTRAIT MADE FOR BOB CHARMICHAEL. RETRIEVED FROM [HTTP://BOBCARMICHAEL.COM/TAG/ROGER-BRIGGS-JOURNEY-TO-CIVILIZATION-THE-SCIENCE-OF-HOW-WE-GOT-HERE/](http://BOBCARMICHAEL.COM/TAG/ROGER-BRIGGS-JOURNEY-TO-CIVILIZATION-THE-SCIENCE-OF-HOW-WE-GOT-HERE/)

ILLUSTRATION 33. SET OF WAG BAGS ARE CONSTANTLY LEFT IN THE TRAILS. BASICALLY IF CLIMBERS AND PEOPLE IN GENERAL, LIKE TO SPEND TIME OUTDOORS, THEY ALSO HAVE TO MAKE SURE NOT TO LEAVE TRACE, WHICH MEANS PICK UP THEIR FECAL REMAINS.

ILLUSTRATION 34. SOME OF THE SIGNS LEFT TO AWARE THE HIKERS AND CLIMBERS ABOUT THE TRAIL PROJECTS

ILLUSTRATION 35. ILLUSTRATION 36. VIEW OF THE SECOND FLATIRON

ILLUSTRATION 37. . ROGER BRIGGS (FOUNDER OF THE BOULDER CLIMBING COMMUNITY) AND ANGIE RODRIGUEZ CLIMBING THE THIRD FLATIRON

ILLUSTRATION 38. CLIMBING THE THIRD FLATIRON. PICTURE TAKEN HALF WAY.

ILLUSTRATION 39 . ON THE SUMMIT OF THIRD FLATIRON

TABLE OF FIGURES.

FIGURE 1. AU PAIRS GENDER.

FIGURE 2. AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

FIGURE 3. RESPONDENTS' NATIONALITIES

FIGURE 4. PERCENT OF AU PAIRS THAT ARE OR WERE WITHIN THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

FIGURE 5. PERCENT OF COLOMBIANS THAT ARE OR WERE WITHIN THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

FIGURE 6. PERCENT OF GERMANS THAT ARE OR WERE WITHIN THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

FIGURE 7. PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS FROM DIFFERENT LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES THAT ARE OR WERE WITHIN THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

FIGURE 8. PERCENT OF EUROPEAN RESPONDENTS THAT ARE OR WERE IN THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

FIGURE 9. AMOUNT OF TIME THAT THE RESPONDENTS HAVE LIVED IN THE USA

FIGURE 10. AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT STUDYING ENGLISH BEFORE TRAVELING TO THE US

FIGURE 11. AMOUNT OF TIME THAT COLOMBIANS RESPONDENTS SPENT STUDYING ENGLISH BEFORE TRAVELING TO THE US

FIGURE 12. AMOUNT OF TIME THAT GERMAN RESPONDENTS SPENT STUDYING ENGLISH BEFORE TRAVELING TO THE US

FIGURE 13. AMOUNT OF TIME THAT RESPONDENTS FROM LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES SPENT STUDYING ENGLISH BEFORE TRAVELING TO THE US.

FIGURE 14. AMOUNT OF TIME THAT EUROPEAN RESPONDENTS SPENT STUDYING ENGLISH BEFORE TRAVELING TO THE US

FIGURE 15. MAJOR STRENGTHS GAINED IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE BEFORE TRAVELING TO THE US

FIGURE 16. STRENGTHS GAINED IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR COLOMBIAN RESPONDENTS BEFORE TRAVELING TO THE US.

FIGURE 17. STRENGTHS THAT GERMAN RESPONDENTS GAINED IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE BEFORE TRAVELING TO THE US

FIGURE 19. STRENGTHS THAT EUROPEAN RESPONDENTS GAINED IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE BEFORE TRAVELING TO THE US.

FIGURE 20. ABILITY TO FUNCTION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE DURING THE

FIGURE 21. ABILITY TO FUNCTION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE DURING THE FIRST MONTHS.

FIGURE 22. CONFRONTING QUESTION 7 VS 8 FOR COLOMBIAN RESPONDENTS

FIGURE 23. ABILITY TO FUNCTION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE DURING THE FIRST MONTHS

FIGURE 24. ABILITY TO FUNCTION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE DURING THE FIRST MONTHS.

FIGURE 25. ABILITY TO FUNCTION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE DURING THE FIRST MONTHS

FIGURE 26. PERIOD OF TIME NEEDED TO IMPROVE OR LEARN ENGLISH

FIGURE 27. PERIOD OF TIME THAT COLOMBIANS NEEDED TO LEARN OR IMPROVE ENGLISH.

FIGURE 28. PERIOD OF TIME THAT GERMANS NEEDED TO LEARN OR IMPROVE ENGLISH

FIGURE 29. PERIOD OF TIME THAT RESPONDENTS FROM LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES NEEDED TO LEARN OR IMPROVE THEIR ENGLISH.

FIGURE 30. PERIOD OF TIME THAT EUROPEAN RESPONDENTS NEEDED TO LEARN OR IMPROVE THEIR ENGLISH.

FIGURE 31. LEARNING TOOLS USED BY THE PARTICIPANTS

FIGURE 32. LEARNING TOOLS USED BY COLOMBIANS

FIGURE 33. LEARNING TOOLS USED BY GERMANS.

FIGURE 34. LEARNING TOOLS USED BY RESPONDENTS FROM LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES.

FIGURE 35. LEARNING TOOLS USED BY EUROPEAN RESPONDENTS

FIGURE 36. TIME SPEND STUDYING ENGLISH BY THEIR OWN MEANS

FIGURE 37. AMOUNT OF HOURS THAT COLOMBIANS SPEND STUDYING ENGLISH BY THEIR OWN MEANS.

FIGURE 38. AMOUNT OF HOURS THAT GERMANS SPEND STUDYING ENGLISH BY THEIR OWN MEANS.

FIGURE 39. AMOUNT OF HOURS SPEND THAT RESPONDENTS FROM LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES SPEND STUDYING ENGLISH BY THEIR OWN MEANS.

FIGURE 40. AMOUNT OF HOURS THAT EUROPEAN RESPONDENTS SPEND STUDYING ENGLISH BY THEIR OWN MEANS.

FIGURE 41. SITUATIONS THAT BEST DESCRIBE THE PARTICIPANTS REGARDING TO THE WILL TO SPEAK THEIR HOME LANGUAGE.

FIGURE 42. SITUATION THAT BEST DESCRIBE COLOMBIANS REGARDING TO THE WILL TO SPEAK SPANISH.

FIGURE 43. SITUATION THAT BEST DESCRIBE GERMANS REGARDING TO THE WILL TO SPEAK THEIR HOME LANGUAGE

FIGURE 44. SITUATION THAT BEST DESCRIBE RESPONDENTS FOR LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES REGARDING TO THE WILL TO SPEAK THEIR HOME LANGUAGE

FIGURE 45. SITUATIONS THAT BEST DESCRIBE EUROPEAN RESPONDENTS REGARDING TO THEIR WILL TO SPEAK THEIR HOME LANGUAGE

FIGURE 46. OPINION ABOUT THE INFLUENCE GENERATED BY SPEAKING THEIR HOME LANGUAGE

FIGURE 47. INFLUENCE GENERATED BY SPEAKING THEIR HOME LANGUAGE. COLOMBIAN CASE

FIGURE 48. INFLUENCE GENERATED BY SPEAKING THEIR HOME LANGUAGE. GERMAN CASE.

FIGURE 49. INFLUENCE GENERATED BY SPEAKING THEIR HOME LANGUAGE. RESPONDENTS FROM LATIN AMERICAN'S CASE

FIGURE 50. INFLUENCE GENERATED BY SPEAKING THEIR HOME LANGUAGE. EUROPEAN RESPONDENTS' CASE.

FIGURE 51. RESPONDENT'S OPINIONS REGARDING TO RECOMMENDING OTHER PEOPLE TO MOVE TO AN ENGLISH SPEAKING COUNTRY.

INTRODUCTION

The present project is a series of experiences that will be told by the author who decided to get involved within an exchange program, as a way to improve and learn skills in the English language. While at the same time getting involved with a new community, and understanding people's lifestyle. In the process, analyzing the different tourism factors that play a role in the place of residency, since the author is studying Tourism and Hotel management during the process.

Basically there are two big sections in the project: the learning process of the English language, and the study of tourism agents in Boulder Colorado (location where the project took place), while getting involved with the culture at the same time.

In the first chapters, terms such cultural immersion and exchange program will be address, because they are the very basis of the whole project. Getting to understand the importance and the benefits that exchange programs bring to people is crucial in this matter, since simple things like communicating with others becomes a big challenge for someone who is learning a language, studying and making new friends who have a different culture. Learning about American culture and traditions, making people

more tolerant and open minded, and offering at the same time multiple teachings that will remain for a lifetime.

Furthermore, having the opportunity to interact with people from different countries, is a great occasion to research and to understand why some people perform the English language better than others, hence a survey was created to get to know other people's opinions, experiences and their processes to learn English, before, during and after the exchange program. With this data, making comparisons and analyzing the information resulted in the ability to draw conclusions. This part is crucial since a good amount of Colombians were surveyed, thus the results will be focused on their responses. Analyzing their data, and comparing and giving recommendations for those who are interested in learning a language abroad.

On the other hand, the second part is more related to the tourism and culture; studying the attractions that Boulder Colorado has to offer to tourists, while searching from different sources, and interviewing people which enriches the study about Boulder and its lifestyle culture.

Boulder Colorado is a special place in so many ways. It will be shown by giving a quick glance at its history and the way the city has evolved over the last few decades. Including the economic changes, the revolution of outdoor activities in a caring

environmentally conscious town, which has won many awards because of its efforts to conserve its natural landscapes and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Undoubtedly, all these characteristics make Boulder an interesting place to study and live in, and a perfect place for a person who is developing within an exchange program.

To sum up, living abroad gives someone a great opportunity to learn new things, to experience, to travel to enjoy life in different ways, to progress, to be more critical, etc. This will be demonstrated in every chapter, where learning opportunities will be explored from different scenarios.

OBJECTIVES

General

To acquire skills in English language through a cultural exchange as an competitiveness strategy for the Tourism and hotel management professional

Specific:

- To achieve a total immersion in an English-speaking country as a strategy to learn and improve one's English skills.
- Complementing the learning of the English language by assisting to a university or college, while establishing communication with local people.
- Analyzing the process to learn English when living abroad, creating a survey that permits to collect information and to

study different factors from the participants within the exchange program

- Establishing an interaction with local culture, offering opportunities for exchange of knowledge and, learning from participation in different scenarios and activities.
- Knowing and consulting different information sources about the tourism and cultural heritage of the place of residence, to achieve a learning experience that strengthens the knowledge acquired as a student of Tourism and Hotel Management.

CHAPTER 1

CULTURAL IMMERSION

1. Definition of Cultural immersion.

It is defined as individual exposure to persons or groups markedly different in culture (ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and/or physical exception) from that of the person initiating the exchange. (Indie volunteer, 2012)

The immediate objectives of a cultural immersion program can be to:

- a) To have direct contact with people who are culturally different from oneself in a real life setting which represents the target group's "turf"
- b) To gain insights into circumstances and characteristics of the focal community
- c) To experience what it is to be very different from most of the people one is around.

d) To gain insight into one's values, biases, and affective responses.

Cultural immersion seems to be one of the phenomes of fast growing in this century, USA's former president declared "No one who has lived through the second half of the 20th century could possibly be blind to the enormous impact of exchange programs on the future of countries..." (Clinton, 1993).

In the same way some other presidents of United States expressed:

"There is a flickering spark in us all which, if struck at just the right age...can light the rest of our lives, elevating our ideals, deepening our tolerance and sharpening our appetite for knowledge about the rest of the world. Educational and cultural exchanges...provide a perfect opportunity for this precious spark to grow, making us more sensitive and wiser international citizens through our careers". (Reagan, 1982)

"Only by knowing and understanding each other's experiences can we find common ground on which we can examine and resolve our differences....As the world becomes more and more interdependent, such mutual understanding becomes increasingly vital." (Carter, 1977).

"The spirit of seeking understanding through personal contact with people of other nations and other cultures deserves the respect and support of all." (Ford, 1976).

Accordingly to the last statements, it can be said that cultural immersion is something that has called the attention of nations as way to improve the destiny of a whole country, by giving the right tools to the young people who are the ones that will work, live and make it flourish. All that will happen by the right understanding of cultures, understanding that people can be different in many ways, but always similar in one way: human beings living on earth.

In this context is necessary to talk about this term that has been going on for a while, globalization, which will be explained in the next paragraph.

1.2 Globalization.

“Globalization is the process in which people, ideas and goods spread throughout the world, spurring more interaction and integration between the world's cultures, governments and economies”. (Techtarget, 2016)

“The worldwide movement toward economic, financial, trade, and communications integration. Globalization implies the opening of local and nationalistic perspectives to a broader outlook of an interconnected and interdependent world with free transfer of capital, goods, and services across national frontiers. However, it does not include unhindered movement of labor and, as suggested by some economists, may hurt smaller or fragile economies if applied indiscriminately.” (Business dictionary , n.d.)

As it is well known globalization is a term that people uses frequently to talk about economy, technological and industry growth. This project will be focused mostly in the part related to cultural experiences, where boundaries are starting to open to show their cultures to other people, and how it can interfere in the well-being of the persons involved and the nations themselves. Nevertheless theories and thinkers declared that globalization could damage the inner culture of some fragile communities as indigenous.

Globalization is not easily defined. For some, it is a positive process leading to shared social values worldwide. For others, the term has a negative meaning, and critics see it as marginalizing less dominant cultures, particularly those in the developing world. Some critics refer to it as the "McDonaldization" of culture, due to

global advertising campaigns that undermine cultural diversity.
(Kenzie, n.d.)

In contrast to the last idea, as it was mentioned before, this part will focus on the benefits or “good side” that globalization may offer itself. Yi Wang, Harbin Engineering University, China in his study “Globalization Enhances Cultural Identity”, points out:

In the new era of globalization, people become much more concerned about the uniqueness and particularity of their own culture. Cultural identity provides the global significance of local knowledge and the sense of self, community and nation. To point that cultural identity answers the questions of “Who am I?”, “Where are we going?” and “What do we have?” Since people construct their identities through their cultures, they will defend them. Actually, globalization brings much more awareness of cultural identity than before.

The same author also says: Advocates of Antiglobalization view globalization as homogenization. In fact, globalization is not simply homogenization; on the contrary, it enhances cultural identity. First, People are not mere objects of cultural influences, but subjects who can reject or integrate culture. Besides, with the development of science and technology, people are closer than before. The sense of “togetherness” brought with globalization is not at all in conflict with diversity...Cultural identity provides the

global significance of local knowledge and the sense of self, community and nation. In terms of science, technology and economic development, globalization reflects somewhat the theory of convergence and hegemonic control, but in deeper sense, it promotes cultural identity. (Wang, 2007).

Globalization is always controversial. But certainly it can be confirmed that thanks to this process or phenomenon, countries are starting to create different opportunities such as international exchanges. In this way people can open up their eyes and see the different ways things can be done, from the basic things (that sometimes are the most important) like shopping, studying, raising a child, feeding habits, citizen culture and so on. And from there, decide what is best. Many people won't realize how good their home food is until they move to another country where it can't be found. Hence the people involved will care much more about it, as a result they will try to preserve it, or at least be more aware about the importance of it.

1.3 Exchanges Programs.

Currently there are many exchanges programs around the world with different purposes and goals, length, requirements etc. In the next part some exchanges programs will be explained with an

emphasis especially on the one this project took place, which is a cultural exchange program called au pair.

1.4 Student Exchange Program

This kind of program is one of the most common exchange programs, it can be experienced for students in different scenarios such as high school, college, Master's Degree etc.

1) Exchange students are usually students in high school or post-secondary systems of education who leave their home countries to spend anywhere between a few weeks and an entire year within a foreign country. During this time, most must attempt to learn a new language and thus experience the culture through the means of direct application. (Exchange student world, 2016).

2) The term "exchange" means that a partner institution accepts a student, but does not necessarily mean that the students have to find a counterpart from the other institution with whom to exchange. Exchange students live with a host family or in a designated place such as a hostel, an apartment, or a student lodging. Student exchanges became popular after World War II,

and are intended to increase the participants' understanding and tolerance of other cultures, as well as improving their language skills and broadening their social horizons. (wikipedia, 2016).

Year-long exchange: Most of the year-long exchange companies offer the choice between a semester program (half-year) and the full-year exchange, so we can umbrella semester long exchanges under “exchange student,” as well. However, I will say that the cultural and language experience gained from a half-year program is not the same as a year-long. There’s an emotional and language-learning arc you get over a year that you just can’t cram into six months. (High School Exchange Insider, 2011)

The same website also defines the short Stay-Exchange.

1.5 Short- Stay Exchange.

Short-stay exchange operates a lot like year long exchange, but on a shorter time frame. There are organizations that specialize in short-stay — one month to three months — and there are the larger exchange companies that also offer short-stay options. Often these programs are summer programs and do not involve a local immersion school element, because of the time constraints. Two

incarnations of this: boarding school language program in-country and host-family cultural experience.

These programs are most often taken by college-aged students.

Facts:

The most recent IIE data indicate that 57 percent of all study abroad students in 2009–2010 engaged in short-term programs (eight weeks or less), another 39 percent engaged in mid-length programs (a semester or less), and only 4 percent participated in long-term programs (an academic year or longer). (IEE, 2011).

1.6 Au pair program

As I was mentioned above the present project was developed within this program. Considering the last information, au pair is a year long exchange program since the person can be part of it for one year, at least in United States, (in another countries the au pair can stay for shorter periods of time). Also the participant can decide if extend for a period of 6 months, 9 months or one more year.

An au pair is an unmarried young adult aged 18 to 30 years, who has no children and travels to a foreign country for a defined

period of time to live with a host family. The au pair is considered as a full member of the family during the entire stay. As such, he or she helps the family with childcare and can be asked to assume some light household tasks. In return, the host family provides free board and lodging, as well as pocket money. The main purpose of the au pair placement is a cultural exchange, which gives the au pair an opportunity to improve his or her language skills. For this reason child minding in your own country doesn't count as an au pair stay. The au pair should also attend a language course in the host country. He or she should, however, have some basic language skills beforehand. (au pair world, n.d.).

Au pair in America an agency that offers this program also defines: ““On par" or "equal" in French, is a term for a child care provider who lives with a host family as part of an international cultural exchange program.

Au pairs and EduCare companions are typically young international visitors who travel to the United States on a J-1 Visitor Exchange Visa to acquire a better understanding and appreciation of American life while living with an American family and caring for their young children.

Colombia has different agencies that offer this program to many countries around the world. Among the companies that offer it,

there are: cultural care, au pair in America, au pair care, Go au pair etc.

ACHIEVING A TOTAL IMMERSION IN AN ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRY AS A STRATEGY TO LEARN AND IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH SKILLS.

1.7. STAGES.

1.7.1 Before traveling.

For this process, the agency Interytur was the chosen one, which links to Eur au pair¹, which is located in United States. The candidate for the program must meet some characteristics in order to get into the program. For one thing, being a good driver and have both a Colombian driver license and an international one, is crucial. Thus, because most of Americans have a car and they use it on a daily basis. Secondly, having experience working with kids, or having skills in the field is certainly necessary. Moreover, having certain skills like playing an instrument, being good at any

¹ See annexes. Annex N1.

sport, speak multiple languages, and being a good cook etc., could be a plus, since it is an cultural exchange, and the more you know the more appealing your profile becomes.

Once the candidate meet the expected requirements and the skills on the foreign language, the next step is to make an agreement between the agency and participant. The first one is to make a compromise to help the au pair to find a host family, following the process, before, during and after the program is over, while serving as a legal platform for visa application, in this case J-1.

The Exchange Visitor (J) non-immigrant visa category is for individuals approved to participate in work-and study-based exchange visitor programs. (J1 visa Exchange program, n.d.)

1.7.2 Trip to United States.

The trip took place in January 2015. Before meeting the host family, it is important to have an introduction about the program. In this way, the first week of the program is executed in New York City, where participants of the program must assist to a workshop.

Workshop in New York: the length of this workshop is one week and the main purpose is to introduce the participants of the program to the new culture, which involves first of all, get to know different aspects about American culture, childcare information,

getting to know participants from another countries, creating at the same time an exchange cultural space, visiting important and touristic places in New York, which is one the most important cities in the world and center of business.

1.7.3 Living with a host family

Living and sharing with a host family is one of the most important things within the program. The first months could be challenging since both sides are getting used to a new situation, where they have to live together and to share common spaces, having the language barrier most of the times. But, over time they become like your own family. Sharing dinner (In United States dinner is the most important meal during the day, since it is when the family gathers together to talk about the day), going for trips or vacation, planning the week, getting involved to the different activities etc., becomes part of a routine. Also it is very interesting to learn different ways to do things, like feeding habits, interacting with people, shopping and so on.

The program was set up for one year, posteriorly extended to one more year (end of January 2017).

Living with a host family is a very hands-on, no-escape way to learning a language. People enrolled in a university language program get to go home after school and speak their own language.

Not so when living with a host family, which forces you to practice. You'll learn more day-to-day talk with this method rather than the sort in text books and you will form relationships that often continue throughout life. When learning a language abroad, your host family is your family. (Hitchton, 2014).

1.7.4 Meeting locals and participants of the program alike.

Socializing is fundamental for a person who is living abroad. This, because getting adapted to a new culture take some time, and in the process is good to make friends who are going through the same situation, or to meet locals who you can become friends with, and who you can learn from. From the author's experience, having a passion such as climbing was a good way to meet locals, and to get involved with the culture. (This point will be widely address in chapter 4).

Having a social life is necessary, since it enhance the experience itself. Going shopping, traveling, planning a fun weekend, learning about culture, going to the movies, cooking, etc., are some of the activities you can do with friends. And, which will become memories that will last for a lifetime.

1.7.5 Learning the language

While leaving abroad people will feel that they need to learn different aspects of the new culture, and it involves itself the ability of communicating to other people, the people who surround their new environment. Every person is different and so is the process to learn a language, it could be variable depending certainly on the personality of the learner as well. Clearly not learning in a classroom but abroad, where the real life happens may confront the person to a new reality, where the brain has to think and act faster. *“When you learn a language in a classroom, you do so piecemeal. You memorize vocabulary words, do some conversation exercises, and maybe write a few paragraphs. In an immersion environment, you have to speak the language, or else suffer isolation”*. (Rivas, 2016).

Learning the language is a process that takes time, discipline and persistence. It also could be learned in different ways. First, by talking to natives and experiencing the culture. But also, self-study is crucial. Listening to music, watching movies, using apps, reading, and doing research about specific things related to the language, are tools that certainly will help in the process.

1.7.6 Studying the language at an Institute or University.

Even though if the most important part to learn a language is experienced on a daily basis. It is also important to take classes

that will strength the language skills. Furthermore, being in a classroom full of students from all over the world becomes a good opportunity to learn from another background, to break the stereotype about certain cultures, and to understand the way they see the world. (This point will be addressed in chapter N 2).

1.7.7 Traveling

One of the most interesting parts of exchange programs is the opportunity to travel. The United States has a good highway system, which enables the possibilities to make trips to faraway places within a weekend. Sometimes, it is also possible to travel to another States.

Moreover, the country is well known for a lot of National parks. So, these places become a must-do within the experience, since they are icons of the country. Such an examples are the Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls, Rocky Mountain National Park, Yellowstone, and Yosemite. Among hundreds of others state parks, which the participant can find a couple of hours of the place of residency.

For a tourism and hotel management student, this part is fundamental, since he is involved in a learning environment. Where aspects, such as customer service, quality in the services, publicity and so on, are analyzed from a professional perspective.

CHAPTER 2.

THE LEARNING OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE THROUGH AND EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

Living abroad is an incredible opportunity to interact with other people, while learning language and culture. Nevertheless, it is always important to take some time to actually study it, and it can happen in two different ways. First, by taking some time to study by own means, or secondly, by attending a university or institute where a teacher will help in the learning process.

2. CLASSES TAKEN AT AN INSTITUTE OR UNIVERSITY.

The decision on where to study depends on the schedule, place of residence (it is not the same living in a big city such New York compared to a small town with few options around). Around Boulder, there are quite a bit of options between Denver, Longmont, Lafayette, and Westminster which are the closest towns and cities.

To be more precise, Denver, the capital of Colorado offers more options for students with different schedules, which is the reason why most of the people inside the program rather to take this option.

According to the author, the following institutes give some advantages to the students for different reasons, such getting to know the American culture and getting prepared for challenges in the English language, such as different tests that measure the proficiency of the language.

2.1 Bridge College.

Bridge College is located in Denver, and it has been a leader in English language training with around 25 years of experience. They offer different programs such general English, business English, academic English, and also a special program for au pairs, which involves learning about American culture and history. Hence, there are some classes that take place in touristic and historic places like monuments, museums, national parks. This allows students to expand their experiences beyond simply the language.

The history part is very important because from there people can discover the way a culture was developed throughout time. Also,

some different topics of general interest were discussed such as immigration which is a phenomenon that has been happening for a long time in history, but which some countries have had to live with more than others. It is certainly a very interesting place to hear experiences and opinions from another students who had been in both cases, immigrants and just people who had to face the experience of having someone living in their country that has a different culture. Also, because the population of United states converged from many cultures.. *The U.S. immigrant population stood at more than 42.4 million, or 13.3 percent, of the total U.S. population of 318.9 million in 2014, according to ACS data.*² it is a fact, United States is a country created for immigrants and they have been able to live together, with different cultures and traditions. The last was just an example of all the interesting topics that can be debated within a classroom full of students with different nationalities.

²Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States, By Jie Zong and Jeanne Batalova, April 2016.

Illustration 1. Angie Rodriguez in front of the Capitol, Denver Colorado, February 2015



Illustration 2. Au pair class in Colorado State Capitol, Denver Colorado.



2.2 Colorado School of English.

This institute is also located in Denver Colorado, and it offers variety of courses with different schedules in order to fulfill the needs of the students.

In this case, one of the programs that will be explained is “TOELF PREPARATION CLASS”, Toelf is an abbreviation for Test of English as a Foreign Language: a test of English for speakers of other languages.

The TOEFL iBT test measures your ability to use and understand English at the university level. And it evaluates how well you combine your listening, reading, speaking and writing skills to perform academic tasks. More than 30 million people from all over the world have taken the TOEFL® test to demonstrate their English-language proficiency. The average English skill level ranges between Intermediate and Advanced. (ETS, TOELF , n.d.)

These are some of the reasons why people take this test.

- Students planning to study at a higher education institution
- English-language learning program admissions and exit
- Scholarship and certification candidates

- English-language learners who want to track their progress
- Students and workers applying for visas

Taking this test brings many advantages to the students since more than 9,000 universities, agencies and other institutions in over 130 countries accept the TOEFL test, including top universities in Australia, Canada, the UK and the US. (The toelf test advantage , n.d.).

Taking classes with students from different countries is a good experience not just to improve the language, but also to realize, how people can perform the language differently, depending on, most of the times, the nationality. It is a fact that not all people come to the USA with a good level of English, and because of that, they have to sort different situations that may be challenging while learning the language. Also, people have different ways to absorb it, habits, and ways to study, which will influence the learning process within the country.

All these aspects will be addressed in the next pages.

CHAPTER 3

LEARNING EVERY DAY IN DIFFERENT SCENARIOS

Justification.

Learning a language abroad depends mostly on the attitude of the learner, but on the other hand, is also important to analyze other variables that may come from the person's background, such time spent studying the language before moving abroad, strengths gained, study habits etc.

For this reason, it is important to advance an investigation that allows knowing the different characteristics of au pairs. Confronting the information from natives of other countries that are also interested in learning or improving the language. Searching from their experiences, before, during and after the program.

This, because countries have different policies and programs regarding the learning of the English language. And, that at the same time could benefit or affect the participant's experience.

The present investigation will work as a source of information for those who are interested to live overseas, and to know the process participants have to face in order to learn or improve a language.

Objectives.

General

To analyze different characteristics from the au pairs, which may influence the learning process of the English language during the exchange program.

Specifics

- To compare data from au pairs from different countries versus Colombian's respondents data.
- To analyze how the amount of time spent studying English, and the strengths gained before traveling to the United States are important for the further learning, and for the cultural shock experienced at the beginning of the program
- To find out which are the study habits and which tools are used within the learning process of the English language.
- To search out which is the general impression au pairs have about exchange programs and living abroad, regarding to the improvement of the language.

Methodology

The type of research used in the investigation is practical research.³

The data will be collected by surveys. The type of survey used will be *Closed-ended*, which consists in *Questions that are conclusive in nature as they are designed to create data that is easily quantifiable*. (wikipedia, n.d.)

The fact that questions of this type are easy to code makes them particularly useful when trying to prove the statistical significance of a survey's results. Furthermore, the information gained by closed-ended questions allows researchers to categorize respondents into groups based on the options they have selected. (Fluid Surveys, 2013).

In the survey, 14 questions were made, in order to find out different aspects, such as age, nationality, time spent studying the language, amount of time living in the USA, ability to speak the language and time needed for that, among others details.

³ The practical approach consists of the empirical (based on testing or experience) study of the topic under research and chiefly consists of hands on approach. This involves first hand research in the form of questionnaires, surveys, interviews, observations and discussion groups

For this matter 60 people from different countries within the exchange program were surveyed.

Universe: 150 au pairs in the Boulder area.

Sample: 60 au pairs

When the information was collected, two different facts were noticed. First of all, a big amount of the respondents were Colombians which help to the process of analyzing their data, and also the second biggest group was Germans which makes a good exercise to compare Colombian's data versus German's. Also, the information will be separated and analyzed in 4 groups for most of the question, where the data can be examined from different perspectives.

The groups are:

- Colombians.
- Germans.
- From other Latin-American countries.
- From other European countries.

**Note: see all the results and graphs in the Annexes section.
(Annex N 3)**

3. Results.

3.1 Gender

Most of the respondents were female, but in this program it is more common to have males apply from European countries than Latin American countries. (See annexes. Annex N3, question N 1).

3.2 Age

The most popular ages to do the exchange program are 23, 25, 21, 24 and 22 years old. Few respondents were within the following ages: 27, 19, and 20. (See annexes. Annex N 3, question N 2).

3.3 Time spent within the program.

Most of respondents are still within the program. Nevertheless, most of the opinions from former au pairs come from European respondents, which means that they will have consistent opinions in their responses, since they are based on one year experience or even longer. (See annexes. Annex N 3. Questions N 4 and 5)

3.4 Amount of years spent studying English before traveling to the USA.

38% of the Colombian respondents said to study English from 1 to 5 years. While 80 % of the Germans study English during almost their whole life. And 20% of them said at least from 1 to 5 years. None of them said less than one year or to study by their own means, which means that being bilingual in Germany is a priority. (See annexes. Annex N 3. Question N 6).

3.5 Major strength in the English language before traveling to the USA

Analyzing which is the major English skill for the respondents, before traveling to the USA, which includes: reading comprehension, listening, speaking and writing. The main strength for the Colombians is reading comprehension with a 39%. However, the speaking skill is not very developed (11%), nor the capacity to have all of them (7%). On the other hand, 40 % of the German respondents said they were able to perform well all the skills. Also, the 30 % said that their major strength was listening. (See Annexes. Annex N3. Question N 7).

3.6 The way participants feel about their English skills during their first few months (1-3 months) in the USA.

Analyzing how the English was during the first months, 61.7 % of the respondents said they had problems but they improved fast at the same time. On the other hand, the 21.7% of them said to have a hard time with the language and, just a 16.7 % of them said to be fluent. (See annexes. Annex N 3. Question N 8).

3.7 Amount of time needed to learn the language

The 46.6% of the respondents needed between 1 to 3 months to improve their English, also 29.3% of them said it took them between 6 to 12 months. On the other hand, 17.2% said from 6 to 12 months and only the 6.9 % of them said one year or more. To illustrate, most of the Colombians (38%) needed a period between 6 and 12 months to improve their English and, be able to have a fluent conversation, express ideas, and order food in a restaurant etc.). Nevertheless, the 29 % of them spent 3 to 6 months to improve it, whereas just the 19 % needed a year or more. (See annexes. Annex N3. Question N 9).

3.8 Tools used to learn the language besides speaking to natives.

The most popular options to study English are, watching movies (67.8%) since most participants see that as a way to study while

socializing. Also, reading random stuff, books, magazines (39 %). On the other hand, 6.8 % study on different ways, and 8.5 % (most of them said to speak with natives, which mean they did not understand the question quite properly), also the 8.5 % of them do not use any of the options mentioned in the chart. Some of the other options were using apps such duolingo, and watching educational videos. (See annexes. Annex N 3. Question N 10).

3.9 Amount of time used to study English by their own means

This question does not have a strong inclination for any of the options. Still, it can be said that the 33.3% of the respondents said to spend 2 hours per day or more to study English. Nevertheless, 28,3 % of them said to study less than one hour a week which is the lowest amount of time. (See annexes. Annex N 3. Question N 11).

3.10 Situations that best describe the participants regarding to the will to speak their home language.

48.3 % of the respondents said they want to learn the language. But, for them, it is important to communicate with friends who speak their home language, since they feel they can communicate better.

On the other hand, 30 % of them said to make an effort to speak with natives and just fill in with their home language when needed it. Only 21.7 % of them said to avoid speaking their home language as much as possible.

Speaking the home language with friends is very important for most of the respondents, regardless of the nationality. Still, the Colombian respondents seems to have the biggest percentage (62%) out of all the respondents, at the same time Colombians respondents are the less interested to avoid their home language (5%).

(See annexes. Annex N3. Question 12).

3.11 Does speaking their home language affects the learning of the English language?

Even though if the most of the respondents said that they speak their home language with friends (question 12), also most of them think that it slows their ability to learn English (61.7 %). On the other hand, 25 % of them think that it does not matter, and 13.3 % do not know.

Most of the Colombian (67%) think that speaking their home language slows the ability to learn English. Even though, most of them speak their home language with friends (62%), which means that this is a problem in the process. Colombians should try to

make a big effort to reduce the time spent talking in their home language in order to improve their English skills.

(See Annexes. Annex 3. Question 13).

3.12 Recommending to live abroad as a way to improve a language

The 95 % of the respondents would recommend other people moving abroad as a way to improve their English skills. Even though, if some of the participants, struggle at the beginning of the program. Regardless, than for some of them it took them more than one year to be able to perform the language confidently.

This is the question in what most of the groups agree, regardless of nationality and time spent in the country.

(See Annexes. Annex N 3. Question N 14).

3.13 Survey's Conclusions.

- The survey helps to get to know some of the reasons why some people within the exchange programs display better results than others, besides the attitude, one of the major reasons is the previous contact they had with language. Indeed English is the second language for many countries, but some of them (like Germany) make sure that most of the population is able to perform the speaking and listening skills which are the most important when it comes to communicating with English natives.
- The study of the English language in Colombia is more varied compared to other countries like Germany or different European countries, where the study of a second language seems to be a priority and part of their studies throughout their life. Also, it can be predicted that most of the European respondents need to speak English as a way

to travel for the European Union, since it is the most popular language.

- Making a comparison between Colombian respondents and the ones from other Latin American countries, it can be concluded that Colombians are behind the average, where just 24% of them said to study English for their whole life, whereas the 43 % of the others said so. Also, the factors that may interfere in the Colombians respondent's process to learn English before traveling to the US were not cover by the survey, which can be economic, access to education, place of residency etc.
- For Colombians respondents the main strength was reading comprehension so was the same for respondents from another Latin American countries. This is the most developed strength in Latin American, but sadly even though if the population has a contact with a second language, this skill is not the most important when it comes to communicating with English natives. On the other hand, contemplating the speaking skill for Colombians, which is one of the most important in this matter, only 11% of them said to be able to perform it. Even though if 7 % of them

said be able to perform all the skills (reading comprehension, listening, speaking).

- Exchanges programs are made with the purpose to encourage students to improve their language skills. Nevertheless, it seems like even though if the participants have to have a language basis it could vary depending on the nationality, since different countries have different policies and programs for learning a language. As a result, the experience for the participants could conflict as well, depending on those variables. When the participant come with a good basis it will be easier to adapt to the culture and different aspects of it, whereas is the opposite, the experience will depend most likely on the participant's personality.
- The 38 % of Colombians said they needed between 6 -12 months to improve their English, hence the long term exchange programs seem to better fit Colombians. Since most of them have a lack of English speaking and listening skills, which will improve mostly by the experience of living abroad and talking to natives.

CHAPTER 4

GETTING TO KNOW BOULDER COLORADO.

Before starting to talk about interactions with locals and getting to know the place, it is crucial to explain Boulder and its culture since it is a very special and different place. This will be explained in this chapter and the next ones when topics like interacting with the community and culture will be addressed.

4. Boulder Colorado

Boulder is the home rule municipality that is the county seat and the most populous municipality of Boulder County, and the 11th most populous municipality in the U.S. state of Colorado. Boulder is located at the base of the foothills of the Rocky Mountains at an elevation of 5,430 feet (1,655 m) above sea level. The city is 25

miles (40 km) northwest of Denver. The population of the City of Boulder was 97,385 people at the 2010 United States Census, while the population of the Boulder, CO Metropolitan Statistical Area was 294,567. (wikipedia, n.d.)

Boulder has had different periods in history which has changed its culture and the environment, creating at the same time a new concept for the town. In the very beginning the land used to be the place of residence of some indigenous tribes such Arapahos⁴. After that came the gold seekers who established the first non – native settlement, also around 1960 where the hippie movement was a hit in United States, and it had a very special place in Boulder.

Lately the town has become a place for high performance athletes who compete in different areas like climbing, running, and mountain biking who set records around the world. Hence, Boulder is becoming more and more attractive for those who are chasing a healthy life style. Because people want to stay, they also want to create and innovate, and in a place where the cost of living is raising every year, it becomes the perfect place for entrepreneurs.

⁴ *The Arapahoe are a tribe of Native Americans living on the plains of Colorado and Wyoming.*

Boulder is attracting the attraction in the country, Burt Helm in his article *How Boulder became America's startup capital* points out “*Boulder is an entrepreneurial powerhouse like no other. In 2010, the city had six times more high-tech start-ups per capita than the nation's average, according to an August 2013 study by the Kauffman Foundation--and twice as many per capita as runner-up San Jose-Sunnyvale in California*”. The same author also says “*Unemployment is 5.4 percent--almost two points below the national average and a full point below the Federal Reserve's goal for the nation. It is the home to a start-up incubator, Techstars, and a healthy venture capitalist community*”. (Helm, 2014)

All of these features make Boulder and interesting place full of opportunities.

4.1 History

To have a better idea about Boulder, a brief summary of history will be given, highlighting the most important events through the years.

4.1.1 Gold seekers.

Boulder, Colorado was founded by a party of gold seekers who stopped off in October 1858 on their way to the Cherry Creek

diggings. Liking the look of the mountains to the west they began prospecting and struck pay dirt in January 1859. By 1866 Boulder was the gateway to the rich mines in the mountains west of town. (Colorful Colorado towns, 2016). Because of the gold many people moved to Boulder, drawn also for its beautiful landscapes.

4.1.2 Hippie movement

To talk about the hippie movement in Boulder and its repercussions on the culture, some documental information was collected. Because still nowadays it is very important part of Boulder's culture and core alike.

Boulder was transformed by the cultural and political dissidence of the 1960s. It went from being moderately Republican to liberal Democrat. David Hays, archivist at University of Colorado Boulder's Norlin Library, wrote in an unpublished paper that there was "an enormous rise" in the Boulder's population at the time:

"Between 1960 and 1970, the city grew from 37,718 to 66,870, or by 70 percent. By 1975, the estimated population for the city of Boulder was 81,900, an overall increase from 1960 of 44,182, or 117 percent... By 1970, 55 percent of a much larger city were under 24 years of age, split fifty-fifty at age 18. More than a

quarter of the town's population was between 18 and 24. In 1970, the town's median age was 23.5 years.” (Anderson, 2015)

The same author also explains “In June 1972, the Boulder city council discussed the “summer transient problem”the social workers issued a report about the young people coming to Boulder. They could be divided into “transients” and “street people.” The “transients” came from middle class families, stayed in Boulder for about three to four weeks and were “on a road to maturity.” They had more schooling and were younger than the “street people,” who came from poorer families, had become permanent residents of Boulder and were “on a path to selfdestruction.” The report predicted that “the street life question” would persist for some time to come”.

Other important thing to talk about is the way people care about having healthy food and the beginning of it started around this period “The hippie invasion did happen in ’68,” “It was a college town, a beautiful place, and around that time the natural foods movement started here.”⁵

4.1.3 Healthy life style and caring about the environment.

⁵ An Interview to Nancy Geyer, Boulder History museum CEO. Published by the Boulder weekly, “Historical hippies”. September 29, 2011.

There are some interesting facts related to the healthy lifestyle timeline in Boulder. Some of the following facts were taken from “Boulder Colorado USA” website. Some of the information is complemented with some other information sources.

4.1.4 Healthy lifestyle timeline in Boulder.

1898: Boulder sets aside its first land for Open Space at Chautauqua.⁶

1967: Boulder voters are first in the nation to tax themselves to preserve open space within the community. Property which is considered of utmost importance is the mountain land above the Blue Line that forms Boulder’s unique scenic backdrop.” This indicates that the beautiful areas of Boulder that create its unique identity are valued higher than other open space in Boulder.

⁶ An adult education movement featuring lectures, plays, and musical performances; the word is also used for any single organization pursuing this activity. The idea was originated in 1874 in Chautauqua, New York, which lends its name to the format, but was soon copied elsewhere. The Colorado Chautauqua, is one of the few such continuously operating Chautauquas remaining in the United States, and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2006. This Chautauqua was particularly important for the area, because it really began Boulder's parks and open space preservation.

Illustration 3. The flatirons at sunrise. Source, snow brains. October, 2015



This picture shows the area the Boulderites were most concerned about. The uniqueness of the view was the main priority, hence they taxed themselves to keep it.

1969: **Celestial Seasonings** forms, blending wild herbs growing in Boulder into herbal tea. It would become the leading brand of natural teas in North America.

1976: Eco-Cycle makes Boulder one of the first places in the nation with curbside recycling. It would become the largest non-profit re-cycler in the USA.

1979: Bolder Boulder, a 10k road race on Memorial Day, is run for the first time through the streets of Boulder. It would become second largest 10K in the world.

It's a great road race and even though there are really good runners and professionals who train for it, most of the participants do it for fun, and it can become a traditional activity to do with family and friends.

Illustration 4. At the end of the race at Folsom Field.



2000: Boulder's University of Colorado is the first university in the nation to **use renewable energy, powered by wind.**

2005: Boulder's Farmers' Market is the first zero waste event in the USA to occur regularly. Trash cans are removed- everything can be recycled or composted. The U.S. EPA designates Boulder a "Green Power Community," the first in the state of Colorado.

2012: City Council passed an ordinance requiring a 10-cent fee for disposable plastic and paper checkout bags at all grocery stores in Boulder.

2013: The city accelerated a Net-Zero Energy Code, requiring new and remodeled residential and commercial buildings meet net-zero emissions by 2031.

2016: The White House designates Boulder a Climate Action Champion for "outstanding leadership in climate resilience actions and greenhouse gas emissions reductions."

4.1.5 What is Boulder known for? Records.

Boulder is certainly a special place. There are many reasons to say so, from being a college town, to having one the best scenarios to live in, from having some of the best athletes in the country to having a fancy line food.

The following are some of the records that Boulder has achieved over time. This information was taken from *city of Boulder Colorado* website.⁷ Each year Boulder is known for something new, but also there are many years where it keep being selected for the same reasons, hence not all the honors attributed to Boulder

⁷ Best of Boulder, Community honors, retrieved from from Bouldercolorado.gov, searched September 20th, 2016.

will be mentioned, only some of them, in order to continue creating the general idea what is Boulder about, and the following mentions are related to the last couple years.

2016.

The Healthiest Cities in America (#1) - Niche, August 2016

The Best Cities for Entrepreneurs (#1) - Livability, July 2016

The Best Communities for Physical Well-Being (#1) - Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, February 2016

The 10 Most Active Cities in U.S. (#1) - trulia, February 2016

Most Educated Metro Areas in the Nation (#2) - ValuePenguin, March 2016.

2015.

The Best Cities for Outdoor Recreation Enthusiasts (#1) - Storage, Nov. 3, 2015

Top 10 Places to Do Business (#3) - Business Review USA , August 2015

Top 10 Cities in the U.S. for Small Business Friendliness (#9) - Thumbtack , August 2015

Healthiest City in Colorado - USA Today , August 2015

Best Farmers Market in the U.S. - USA Today 10Best, August 201

The Most Fitness-Friendly Cities in America (#1) - Huffpost Healthy Living , July 2, 2015

The 10 Best Cities For Starting A Business In 2015 (#1) - Forbes , April 30, 2015.

2014.

Top 10 Foodie Cities 2014 (#7) - Livability , June 16, 2014.

10Best: Bike-friendly Cities (#2) - USA Today , July 1, 2014

America's Fittest Cities - The Active Times , March 26, 2014

Top 10 Mid-size Communities for Well-being (#2) - Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, March 2014.

The above information serves as a guide to understand a little more about how the culture has been changing in Boulder, and how people take care of their own wellbeing and the place they live in. In conclusion, Boulder is a place where magic happens, and it is often called a “bubble” because everything inside of it is beautiful, most of the people are kind, smart, and manage to have a healthy life style, and they also care about their surroundings. Basically, a very safe and fun place to live in. One of the brand designs for the city was “Beautiful Boulder, come to play, come to stay”. Also,

currently there is this slogan that can be found in different places in the town, “be Boulder”, which means be clean, be fun, be kind, be respectful, and so on; people certainly feel that in order to fit in Boulder, they have to be in that way.

4.2 TOURISTC PLACES IN BOULDER.

4.2.1 Pearl Street.

Pearl Street is located in Downtown Boulder, and it is something that locals feel proud of and tourist can’t skip when visiting. A space where all Boulderites gather to enjoy different pleasures like eating, shopping, enjoying different festivals, night life etc.

Some sources define it:

The brick-paved Pearl Street is Boulder's heart and soul — a central gathering place where locals and visitors alike come to stroll and shop among the historic storefronts, dine at buzzed-about restaurants, sip coffee, throw back a microbrew or simply people-watch. (Boulder Colorado Usa, 2016).

The Pearl Street Mall is a popular destination for tourists visiting Boulder and for students attending the nearby University of

Colorado Boulder. The mall hosts a blend of locally-owned businesses and national chain stores and restaurants. It is also home to much of Boulder's nightlife. During the summer months, Pearl Street Mall is the stage for a number of street performers, including musicians.

The Pearl Street Mall is filled with public art, including numerous fountains and sculptures as well as a sandbox for children, a stylized map of Boulder County and a number of small gardens which are planted with a variety of flowers and trees, most notably tulips in the spring.

The Mall is at the heart of downtown Boulder, in the western part of present-day Boulder. The area is a historic district and many of the buildings are among the oldest in Boulder. The Boulder County Courthouse is located in the 1300 block on the north side of the mall. Although the courthouse no longer houses the actual courts for Boulder County, it remains the seat of county government. (wikipedia , 2016).

Walking on Pearl Street is always a pleasure, and there is often something interesting to see, hear, and to feel. As it was said before, Boulder was an important place when the hippie movement started back in the 60's, and nowadays some of that still remains in the town, hence this, "hippie, easy going vibe gives to Boulder part of its inner essence. As a result people would be able to appreciate

interesting and quite unusual shows such young guys playing this new instrument called Bells, which is a mixed of some eastern countries instruments, the man who knows all the zip codes in United States, a woman reciting poetry, or magic shows among others. Pearl Street is a place where the little ones and adults can have lots of fun in different ways.

Illustration 5. Spectacles are common on Pearl Street.



Illustration 6. Court House on pearl Street.



Illustration 7. The Buffalo, symbol of Colorado University



4.2.2 Chautauqua Park.

Chautauqua Park is a portion of an iconic historic landmark dating back to when the City of Boulder began preserving wild lands over 100 years ago. In 1898, Boulder citizens approved a bond issue to purchase 80 acres to be used as “Chautauqua”. The park land owned by Boulder Parks and Recreation is located adjacent to OSMP (open space mountain parks) trails, Chautauqua Dining Hall and Auditorium, and Chautauqua Ranger Cottage and provides a playground, tennis courts, and open turf.

This meadow-like foothills park is ideal for a lazy afternoon with a book, a family picnic, bird watching, or a vigorous hike on

numerous trails that will suit any skill level. The hiking trails take you into the Flatirons and the Bluebell Shelter or the top of Flagstaff Mountain. A century old community center occupies the middle of the park. Numerous lectures and musical performances are scheduled, including the Colorado Music Festival, which is held each summer. The Royal-Arch and Green Mountain hikes are not-to-be-missed but should only be attempted if you're in good shape, have plenty of water, and have had a few days to acclimate to Boulder's altitude. (Gately, n.d.)

Illustration 8. Welcome to Chautauqua.



Illustration 9. People hiking at Chautauqua, September 2016



Illustration 10. Chautauqua Dining hall. Flatiron at the background.



4.2.3. Boulder Creek Path.

Miles of paved path meander right through the heart of Boulder and are easily accessible to all. Join locals who bike, jog, skate and walk Boulder Creek Path alongside the babbling creek beneath shady old-growth trees for some fresh air and beautiful Boulder views. (Ironman, n.d.)

The Boulder creek path connects many important places in Boulder such the library, the farmers market, and different parks along it. It is also common to see variety of wildlife; among the animals that can be found are squirrels, raccoon, deer, ducks etc.

Illustration 11. View from Carpenter park In Boulder Creek Path



Illustration 12. Boulder Creek Path in an autumn day



Illustration 13. Raccoon moving around Boulder creek path



Illustration 14. Stone Balance by artist Michael Grab, Boulder Native. At the Boulder Creek festival, may 2015



4.2.4 University Of Colorado Cu. Museum Of Natural History.

The Museum is conveniently located in Boulder, on the University of Colorado campus, just off Broadway St. in the Henderson Building, which is next to the University Memorial Center. Museum exhibitions present natural and cultural wonders from Colorado, North America, and the world.

The University Of Colorado Museum Of Natural History is an academic unit of the Graduate School at the University of Colorado Boulder. Their mission is to contribute to the knowledge

of the natural world and human history through research, teaching, and public education.

The Museum's exhibition galleries are open to the public, free of charge, seven days a week and the Museum offers a variety of programs and events throughout the year. (Museum of Natural History , 2016).

Illustration 15. Becoming butterflies. Exposition hold by Museum of Natural History, Colorado University, October 2016



Illustration 16. Pieces at the museum



4.2.5 Brewing Companies

Beer is part of the Boulder's culture. It is actually something that Colorado is known for country wide. *Last year, Colorado ranked fourth in number of breweries and breweries per capita, according to the BA. Another BA report published last year found Colorado ranked No. 5 among states in economic output related to craft beer, at \$1.6 billion, and No. 2 in per capita output for the over-21 population, just behind Oregon. (No other state, it should be noted, cracked the top five on those two economic yardsticks).* (Gorski, 2014)

No trip to Boulder would be complete without a stop in one of their 20 breweries. An example is Avery Brewing's shiny new, open-concept facility where people will get a whole new appreciation for the art of brewing.

Illustration 17. Avery Company. Opened in 2015, being today one of the most visited places in Boulder, Picture source, Avery Brewing company.



Illustration 18. Enjoying a beer with some au pairs at Avery Brewing Company



4.2.6 Flagstaff Mountain.

Flagstaff Mountain offers scenic day and night views of Boulder, Metropolitan Denver, and the surrounding mountains. There are hiking and bike trails, picnic areas, the Summit Nature Center, and an outdoor amphitheater among other things.

The short drive up Flagstaff Road to these trailheads will not only take you into some of Boulder's richest history and natural scenery, but you'll learn about how we are linked to some of our nation's most poignant history, as well. (City of Boulder Colorado, 2016)

When there is no snow, many bikers will bike uphill to enjoy one of the hardest road rides in town. On the other hand, hikers delight themselves with the views that winter offers. Whereas in summer, it is frequented more and the perfect place to hike, bike and have a picnic with great views as well.

Illustration 19. Flagstaff Mountain on winter.



4.2.7 El Dorado Canyon State Park.

Eldorado Canyon State Park is part of the Colorado State Park system. It is located in Boulder County near the city of Boulder. The park consists of two areas, the Inner Canyon (developed area) and Crescent Meadows (undeveloped area). The park encompasses 885 acres (3.6 km²) with a variety of recreation opportunities available. Eldorado Canyon is home to one of the world's most accessible and comprehensive rock climbing areas. This state park is open during daylight hours only, visitors are expected to leave

before dusk. A fee is required for entry, except on Colorado Day (August 1) when all state parks are free.

The biggest draw to Eldorado Canyon State Park is rock climbing. Eldorado Canyon offers over 1000 technical rock climbing routes. The beauty of this canyon also engages the non-climber. Park visitors may hike or mountain bike over some of 11 miles (18 km) of picturesque trails that vary from easy to difficult and reach out to adjoining public lands outside the park. Visitors may also picnic by or fish in scenic South Boulder Creek. In the winter, Eldorado offers hiking and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. (wikipedia, 2016)

Illustration 20. View from the climber's access trail to the Red garden wall.
Retrieved from
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eldorado_Canyon_State_Park.



4.2.8 Coors Center.

The Coors Events Center is an 11,064-seat multi-purpose arena on the Boulder main campus of the University of Colorado. It opened in 1979, and is home to the Colorado Buffaloes men's and women's basketball teams and the volleyball team.

It was formerly called the CU Events/Conference Center and was renamed to the Coors Events/Conference Center in September 1990 after the Coors family in recognition of a \$5 million gift from the Adolph Coors Foundation. In 2008 with the addition of the basketball offices to the building on the service level, the

"Conference" was removed from the name as there were no longer conference rooms in the building.

The building is an eight-sided concrete structure, with three levels. The arena floor, the service level and the concourse level. The building is single-tiered inside. It replaced the Balch Fieldhouse, the current home of the indoor track and field team located directly adjacent to Folsom Field. (wikipedia, 2016).

Sports are very important for Americans, and many people gather to see different sports such American Football, basketball, baseball, volleyball, etc. Any event taking place on the Coors Field or Folsom Field could cause lots of traffic in town. These places are also used for important events such the Bolder Boulder, New Year's Eve etc.

Illustration 21 University of Colorado. Marching Band at a Buffalo's game



Illustration 22 The buffalo is an important tradition for Boulderites. When there is a game, at the beginning of it the staff release a buffalo, while all people is cheering up. September 201



4.2.9 Boulder Trail System

Generally speaking, Boulder has lots of hiking and biking trails throughout the town. For any outdoor enthusiast, it will be a great place to live in, or just to enjoy for a vacation full of outdoor activities and opportunities.

Boulder's Open Space & Mountain Parks (OSMP) are a very special place. The open space lands teem with native plants and wildlife, and are home to threatened and endangered species. They serve as a buffer between Boulder and nearby development. They sustain agriculture uses and add untold benefits to the natural environment - clean air, water, and earth.

The lands shape the urban mosaic of the Boulder Valley and provide citizens with passive recreation opportunities. Trails are used by walkers, hikers, bicyclists, horseback riders, dog walkers and other passive recreational uses. (City of Boulder Colorado, 2016).

Illustration 23 Climbing rocks in Saintas Trail which is one of the favorites in Town.



Illustration 24 Red Rocks a popular place to visit. Nearby Mountain Sanitas Trail. August 2016.



4.3 EVENTS AND FESTIVALS.

Boulder has lots of events and festivals all year round, but only a couple of them will be mentioned because of their magnitude and importance for the town.

4.3.1 Bolder Boulder.

The Bolder Boulder (styled as BolderBOULDER) is an annual 10-kilometer run in Boulder, Colorado. The most recent race featured over 54,000, runners, walkers, and wheelchair racers, making it the second largest 10k race in the US, and the fifth largest road race in the world. It has one of the largest non-marathon prize purses in road racing.

The race culminates at the University of Colorado's Folsom Field with a Memorial Day Tribute with one of the largest Memorial Day gatherings in the United States. Organizers have dedicated three starting waves to current and former members of the U.S. armed forces. (wikipedia, 2016).

Running this race is quite an experience, and while some people compete professionally, most people do it for fun with friends and family. Some people dress up funny or just try to give a message to others; stopping to catch a picture with picturesque people, eating nachos and cupcakes along the way is a must do. It is certainly an event to have fun, of course if competition is not the main purpose of it.

Illustration 25. Enjoying the entertainment along the way. Bolder Boulder



Illustration 26 People cheering up the runners. It is often to see funny messages throughout the race. "Cycling is better and beer is best".



4.3.2 The farmers Market.

The Boulder Farmers' Market began in 1987 has grown over the years to become a well-organized "family" of approximately 150 participants. They include professional farmers with hundreds of acres, weekend farmers with small acreage, backyard gardeners or hobbyists, and teenagers working small plots to earn extra money. We also involve selected representatives from several local food establishments, as well as local artists at our monthly art shows.

Visitors to the Boulder County Farmers' Market will find a wide variety of fresh Colorado-grown produce suited to their personal choices. We have farmers who use conventional methods of growing, and those who are certified organic growers. All items marketed as "organic" have been grown on farms that are certified by the State of Colorado. (Downtown Boulder, 2016).

Buying organic is a big deal for Boulderites, since they want to help the environment and be healthy at the same time. Also, they want to support local farmers and business. That's why people don't mind paying a little bit more for food or goods as long as it is good for themselves and others.



Illustration 27 Vegetables in the Farmers Market. September 2016



4.3.3 Colorado Shakespeare Festival

Founded in 1958, The Colorado Shakespeare Festival (CSF) is the second-oldest Shakespeare festival in the country and is recognized nationally (named one of the top three Shakespeare festivals in the nation by TIME Magazine in 1992). A professional, Equity Guest Artist and non-Equity summer theatre festival, CSF presents four to five productions each summer in repertory in the Mary Rippon

Outdoor Theatre and the University Theatre. (Colorado University, 2016).

Illustration 28. Colorado University. Digital image. Retrieved from <http://www.colorado.edu/theatredance/sites/default/files/styles/large/public/page/Supermoon.jpg?itok=7v8HQu-t>



4.4 GETTING INVOLVED WITH THE COMMUNITY AND CULTURE.

Getting involved in an activity that pleases is a good way to build a new social life, while getting to know locals that enjoy the same pleasures.

One of the favorite activities for the author is climbing, and Boulder seems to be the best place for it. Known as the *mecca* for the climbers in United States, because of the quality of its rocks and also the town has good indoor climbing gyms that increases the amount of climbers in the area.

First of all, it is important to define the activity:

Rock climbing: an activity in which participants climb up, down or across natural rock formations or artificial rock walls. Rock climbing is a physically and mentally demanding sport, one that often tests a climber's strength, endurance, agility and balance along with mental control. (wikipedia, 2016).

Also climbing has been increasing as an outdoor activity that is often related to touristic purposes. Recently, people are getting more attracted to the nature and its benefits. *Goal-directed outdoor activities are predominantly physical, though they may also be mentally, emotionally, and spiritually rewarding. The outdoors as a physical or social setting may meet the needs of physical health,*

self-sufficiency, risk-taking, the building of social ties (including teambuilding), and the needs of achievement (such as practicing, enhancing and challenging skills, testing stamina and endurance, and seeking adventure or excitement). The outdoors can be an environment in which people "show what they can do" (wikipedia, Outdoor recreation , n.d.)

There are different climbing gyms in the town, but one of the most popular is Movement, Climbing and Fitness. Because climbing is rooted in the outdoors, 80% of its energy is produced by solar panels. It well is designed for beginners and experienced climbers alike, and offers several different types of fitness, yoga, and outdoor classes.

Illustration 29. Climbing with friends at Movement climbing and fitness. Boulder Colorado, 2016



Illustration 30. . Angie Rodriguez and Ashima Shiraishi who is known for being one of the strongest young climbers -male or female- of all time. Denver Colorado, 2016.



Illustration 31. Photo with Tommy Caldwell who is one of the best climbers around the world and a Coloradan native. Boulder Colorado, 2016.



There are not enough words to express the happiness felt when being able to climb and meet some of the best climbers in the

world. This is something that only happens when people leave the “*comfort zone*”⁸, which is one of the terms most used these days. Being exposed to this kind of moments is what makes traveling and living abroad an unforgettable and unique experience.

Also, being a member of the gym gives one the opportunity to enjoy different events. Different topics can be discussed, such protection and preservation of climbing areas; to protect these areas it is necessary to commit to different tasks, like trail building, signaling pathways etc. As an example, on March 12th 2016, the event **COOKIE JAR COMPETITION & BCC FUNDRAISER**, took place at Movement. The reason for this was to raise money for local climbing stewardship, while enjoying multimedia from legends Tommy Caldwell and Roger Briggs.

As it was mentioned above, Tommy Caldwell is known for being one of the best climbers in the world, setting important records for the climber community. On the other hand, ***Roger Briggs*** is the founder of the **Boulder Climbing Community (BCC)**. The goals of the BCC -- stewardship and sustainability -- are an extension of the free and clean ethic, trail building and maintenance are the BCC's top priorities. Especially in Boulder Canyon, where off-trail

⁸ The comfort zone is a psychological state in which a person feels familiar, at ease, in control and experiences low anxiety and stress. In the zone a steady level of performance is possible.

hiking leaves marks on the land reminiscent of the piton⁹ damage in the 1960s. Briggs points out “*Trail building doesn't seem like anything really deep, but it's how we're going to get people out there in a sustainable way -- enjoying nature rather than beating it up.*”¹⁰

Boulder Climbing community was created in 2010. They are affiliated with the American Alpine Club¹¹ and Access Fund¹². B.C.C. works with land managers and climbers to address the growing impacts of climbers at areas frequented by Boulder

⁹ In climbing, a piton is a metal spike (usually steel) that is driven into a crack or seam in the rock with a hammer, and which acts as an anchor to protect the climber against the consequences of a fall, or to assist progress in aid climbing. Pitons are equipped with an eye hole or a ring to which a carabiner is attached; the carabiner can then be directly or indirectly attached to a climbing rope. Pitons were the original form of protection and are still used where there is no alternative. Repeated hammering and extraction of pitons damages the rock, and climbers who subscribe to the clean climbing ethic avoid their use as much as possible.

¹⁰ Taken from “*Briggs and Erickson inducted into Boulder Sports Hall of Fame*”, by Chris Weidner. September 25th 2012.

¹¹ The American Alpine Club (AAC) is a non-profit member organization whose goal is “a united community of competent climbers and healthy climbing landscapes.” The Club is housed in the American Mountaineering Center (AMC) in Golden, Colorado. Through its members, the AAC advocates for American climbers domestically and around the world; provides grants and volunteer opportunities to protect and conserve climbing areas.

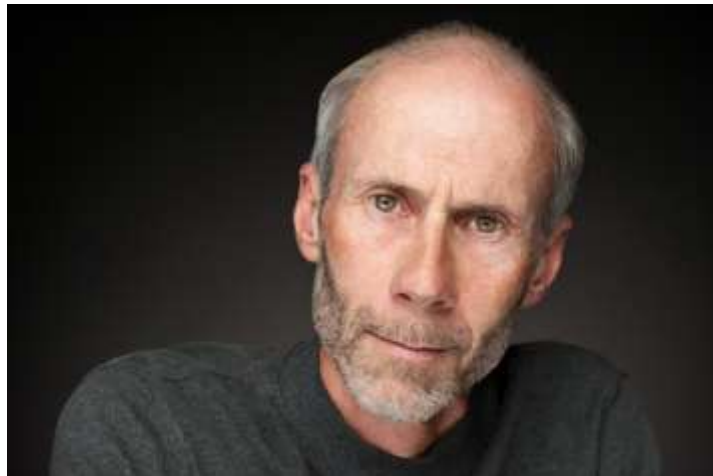
¹² The Access Fund is a not-for-profit rock climbing advocacy group in the US. Their goals are twofold. First, keeping climbing areas open and gaining access to currently closed climbing areas. Second, they promote an ethic of responsible climbing and conservation of the climbing environment. The Access Fund was originally the access committee of the American Alpine Club and was created as the climbing community realized the need for an organization to represent climbing and climbers' rights in the US

climbers. This involves a lot of discussion and planning with land managers and other organizations, educational and outreach efforts directed towards the general public, and organization of stewardship initiatives.

Their primary stewardship initiatives are: Professional & volunteer trail teams (Front Range Climbing Stewards), Bolt replacement efforts, Maintenance and stocking of several wag bag stations, Golden Eagle monitoring assistance in Boulder Canyon, Graffiti cleanup. (Community, Boulder Climbing, n.d.)

4.4.1 Roger Briggs.

*Illustration 32. Roger Briggs, portrait made for Bob Charmicael.
Retrieved from <http://bobcarmichael.com/tag/roger-briggs-journey-to-civilization-the-science-of-how-we-got-here/>*



Roger is world class in many ways and he was just inducted into the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame¹³. He has climbed at the highest level throughout his life.

Roger taught in public schools for 30 years and served as science liaison for the Boulder Valley Schools. Since retiring in 2005, Roger authored *Journey to Civilization: The Science of How We Got Here* and founded the Boulder Climbing Community, a non-profit that builds partnerships with land managers and stewards climbing areas near Boulder. (Highland city club, n.d.)

4.4.2 An interview with Roger Briggs.

To illustrate the information above, it is important to get involved with organizations like this one. On August 2016, different meetings, conversations, and interviews with Briggs were granted.

The tools used for that matter were camera and voice recorder.

The first meeting took place in Highland City Club, where Briggs is a member. He explained the Boulder Climbing Community and their achievements, and also an invitation to visit the Flatirons was offered. The Flatirons is an icon of Boulder Colorado, and besides

¹³ The Colorado Sports Hall of Fame (CSHoF) is a hall of fame and museum that honors, by public acknowledgment or commemoration, individuals who merit recognition and distinction for their exploits, accomplishments, and leadership in sports and athletic endeavors in the state of Colorado

simply climbing it, the purpose was also to understand what the BCC is doing, since they have a crew working over there.

The main purpose of the interview (In Boulder, business interactions can take place while being outdoors) was to get to know what work the BCC is doing in regards to trail building, also opinions about tourism, climbing life experiences, and the history of Boulder. More than simply an interview, it was a conversation to learn points of view and experiences from a Boulder native.

Note: see the full interview in the Annexes section. (Annex N 4)

4.4.3 Considerations from the author.

The interview with Roger Briggs was a success. He was always willing to talk and contribute to the topics. Having the opportunity to visit some of the places where trail work was done, and having an explanation from experts made this exercise a unique and enriching experience.

Besides, experiences like this are crucial for a professional's training. Colombia is a country with a lot of potential in the tourism industry. However, one of the major challenges the country is facing is having ecotourism as a way to enhance the

economy and the communities. To have the ability to show our countries natural beauty to the tourist, while protecting and conserving the environment at the same time.

When the student is immersed in these sort of scenarios, new ideas come to mind that maybe were not thought of before. Thinking about how things can be improved in their home country, and bringing back valuable experience and knowledge.

As Roger Briggs points out, the best way to get people out there is by making trails. But, it has to be assured that are they are the right trails. Choosing a trail that will not harm fauna and flora as much; they have to be durable, and efficient. In this way, most of the land will be protected, and the tourist or outdoor enthusiasts can still get outside and enjoy it in a responsible manner.

CONCLUSIONS

- Exchange programs are a great opportunity to live and learn in a different country. Those involved in them will acquire many different skills they may not acquire in their home country.
- The understanding of cultural immersion, as a way to connect people from different backgrounds is crucial to the development of societies. For one thing, people become more aware about the uniqueness of cultures, and about 'difference' as a positive thing. Secondly, after meeting so many people from different countries, traveling becomes a necessity and an opportunity for future growth. Also, with so many friends in different countries, traveling becomes easier and cheaper.
- The learning of the English language is always challenging. It may be difficult for some, and easier for others. It may depend on different factors such as nationality and education. Some countries like Germany, have a strong education system for language. Contrarily, Colombians, which were the main focus of the study have a harder time. It is caused by the length of time spent studying the language and the skills learned, before traveling to the USA. In conclusion, the Colombian government should

invest more in education, and not only for students but also for English teachers.

- Some factors that may help in the process of learning a language are: the amount of time spent studying English by one's own means, which means to use different useful tools to improve any flaw, which could be either speaking, listening, reading or writing. Also, the less the home language is spoken, the better.
- Learning English is a process and it could be difficult on people during the first few months. Most of the respondents' surveyed recommend an exchange program as a way to improve their language's skills.
- Living abroad gives someone the opportunity to enjoy a new culture, while learning something new every day. It also is a perfect scenario to absorb multiple features about the place of residence. Therefore, the individual involved will expand their horizons, not only in a personal way, but also professionally and culturally.
- Researching about the place of residency and the tourism factors gives a big advantage to the learner. Whom not only will experience culture through daily living, but also will get a deeper experience about the place, while learning about history and changes throughout time.

- Most people who are living abroad have time to explore and to get into any sport, activity, pleasure, or project. Having the ability to get better at it, or to learn from other experts in the matter. Some of which, may not be available in their home country.
- Being part of an exchange program and doing research also puts students in a situation where they have to understand different perspectives. This includes interviewing people with expertise in different areas, and allows the opportunity to gain knowledge that may not be found elsewhere.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Any person interested to go overseas, as a way to learn a language will experience a new culture. Being open minded and tolerant is highly recommended.
- Exchange programs are great. However, it is a process, and people may go through different situations. Especially at the beginning of the experience; patience and discipline are some of the qualities most needed.
- Getting involved in any kind of activity, such sports or hobbies, may be a source to meet new people, especially locals, who share the same interest or pleasures. This will open up many different opportunities.
- Before traveling abroad, it is important to study the new language as much as possible. Mainly, skills that involve speaking and listening, since they are crucial in making conversations with locals. This can soften the cultural shock experienced at the beginning.
- It is recommended to try to avoid the home language as much as possible. This will strengthen the English skills, and will expand the opportunity to interact with many people from different backgrounds.
- In order to perform all English skills, it is suggested to use different sources. Such as speaking with locals, reading,

and watching movies or videos in English, which are all useful tools.

References

- Anderson, D. (07 de Mayo de 2015). *Hippies and street people*. Recuperado el agosto de 2016, de <http://www.boulderweekly.com/opinion/hippies-and-street-people/>
- Boulder Colorado Usa*. (September de 2016). Obtenido de <http://www.bouldercoloradousa.com/things-to-do/must-see-boulder/>
- City of Boulder Colorado*. (september de 2016). Obtenido de <https://bouldercolorado.gov/osmp/cultural-resources-flagstaff-mountain-hike>
- City of Boulder Colorado*. (september de 2016). Obtenido de <https://bouldercolorado.gov/osmp>
- Colorado University*. (26 de september de 2016). Obtenido de Colorado Shakespeare Festival: <http://www.colorado.edu/theatredance/about-us/colorado-shakespeare-festival>
- Colorful Colorado towns*. (7 de september de 2016). Obtenido de A pictorial History of Boulder Colorado: <http://www.theroadwanderer.net/boulder.htm>
- Community, Boulder Climbing*. (s.f.). Recuperado el september de 2016, de <http://boulderclimbers.org/what-does-bcc-do/>
- Downtown Boulder*. (25 de september de 2016). Obtenido de <https://www.boulderdowntown.com/go/boulder-county-farmers-market>

- ETS, TOELF* . (s.f.). Recuperado el agosto de 2016, de
<https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/about>
- Fluid Surveys*. (07 de agosto de 2013). Recuperado el agosto de 2016, de
Comparing Closed-Ended and Open-Ended Questions:
<http://fluidsurveys.com/university/comparing-closed-ended-and-open-ended-questions/>
- Gately, H. (s.f.). Recuperado el september de 2016, de 10 best USA
today:
<http://www.10best.com/destinations/colorado/boulder/attractions/best-attractions-activities/>
- Gorski, E. (15 de september de 2014). *The Denver Post*. Obtenido de
Does Colorado craft beer need a branding campaign?:
<http://blogs.denverpost.com/beer/2014/09/15/colorado-state-of-craft-beer/13915/>
- Helm, B. (January de 2014). *Inc Magazine*. Recuperado el october de
2016, de How Boulder Became America's Startup Capital:
<http://www.inc.com/magazine/201312/boulder-colorado-fast-growing-business.html>
- Highland city club*. (s.f.). Recuperado el october de 2016, de
<https://highlandcityclub.com/about/people/membership/>
- Hitchton, B. L. (03 de Marzo de 2014). *10 ways to learn a language abroad* . Recuperado el Agosto de 2016, de Go Overseas:
<https://www.gooverseas.com/blog/ways-to-learn-a-language-abroad>
- Ironman*. (s.f.). Recuperado el september de 2016, de Ironman, official
site: <http://www.ironman.com/hr-hr/triathlon/news/articles/2014/08/destination-boulder.aspx>
- J1 visa Exchange program*. (s.f.). Recuperado el september de 2016, de
<https://j1visa.state.gov/basics/>

Kenzie, E. M. (s.f.). *Negative effects of globalization on culture*. Recuperado el september de 2016, de <http://peopleof.oureverydaylife.com/negative-effects-globalization-culture-6120.html>

Museum of Natural History . (2016). Obtenido de <http://www.colorado.edu/cumuseum/exhibits>

Press, J. (1967). *Celestial Seasonings, Inc. History*. Recuperado el Agosto de 2016, de International Directory of Company Histories: <http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/celestial-seasonings-inc-history/>

Rivas, K. (9 de Agosto de 2016). *Omniglot*. Obtenido de The online enciclopedia of writting systems &languages : <http://www.omniglot.com/language/articles/languageimmersion.htm>

Techtarget. (June de 2016). Obtenido de Globalization: <http://searchcio.techtarget.com/definition/globalization>

The toelf test advantage . (s.f.). Recuperado el septiembre de 2016, de <http://www.toeflgoanywhere.org/what-is-toefl#the-toefl-test-advantage>

USA TODAY . (2016). Obtenido de 10 best destinations in Boulder Colorado: <http://www.10best.com/destinations/colorado/boulder/attractions/best-attractions-activities/>

wikipedia. (s.f.). Recuperado el Agosto de 2016, de https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Closed-ended_question

wikipedia. (s.f.). Recuperado el agosto de 2016, de https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boulder,_Colorado

wikipedia . (september de 2016). Obtenido de https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearl_Street_Mall

- wikipedia*. (2016). Obtenido de Rock climbing:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock_climbing
- wikipedia*. (september de 2016). Obtenido de
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eldorado_Canyon_State_Park
- wikipedia*. (september de 2016). Obtenido de
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coors_Events_Center
- wikipedia*. (september de 2016). Obtenido de
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bolder_Boulder
- wikipedia*. (october de 2016). Obtenido de
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hotel_Boulderado
- wikipedia*. (september de 2016). *American Alpine Club*. Obtenido de
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Alpine_Club
- wikipedia*. (s.f.). *Access Fund*. Recuperado el 2016, de
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Access_Fund
- wikipedia*. (s.f.). *Outdoor recreation* . Recuperado el september de 2016,
de
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outdoor_recreation#cite_note-Rolston_1988-2

ANNEXES

Annex N 1. Eur aupair intercultural child care programs

Annex N 2. Survey Model

Annex N 3. Survey's results.

Annex N 4. Full Interview with Roger Briggs.

ANEXE 1

EURAUPAIR INTERCULTURAL CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

EurAupair International, Inc., its agents, principals, sponsors, affiliates, directors, officers, employees and attorneys (collectively "EurAupair"), and the undersigned Au Pair exchange visitor ("Au Pair"), understand and agree to the terms and conditions stated in this agreement ("Agreement") relating to the Au Pair's participation in Eur Aupair's Au Pair exchange program ("Program"). Adult(s) and their resident children who agree to host an Au Pair for the Program term are referred to as the Host Family ("Host Family").

A. Admission and Placement: EurAupair considers such criteria as Au Pair application packet materials, age, education level, English language fluency, child care experience, physical and mental health, references, essay and personal interviews in determining whether to admit the Au Pair into the Program. EurAupair has the sole discretion to determine whether the Au Pair will be admitted into the Program and such determination is final. All preferences and characteristics of the Au Pair may not be accommodated in the placement process. Further, EurAupair cannot control the timing or location of Au Pair placement.

B. Dissimilarities or Differences Abroad: In addition to learning the host country's language, the Au Pair is expected to adapt to the culture and lifestyle of the Host Family and host country. There may be significant cultural, economic and lifestyle differences between the Au Pair's home country and host country. The host country may have different health care services, living conditions, road and transportation systems, educational approaches and systems, criminal justice systems, civil liberty laws, customs and values. Some host country services, living conditions or systems may be relatively inadequate, unsafe or unreliable in comparison to the Au Pair's home country. Other host country services, conditions or systems may be superior to the standards in the Au Pair's home country. Living conditions vary from one Host Family to another even in the same community. The Program offers numerous opportunities for the Au Pair, however, Au Pairs must be aware and accept these

differences and the risks associated with traveling and living in another country. The Au Pair's level of maturity must be adequate to recognize and cope with these differences and risks. Au Pairs must take responsibility to educate themselves and prepare for the risks associated with foreign travel and living abroad. Program Representatives are available by telephone to provide assistance on an ongoing basis during the Au Pair's participation in the Program. However, the Program cannot and does not provide constant direct oversight of the Au Pair. As a condition of acceptance into the Program, the Au Pair agrees to hold EurAupair harmless for all injuries and/or damages incurred during the Au Pair's participation in the Program resulting from any risks associated with international travel and living abroad, and any negligence and/or intentional acts caused by any third party, including but not limited to any member, guest, employee or agent of the Host Family or other persons in the host country. X ACR

C. Rules For Au Pairs:

The Rules for EurAupair Au Pairs ("Rules") have been established by EurAupair as minimum standards of conduct, and any infraction may result in immediate repatriation (return) of Au Pair to his/her home country at their own expense. Each Au Pair must acknowledge that they understand and have agreed to adhere to the Rules prior to the Au Pair's

final program acceptance. X _____

D. Use Of Au Pair's Name and Likeness: The Au Pair consents to the use of the Au Pair's name, photograph, film or video likeness or any comments or statements of the Au Pair in materials or publications utilized to promote the Program.

E. Problem Notification and Resolution: As the Au Pair is living as a member of a Host Family and not under continual oversight or control of EurAupair staff, it is the responsibility of the Au Pair to advise EurAupair of any significant problems, including but not limited to the health, safety or welfare of the Au Pair, adjustment to family, school, culture, language, etc. In addition, the Au Pair must notify EurAupair of any misunderstandings or problems with the Host Family. EurAupair will intervene and attempt to resolve the problem. If necessary, EurAupair may in its sole and absolute discretion, seek a replacement Host Family, if possible within the same community. If the Au Pair does not make a good faith and substantial effort to resolve the problems or

misunderstandings, EurAupair may return the Au Pair to his/her home country at the Au Pair's expense. If the Au Pair violates any terms of this Agreement, EurAupair may, in its sole and absolute discretion, terminate the Au Pair's participation in the Program and immediately repatriate the Au Pair to his/her home country, at Au Pair's expense. In the event the Au Pair does not successfully complete the program year, the Au Pair must purchase the return flight ticket.

X ACR

F. Agreement between Au Pairs and Originating Exchange Organization: Au Pairs understand that EurAupair is not a party to any agreement between Au Pairs and the originating exchange organization located in the Au Pair's home country ("Originating Exchange Organization"). Au Pairs acknowledge and agree that the laws of their home country shall exclusively govern any dispute or claim arising out of any agreement with the Originating Exchange Organization. Au Pairs acknowledge and agree that the Originating Exchange Organization is solely responsible to the Au Pairs for injury or damage from a violation of any such agreement. EurAupair assumes no duties or responsibilities for any acts or omissions of the Originating Exchange

Organization.

G. General Release, Indemnification and Hold Harmless Provisions: As a condition of Au Pair's participation in the Program, Au Pairs agree to release and hold harmless EurAupair for injury, loss, delay, or any other damage and/or expense incurred by the Au Pair due to (i) any incident beyond EurAupair's reasonable control, including, without limitation, acts of God, acts of war, or government actions and restrictions, (ii) any events directly or indirectly caused by intentional or negligent acts or omissions by any third party, including but not limited to any member, guest, employee or agent of the Host Family or other persons in the host country, (iii) risks associated with foreign travel and living abroad, including but not limited to risks associated with health care services, living conditions, sanitation conditions, road and transportation systems, criminal justice systems, civil liberty laws, customs, and values, (iv) any differences in the living conditions and standards between Au Pairs' home and home country and the host home and host country, and, (v) any act or omission of the Originating Exchange Organization. As a further condition of Au Pair's participation in the Program, the Au Pair agrees to indemnify and hold harmless

EurAupair from any liability or expense, including court costs and attorney fees, resulting from any injury, loss or any other damage or expense caused by the Au Pair during his/her participation in the Program.

H. Arbitration and Venue: This Agreement shall be deemed to have been made in the State of California, USA and its validity, construction, breach, performance and interpretation shall be governed by the laws of the State of California, USA. The parties to the Agreement acknowledge and agree that any dispute or claim arising out of this Agreement, any resulting or related transaction, or the relationship of the parties, shall be decided by neutral, exclusive and binding arbitration in Orange County, California, USA. The arbitration shall be conducted before JAMS/Endispute, Inc. Either party may appear telephonically at the arbitration hearing. The award of the arbitrator may be enforced in any court of competent jurisdiction located in the United States. In the event that the arbitration clause is deemed void or inapplicable, each party expressly consents to and submits to the personal jurisdiction of the federal or state court(s) of Orange County, California, USA. In any action, including arbitration, brought for breach of this Agreement, the prevailing party shall be entitled to recover reasonable attorney's fees and costs, including but not limited to the costs of arbitration. X ACR

I. EurAupair Program Agreement Controls: Where there are any differences between this Agreement and any other program materials, the Agreement shall control. EurAupair cannot be legally bound or committed by any person other than a duly authorized representative. Parties are required to follow this Agreement and cannot vary from its terms.

J. Severability: In the event any clause, sentence, term or provision of this Agreement shall be held by any court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal, invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the remaining portions of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

All terms and conditions of the EurAupair Au Pair Handbook ("Au Pair Handbook") are incorporated in this Agreement by reference. I have read and fully understand the EurAupair program materials and agree to adhere to the EurAupair Rules for Au Pairs and the EurAupair Program Agreement. This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, and all of which shall constitute one and the same instrument. Facsimile and/or electronic signatures on this Agreement shall be

deemed a valid and binding execution of this Agreement.

ANEXE N 2.

Survey Model

LEARNING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE THROUGH AN EXCHANGE PROGRAM

This survey is made in order to find out which methods or techniques participants of exchange programs use to improve their English skills. There are 14 simple questions that will only take a couple minutes, and our goal is to collect as accurate information as possible. The information collected will be used strictly for academic purposes, and kept confidential. Thank you for your cooperation, and have a great day!

1. Gender

- a. Male
- b. Female

2. Age

3. Nationality

4. Are you working as an au pair?

- a. yes
- b. no
- c. in the past

5. How long have you been living in the United States?

- a. 1 to 6 months
- b. 6 to 12 months
- c. 12 to 18 months
- d. 18 to 24 months
- e. 24+ months

6. How many years did you spend studying English (school, institute, university, courses) in your home country?

- a. One year or less
- b. 1 to 5 years
- c. Almost my whole life
- d. I studied by my own means

7. When you were living in your home country, which of the following options were your major strengths?

- a. Reading comprehension
- b. Speaking
- c. Listening
- d. Writing composition
- e. All of them

8. How did you feel about your English skills during your first few months (1-3 months) in the USA?

- a. It was very easy. My English was very fluent.
- b. I had some problems but I was learning fast, and I improved every day.
- c. It was very overwhelming. I had a hard time understanding and communicating.

9. How long did it take you to learn or improve your English? (Have a fluent conversation, be able to express your ideas, order food in a restaurant, make a call, write properly, and explain your complaints).

- a. 1 month to 3 months.
- b. 3 months to 6 months.
- c. 6 months to 12 months.
- d. One year or more

10. Which of the following options do you use the most to study English currently, outside of communicating with native English speakers?

- a. Reading (random books, magazine, newspaper etc)
- b. Reading books to learn English (grammar, orthography, exercises)
- c. Watching movies.
- d. Watching educational videos about specific subjects. (Grammar, phrasal verbs, tips for pronunciation).
- e. Using apps (Duolingo etc)
- f. All of them
- g. None of them.

a. Other:

11. How many hours do you usually spend studying English by your own means? (Reading books, watching movies, watching educational videos, using apps)

- a) Less than 1 hour per week
- b) hours per day or more.
- c) 6-4 hours per week.
- d) 7+ hours a week

12. Which of the following situations do you feel describes you more?

a. I came here to improve my English, and that is why I avoid speaking my home language.

b. I want to improve my English, but I also want to make friends, and that is why speak my home language with friends because I think we can communicate better.

c. I make an effort to speak English with both friends and Native speakers, but fill in with my native language when we can't communicate well.

13. Do you think that speaking your home language slows your ability to learn English?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Don't know.

14. Would you recommend other people to move to an English speaking country as a way to improve their English skills?

ANEXE N3.

Survey's results

1. Gender

93, 3 % of the respondents were female, the 4,7% left were male.

Separating the information in groups:

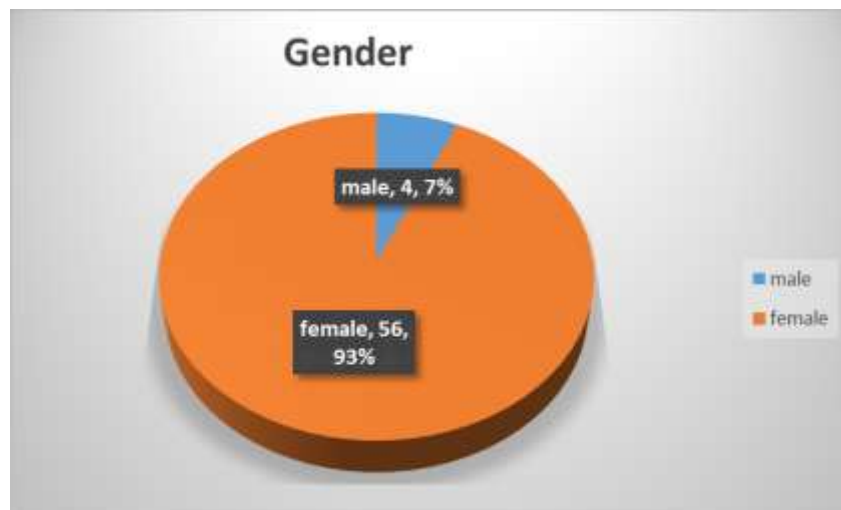
100% of the Colombians respondents were female.

90 % of the German respondents were female, the 10 % left were male.

100% of the Latin American respondents were female.

80 % of the European respondents were female, the 20% left were male.

Figure 1. Au pair's gender



2. Age

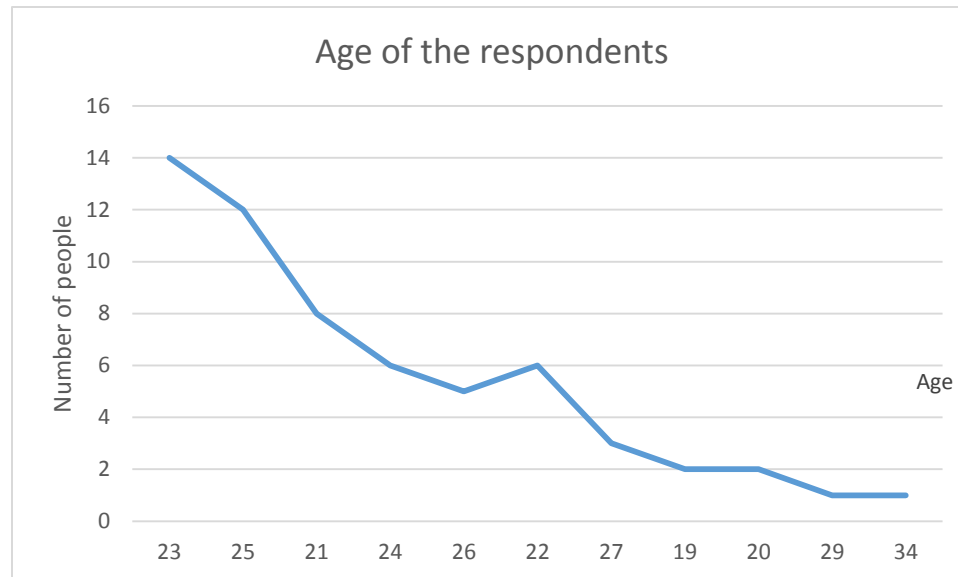


Figure 1. Age of the respondents

Out of 60 respondents 14 of them are 23 years old, 12 of them are 25 years old and, 8 of them are 21 years old. The most popular ages to do the exchange program are 23, 25, 21, 24 and 22. Few respondents were within the following ages: 27, 19, and 20. For those few who marked 29 and 34, it can be analyzed that they are no longer within the exchange program, since the maximum age to do the exchange program is 27.

3. Nationality

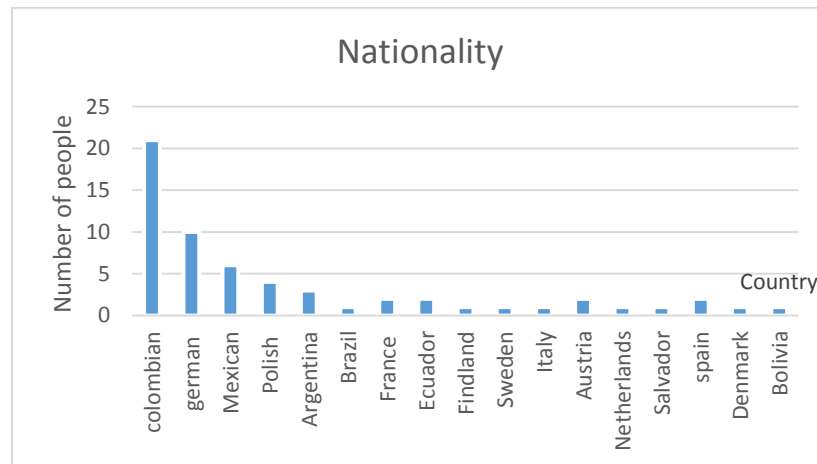


Figure 2. Respondents' Nationalities

As it was said before a big percentage of the respondents were Colombians, followed by Germans and Mexicans. The rest of the respondents were from different countries, either European or Latin American.

4. Are you working as an au pair?

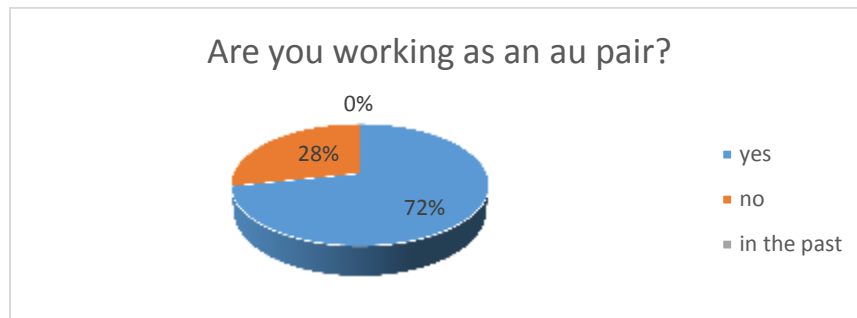


Figure 3. Percent of au pairs that are or were within the exchange

The 72 % of the respondents still are within the au pair program. The other 28 %, were in the past. Which means that results come from people how is currently within the program, but, also from some of those who already finish the program. Therefore they have a strong opinion from most of the questions.

program

Responses from Colombians

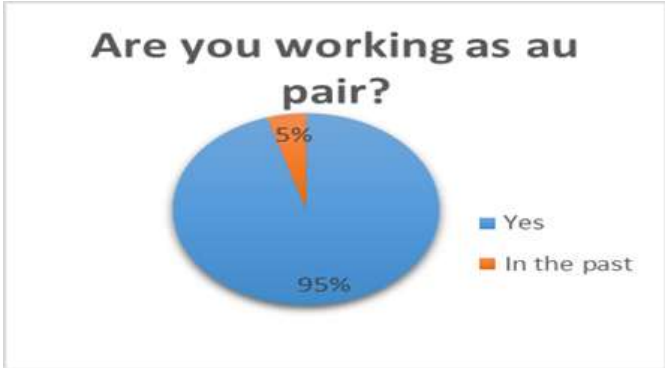


Figure 4. Percent of Colombians that are or were within the exchange program.

Responses from Germans.

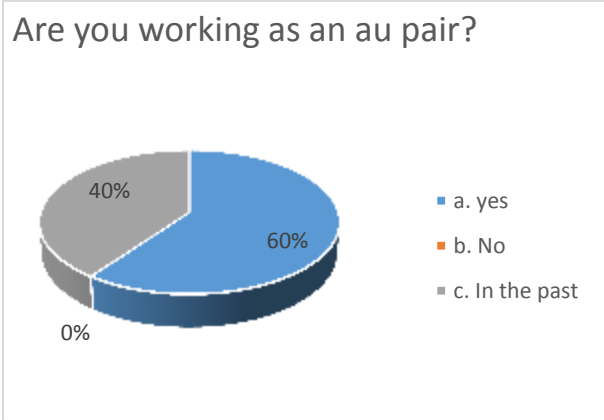


Figure 5. Percent of Germans that are or were within the exchange program.

Responses from other Latin American Countries

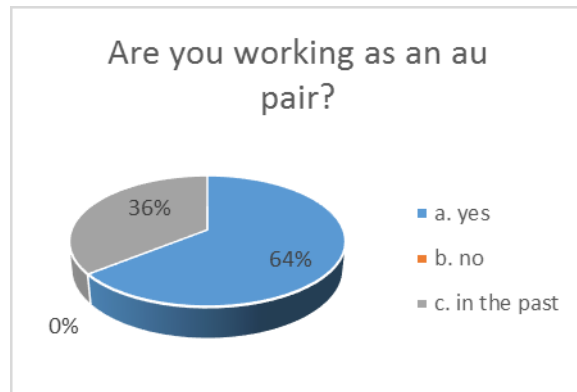


Figure 6. Percent of respondents from different Latin American countries that are or were within the exchange program.

Responses from European Countries

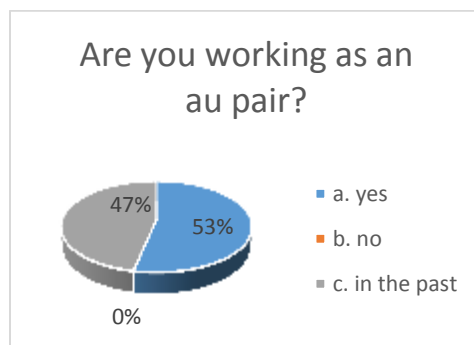


Figure 7. Percent of European respondents that are or were in the exchange program

Conclusions: the 95% of the Colombian au pairs are still within the program. Only 5 % of them were in the past.

On the other hand, 60% of the German au pairs are within the program currently. Also, 40% of them were in the past.

Latin American countries respondents. The 64% of them are still within the program, but 36% of them were in the past. Finally the respondents from different countries in Europe said that 53% of them are still within the program, and 47 % of them were in the past.

Most of the opinions from former au pairs come from European countries, which means that they will have consistent opinions in their responses, since they are based on one year experience or even longer.

5. How long have you been living or for how long did you live in the United States?

5. How long have you been living the United States?

(60 responses)

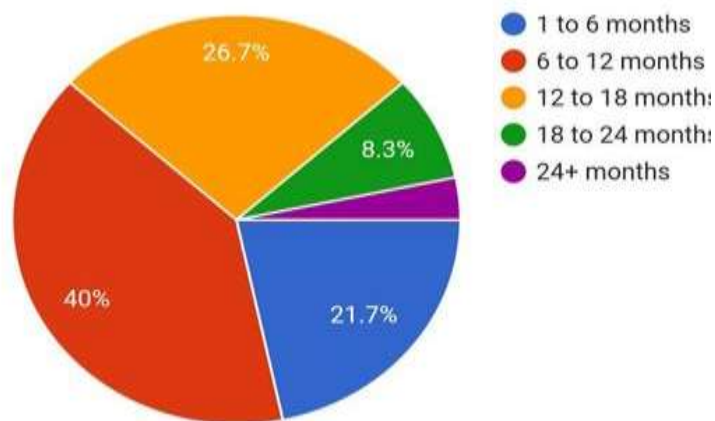


Figure 8. Amount of time that the respondents have lived in the USA

40 % of the respondents have lived in the USA for a period of 6 to 12 months. The 26,7% of them for 12 to 18 months. Only the 8,3% of them have completed the 2 years program, and the 4,3 % said to remain longer that 24 months. Which means they had to change their visa status for a different one.

6. How many years did you spend studying English (school, institute, University, courses) in your home country?

6. How many years did you spend studying English (school, institute, university, courses) in your home country?
(59 responses)

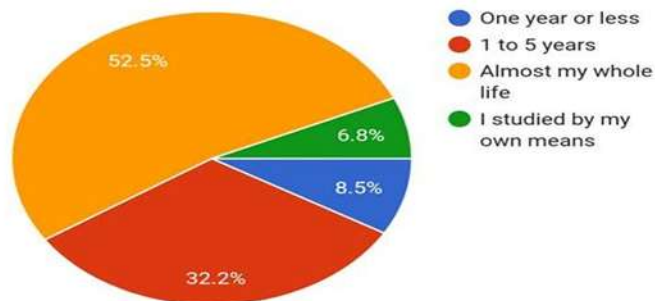


Figure 9 Amount of time spent studying English before traveling to the US

The 52 % of the respondents said to study English for almost their whole life. Also, the 32.2% of them said to study the language from 1 to 5 years. Only the 8.5 % of them said One year or less, and the 6.8 % of them said to study by their own means randomly.

Responses from Colombians.

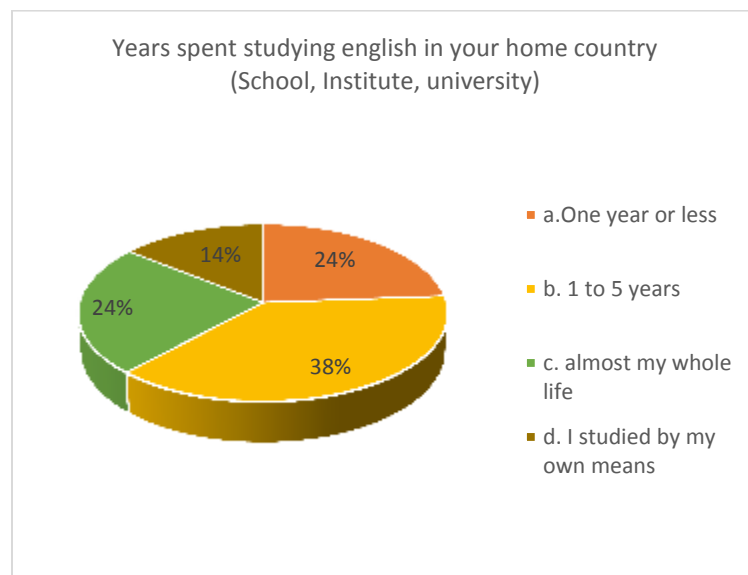


Figure 10. Amount of time that Colombians respondents spent studying English before traveling to the US

38% of the Colombian respondents said to study English from 1 to 5 years. On the other hand, 24% of them said to study it for almost their whole life. But, by contrast, 24 % of them also said to study it for one year or less. Only the 14% of them, said to study it by their own means randomly.

Seems like Colombian responses are very divided, which means that they depend on different aspects that were not covered by the survey, such economic status, access to college, etc.

German Responses

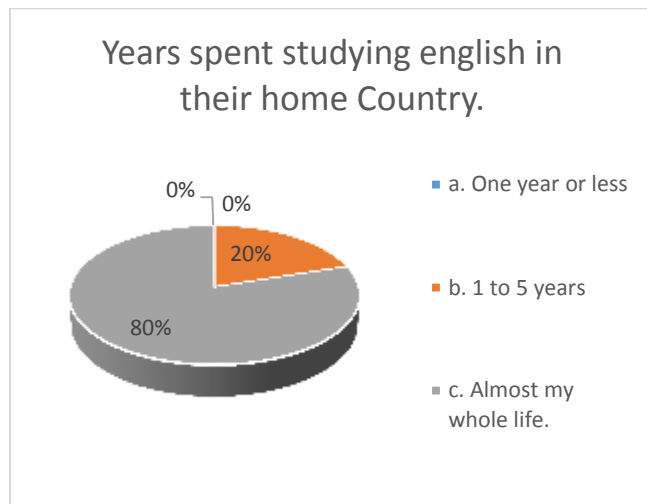


Figure 11. Amount of time that German respondents spent studying English before traveling to the US

80 % of the Germans study English during almost their whole life. And 20% of them said at least from 1 to 5 years. None of them said less than one year or to study by their own means, which means that being bilingual in Germany is a priority, and the Government assure that the population has these benefits throughout their study life.

Responses from Other Latin American countries

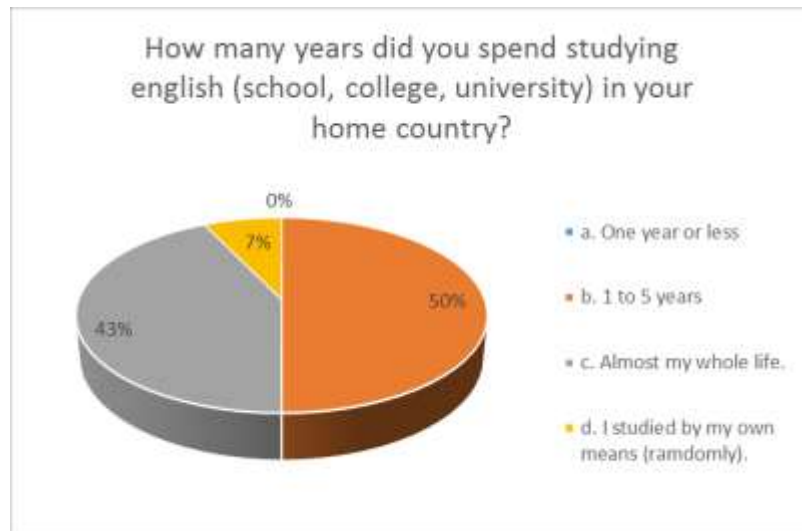


Figure 12. Amount of time that respondents from Latin American countries spent studying English before traveling to the US.

The 50% of the respondents studied from one year to 5 before coming to US. On the other hand 43% of them said that they study English for almost their whole life, which is really accurate since English is the second language and, kids start taking classes since their first grades of school, same thing happens in Colombia. But, the responses were a bit different in this matter were just the 24 % of Colombians said to study the language for their whole life, but most of them maybe just see the basics subjects.

In contrast just 7% of them said they studied English by their own means.

Responses from other European countries.

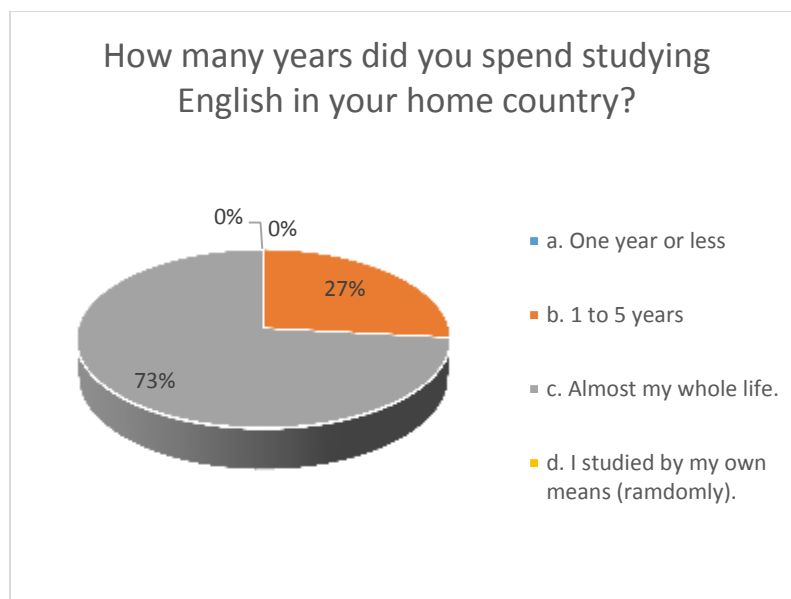


Figure 13. Amount of time that European respondents spent studying English before traveling to the US

The 73 % of the respondents studied during almost their whole life before traveling to the USA, which gives them a big advantage when it comes to communicate with English speakers; especially, during the first months.

Also the 27 % of them said to study between 1 to 5 years. On the other hand, none of them said to study less than one year, nor to study by their own means.

Conclusions:

The study of the English language in Colombia is more varied compared to other countries like Germany or different European countries, where the study of a second language seems to be a priority and part of their studies throughout their life. Also, it can be predicted that most of the European respondents need the language as a way to travel for the European Union, since English is the most popular language. On the other hand, making a comparison between Colombian respondents and the ones from other Latin American countries, it can be concluded that Colombians are behind the average, where just 24% of them said to study English for their whole life, whereas the 43 % of the others said so. Also as it was explained above, the factors that may interfere in the Colombians respondent's process to learn English before traveling to the US were not cover by the survey, which can be economic, access to education, place of residency etc.

- 7. When you were living in your home country, which of the following were your major strengths?**

7. When you were living in your home country, which of the following options were your major strengths?

(60 responses)

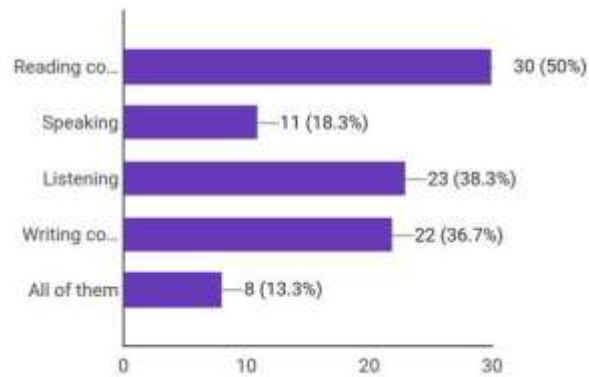


Figure 14. Major Strengths gained in the English language before traveling to the US

Responses from Colombians

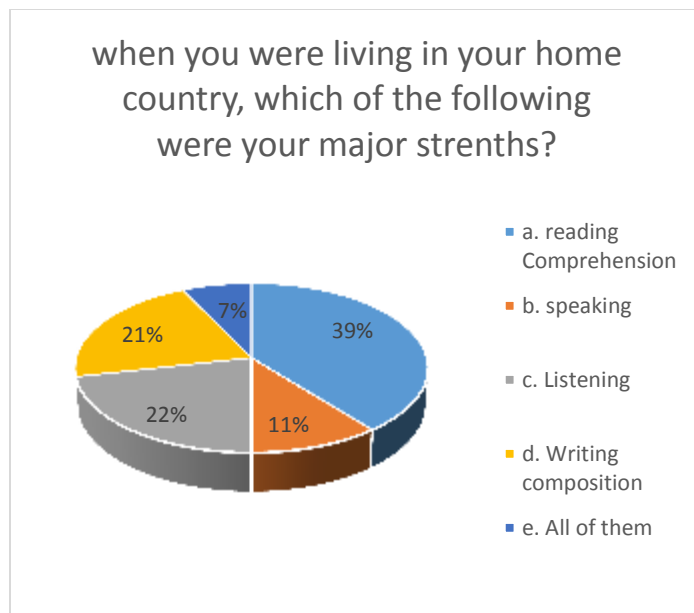


Figure 15. Strengths gained in the English language for Colombian respondents before traveling to the US.

The main strength for the Colombians is reading comprehension with a 39%. The abilities of listening and writing composition are very close together with a 21% and 22% respectively.

Nevertheless, the speaking skill is not very developed (11%), nor the capacity to have all of them (7%).

Seems like Colombians should focus more to develop the speaking skill, which is one of the most important when it comes to communicate with English natives.

Responses from Germans.

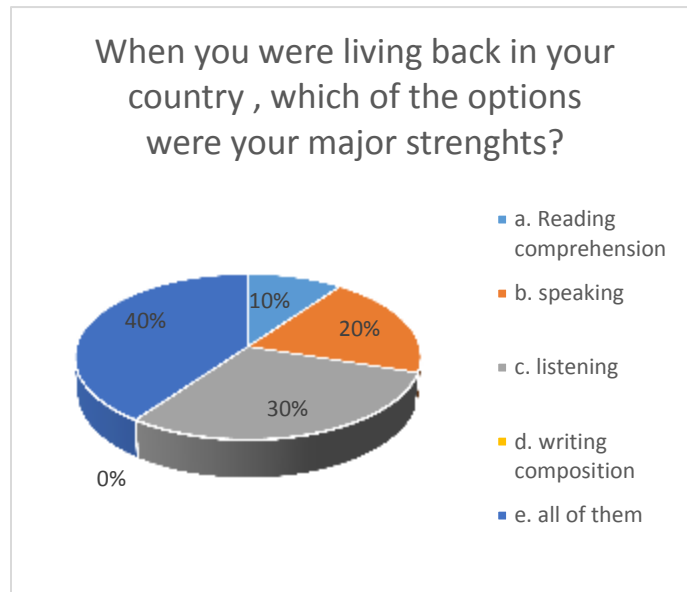


Figure 16. Strengths that German respondents gained in the English Language before traveling to the US

40 % of the respondents said they were able to perform well all the skills. Also, the 30 % said that their major strength was listening. Seems like in Germany the students have to be able to perform all the English skills or, at least the ones that are used the most to make a conversation, such listening and speaking.

Responses from other Latin American countries.

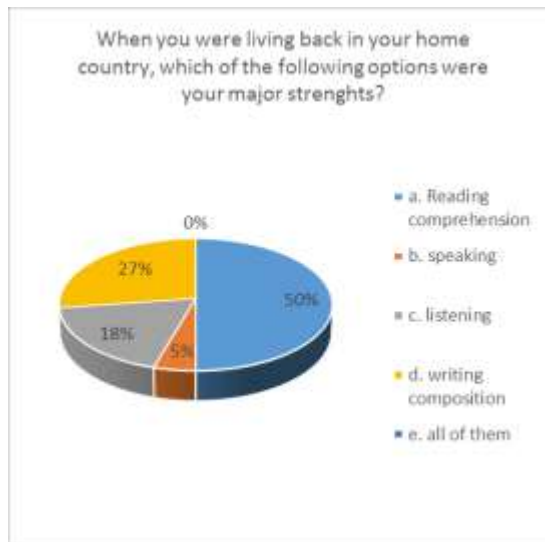


Figure 18. Strengths that respondents from Latin American countries gained in the English language before traveling to the USA

The 50% of the respondents said that the reading comprehension was their major strength. Followed by writing composition (27%). On the other hand, 18% of them said listening. By contrast, just 5 % said speaking, which means that the skills that are the most important when it comes to make a conversation such listening and speaking are not well developed in the Latin American countries. Also none of them said to be able to perform all the skills.

Responses from Other European Countries.

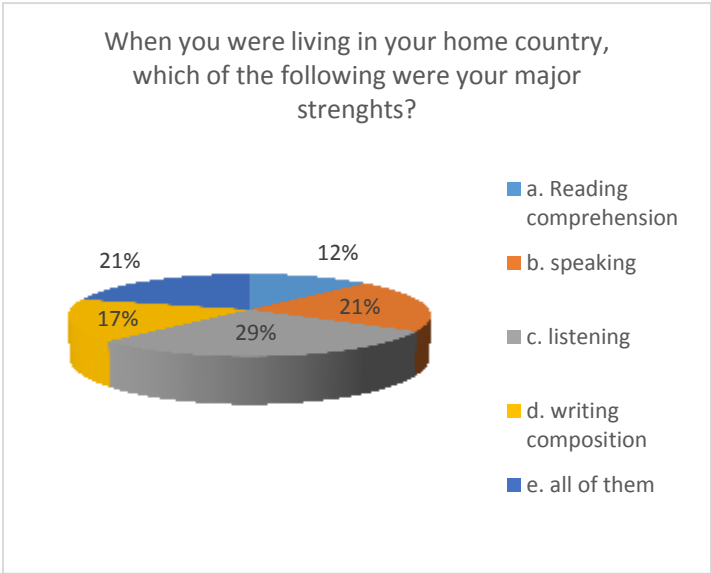


Figure 17. Strengths that European respondents gained in the English language before traveling to the US.

29 % of the respondents said that listening was their major strength. Still, the 21% of them said to be able to perform all the skills, and also the 21% said that speaking was their major strength. Reading comprehension and writing composition were not as popular as the others.

Conclusions

For Colombians respondents the main strength was reading comprehension so was the same for respondents from another Latin American countries. This is the most developed strength in Latin American, but sadly even though if the population has a contact with a second language, this skill is not the most important when it comes to communicating with English natives. On the other hand, contemplating the speaking skill for Colombians, which is one of the most important in this matter, only 11% of them said to be able to perform it. Even though if 7 % of them said be able to perform all the skills.

Exchanges programs are made with the purpose to encourage students to improve their language skills, nevertheless it seems like even though if the participants have to have a language basis it could vary depending on the nationality, since different countries have different policies and programs for learning a language. As a result, the experience for the participants could vary as well depending on those variables. When the participant come with a good basis it will be easier to adapt to the culture and different aspects of it, whereas is the opposite, the experience will depend most likely on the participant's personality.

8. How did you feel about your English skills during your first few months (1-3 months) in the USA?

8. How did you feel about your English skills during your first few months (1-3 months) in the USA?

(60 responses)

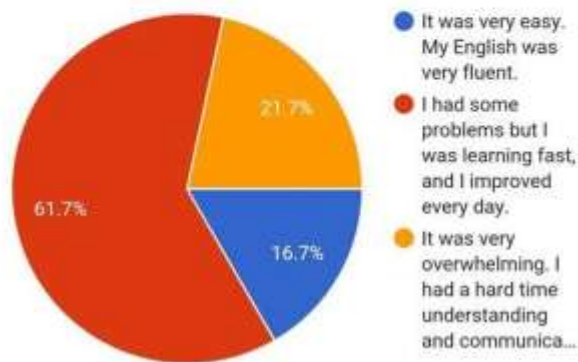


Figure 18. Ability to function in the English language during the first months

61,7 % of the respondents said they had problems but they improved fast at the same time. On the other hand, the 21,7% of them said to have hard time with the language and, just a 16,7 % of them said to be fluent.

Responses from Colombians

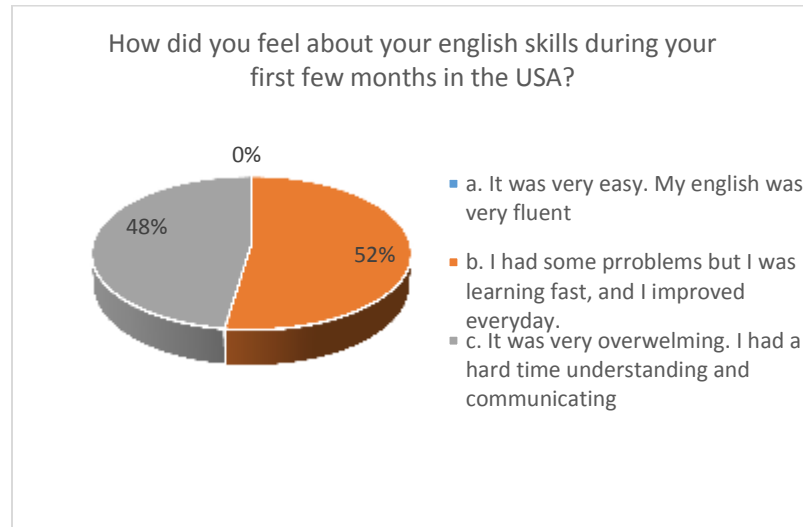


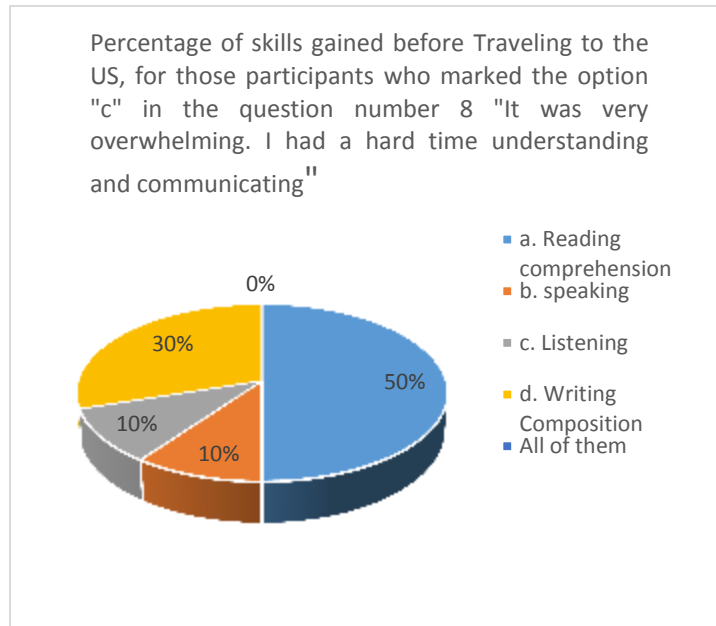
Figure 19. Ability to function in the English language during the

None of the Colombians had a fluent English. But seems like the option b and c are almost tied. Nevertheless, more than half of them (52%) had problems during the first 3 months but they learned fast and improved every day, which proves that attitude is a very important factor when it comes to learn a language.

first months.

Analyzing the option c “It was very overwhelming. I had a hard time understanding and communicating” versus the question

number 7, which addresses the participant's skills before traveling to the US. This analysis only will be shown for the Colombians group.



For the Colombian people who had a difficult time understanding and communicating, it is clear that they had a lack in the speaking and listening skills, since just 10% (respectively in each category) of them developed those skills in their home country. The main strength is reading comprehension, followed by writing composition.

Figure 20. Confronting question 7 vs 8 for Colombian respondents

Responses from Germans.

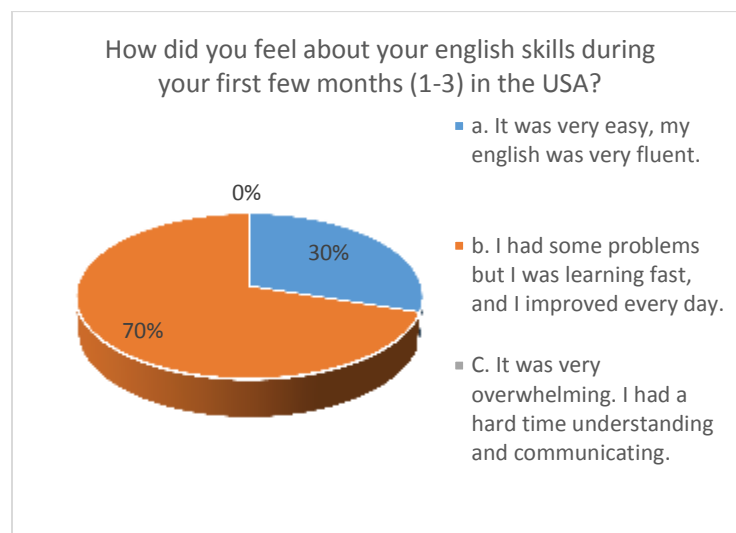


Figure 21. Ability to function in the English language during the

70% of the respondents said they had some problems but they were learning fast and constantly improving. On the other hand, the 30% of them felt that their English was very fluent. Nevertheless, none of the respondents felt overwhelmed because of their English skills.

first months

Responses from other Latin American respondents.

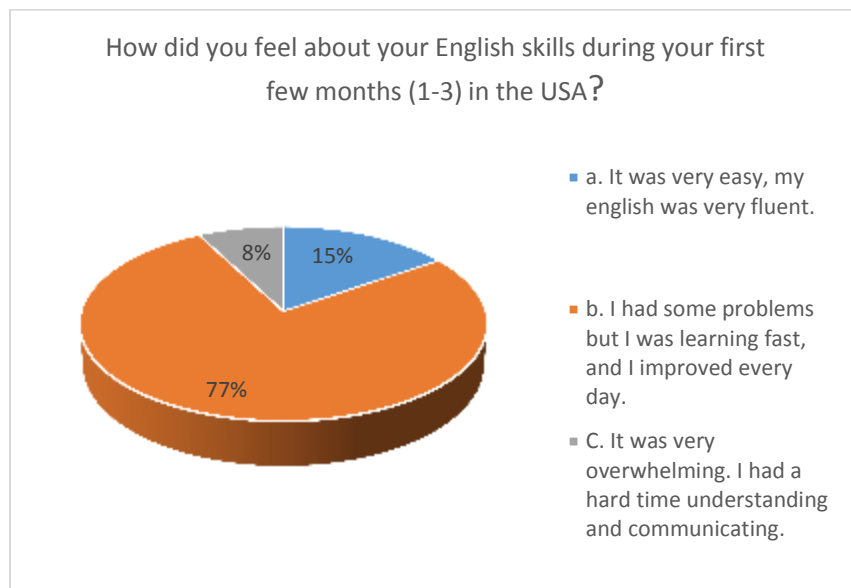


Figure 22. Ability to function in the English language during the first months.

The 77% of the respondents said that they had some problems but they were learning fast and improving every day. On the other hand, the 15 % said it was very easy for them. By contrast, just the 8% of them said to feel overwhelmed about their English skills.

Responses from Other European countries.

How did you feel about your English skills during your first few months (1-3 months) in the USA?

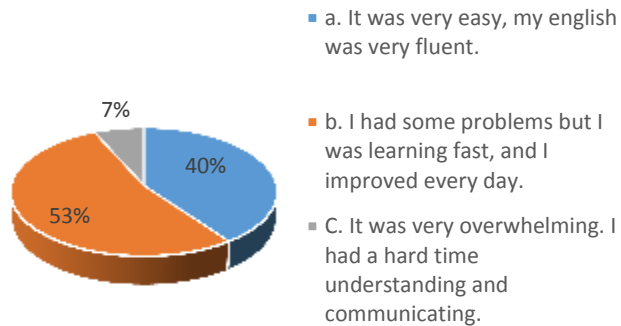


Figure 23. Ability to function in the English language during the

*first
mont
hs*

The 53 % of the respondents said that they had some problems during the first few months in the USA, but they were learning fast. Also, the 40% of them said their English was very fluent. On the other hand, only the 7% of them said to feel overwhelmed and to have a hard time communicating.

Conclusions.

This question was made in order to find out how the participants of the program felt in the first months, focusing on Colombians responses. It is a fact that Colombians did not feel that their English was really good and fluent, even though if some of them (11%) said their major strength was speaking. That is why the questions 7 and 8 were matched, to figure how the skills gained before traveling to the USA can interfere in the process, as it was said above, the lack of speaking and listening for Colombians became a problem to the participants during the first months.

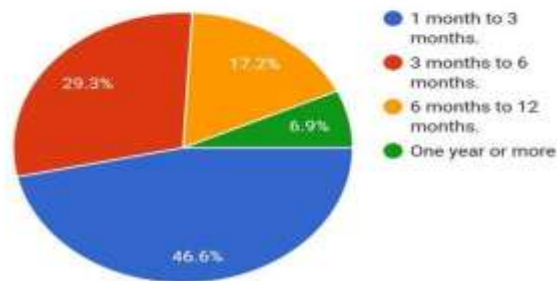
In comparison to the other Latin American countries, some of them said to be fluent and, just 8% of them said to feel overwhelmed because of their English skills, whereas 48 % of Colombians said so. It can be concluded one more time that Colombians are behind the average in Latin America, when it comes to English skills.

Furthermore, talking about the respondents from other European countries as it happened with all the groups, the most marked option was “b” that says they had some problems, but they were learning and improving fast. Still, for the 40% of them their English was fluent. German respondents did not feel overwhelmed on their first months, being the only group that did not mark this option.

9. How long did it take you to learn or improve your English?

9. How long did it take you to learn or improve your English? (Have a fluent conversation, be able to express your ideas, order food in a restaurant, make a call, write properly, and explain your complaints).

(58 responses)



The 46.6% of the respondents it took them between 1 to 3 months to improve their English, also 29.3% of them said it took them between 6 to 12 months. On the other hand, 17.2% said from 6 to 12 months and only the 6.9 % of them said one year or more.

Figure 24. Period of time needed to improve or learn English

Responses from Colombians.

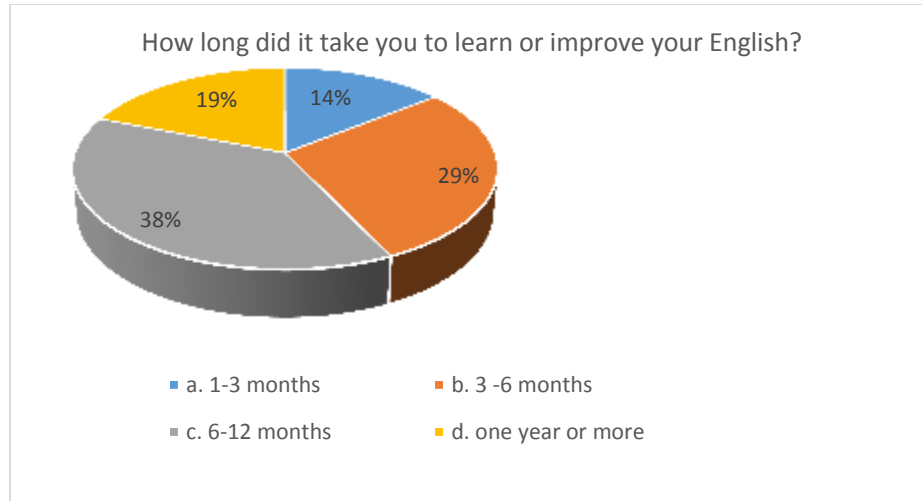


Figure 25. Period of time that Colombians needed to learn or improve English.

Most of the Colombians (38%) needed a period between 6 and 12 months to improve their English and, be able to have a fluent conversation, express ideas, and order food in a restaurant etc.). Nevertheless, the 29 % of them spent 3 to 6 months to improve it, whereas just the 19 % needed a year or more.

Responses from Germans.

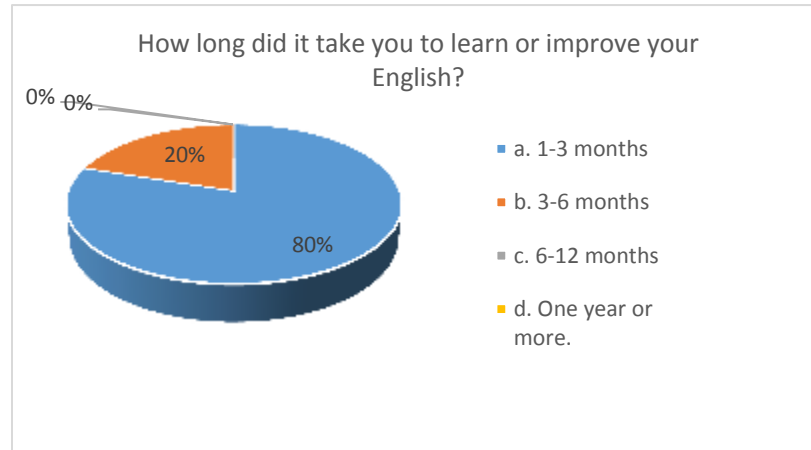


Figure 26. Period of time that Germans needed to learn or improve English

The 80 % of the respondents said that it took them between 1-3 months to learn or improve their English skills. Also, 20 % said that they need from 3 to 6 months to improve it. Still, none of the respondents said to need more than 6 months to display English. Which means that even though if they had some problems at the beginning they got over them since they probably had a strong basis of the language.

Responses from other Latin American countries.

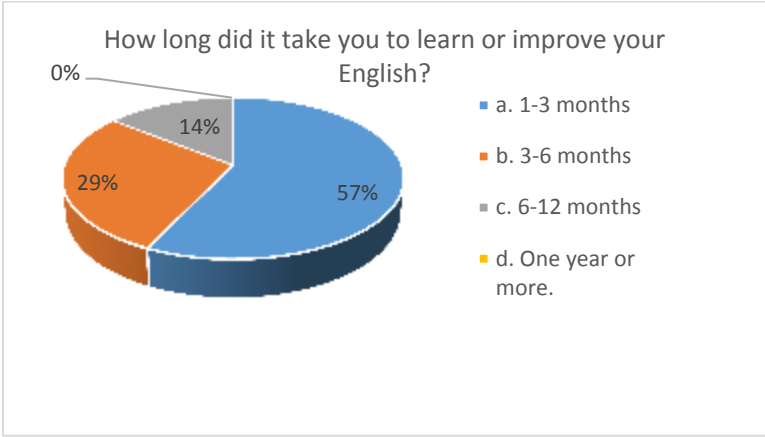


Figure 27. Period of time that respondents from Latin American countries needed to learn or improve their English.

57 % of the respondents said that it took them 1 to 3 months to improve their English, which is much better than the average for Colombians which was just the 14%. Still, for the 29 % of them it took them 3 to 6 months. Nevertheless, just the 14 % of them said need 6 to 12 months to improve it. Also, none of them said to need more than one year.

Responses from other European countries.

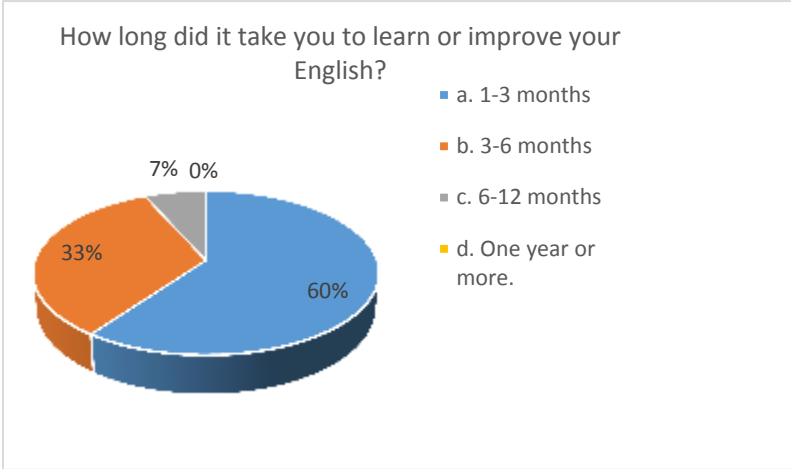


Figure 28. Period of time that European respondents needed to learn or improve their English.

The 60% of the respondents said to need between 1 -3 months to improve their English. Following that the 33% of them needed between 3 to 6 months. Only the 7% of them needed 6 to 12 months. And none of them need more than one year.

Conclusions

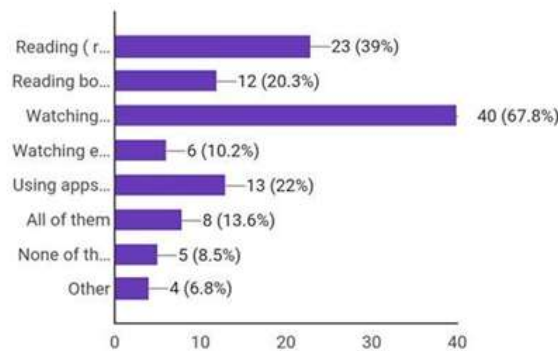
The 38 % of Colombians said they needed between 6 -12 months to improve their English, hence the long term exchange programs seem to better fit Colombians. Since most of them have a lack of English speaking and listening skills, which will improve mostly by the experience of living abroad and talking to natives.

As It was explained above, the information collected from Colombians is very different each other and depends on different circumstances. On the other hand the information collected from German respondents is more segmented, and it can be demonstrated that their strong basis they had before coming to US was crucial to their further learning, since all of them needed a period of six months or less to improve their English.

10. Which of the following options do you use the most to study English, outside of communicating with native English speakers?

10. Which of the following options do you use the most to study English currently, outside of communicating with native English speakers?

(59 responses)



The most popular options to study English are, watching movies (67,8%) and , reading random stuff (39 %). On the other hand, 6,8 % study on different ways and 8,5 % (most of them said to speak with natives, which mean they did not understand the question quite properly), also the 8,5 % of them don not use any of the options mentioned in the chart.

Figure 29. Learning tools used by the participants

Responses from Colombians.

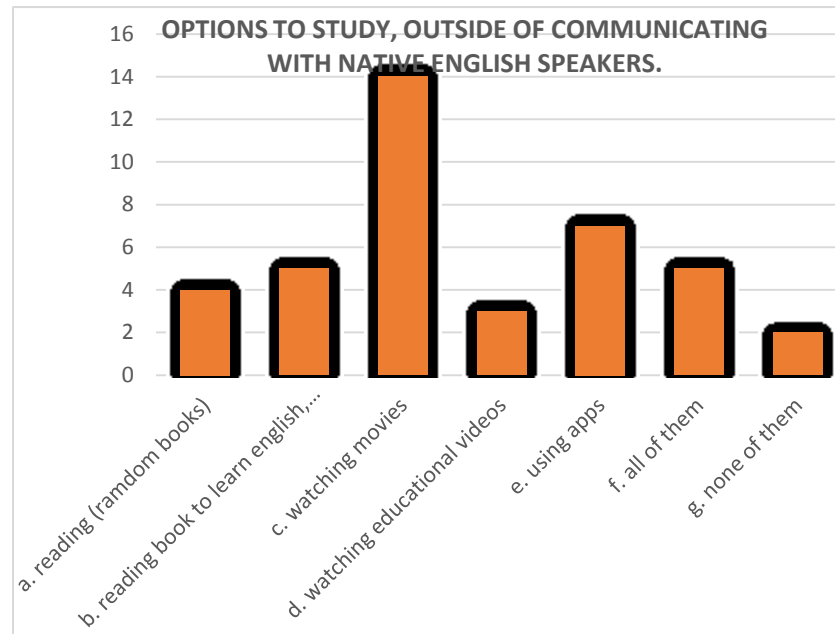
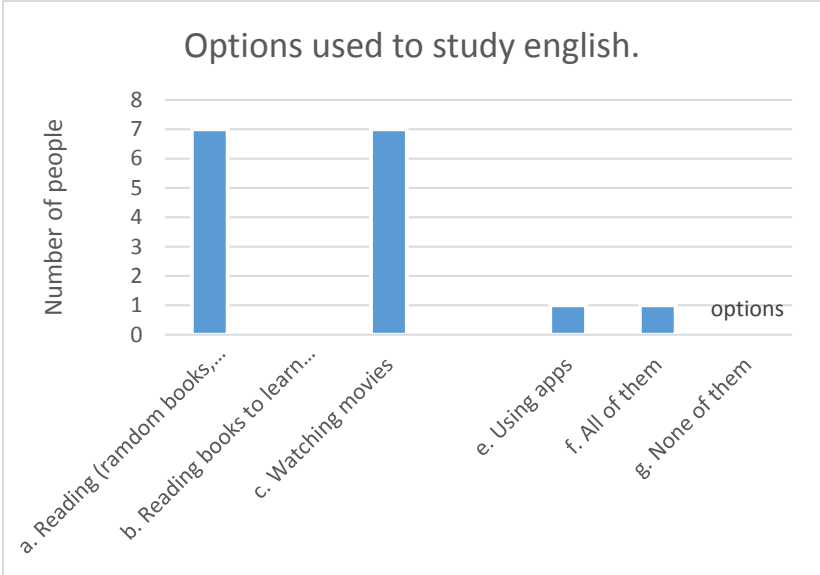


Figure 30. Learning tools used by Colombians

The 38% of the Colombians watch movies as a way to study, it is the most marked option since it involves sharing time with friends or just relaxing at home, while learning. After that one, the next most popular option is using apps such Duolingo 18%.

Nevertheless, Colombians don't spend much time reading as a way to improve their English, just 10% read random stuff such books, magazines etc.). And, only a 12% of them actually read books to learn English or improve English. (Grammar, orthography).

Responses from Germans.



There are two strong options that German respondents use to improve the English language. One of them is to watch movies (44%), which was the most popular option for Colombians as well. But, on the other hand, 44% of German respondents Read random books and magazines, etc. In contrast, 6% respectively use apps and use all of the options to learn English.

Figure 31. Learning tools used by Germans.

Responses from other Latin American Countries.

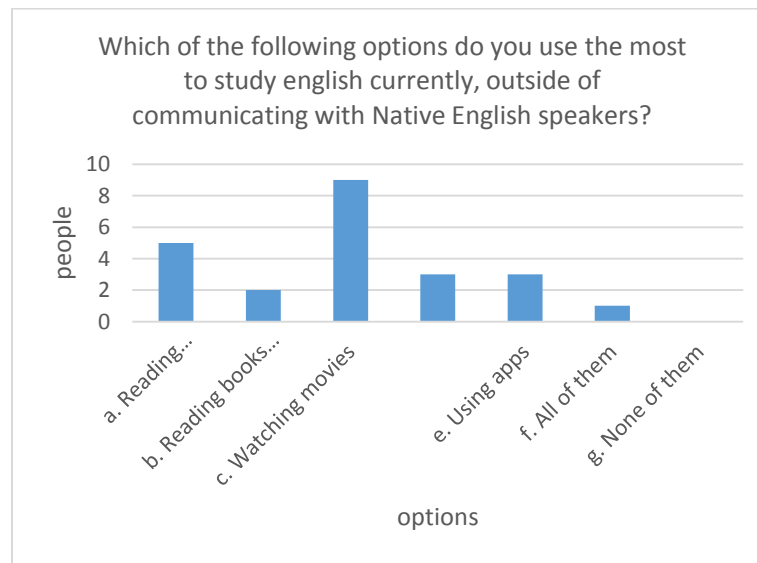


Figure 32. Learning tools used by respondents from Latin

Watching movies is the best way to learn English for the respondents. Followed by reading random books, magazines, etc. By contrast, the less popular options were reading books to learn specific things and use all the options mentioned above.

American countries.

Responses from other European countries.

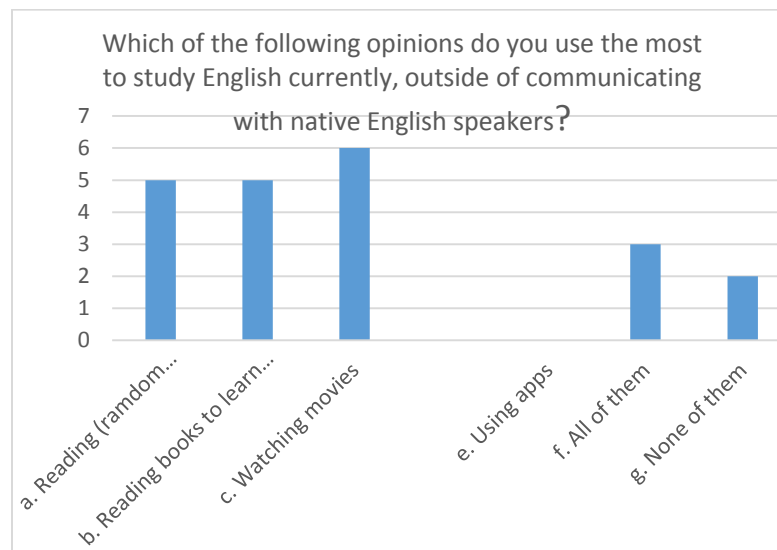


Figure 33. Learning tools used by European respondents

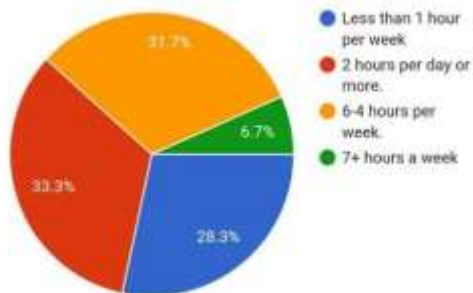
Watching movies is the trend for all the groups including this one. Also reading seems like a strong option, both options “a” and “b”.

Conclusions:

Watching movies is definitely the trend, as it was the most marked option for all the groups. Analyzing the Colombian results is clear that the opinions are very divided, between all the given options. On the other hand, Germans and respondents from other European countries seem to have a strong inclination towards reading and not so much to using technological means as a way to improve their English.

11. How many hours per week do you usually spend studying English by your own means? (Reading books, watching movies, using apps)?

11. How many hours do you usually spend studying English by your own means? (Reading books, watching movies, watching educational videos, using apps)
(60 responses)



This question does not have a strong inclination for any of the options. Still, it can be said that the 33.3% of the respondents said to spend 2 hours per day or more to study English. Nevertheless, 28.3 % of them said to study less than one hour a week which is the lowest amount of time.

Figure 34. Time spend studying English by their own means

Responses from Colombians.

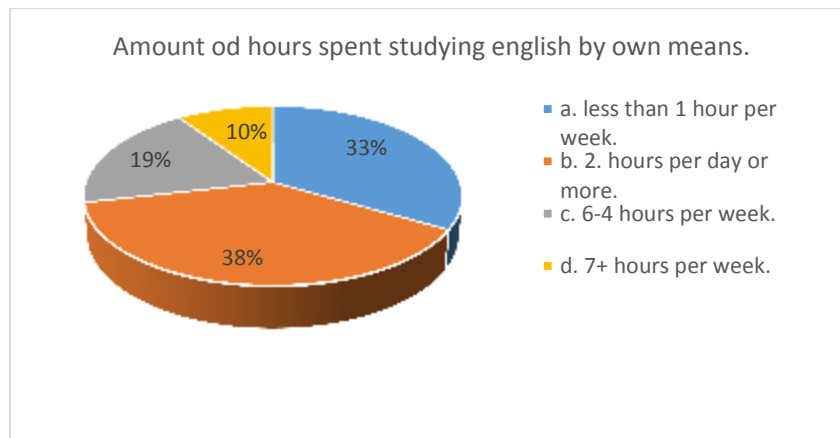


Figure 35 Amount of hours that Colombians spend studying

38% of the Colombians spend 2 hours per day or more studying English. In despite of that, the 33% of them spend less than 1 hour per week. Which means that the studying is matter of attitude or, also it can involve other variables such schedule, and lack of specific skills. For example, if someone has a lack of speaking, they would try to talk to other natives as a way to improve English most likely.

English by their own means.

Responses from Germans.

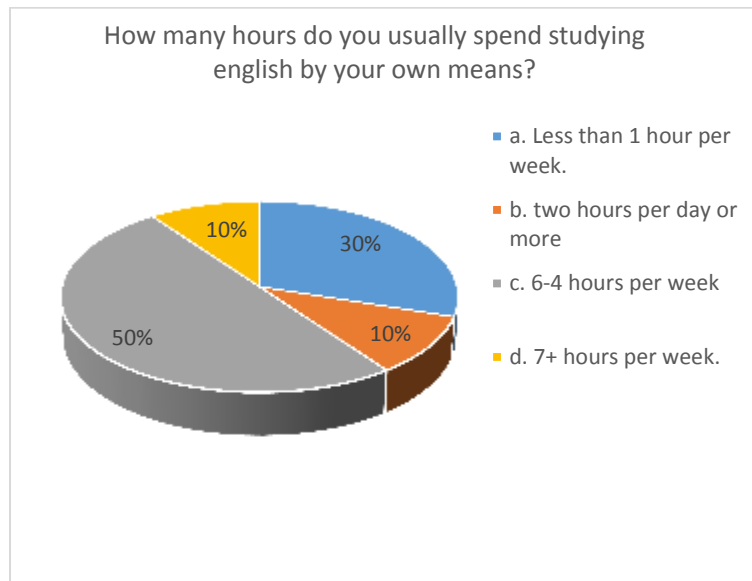


Figure 36. Amount of hours that Germans spend studying English by their own means.

50% of the German respondents spend from 4- 6 hours per week to study English. Nevertheless, the 30% of them spend less than 1 hour per week to study it. In contrast, the options "a "and "d", which involve more time to study are the less popular with 10% respectively, which means that they find other ways to study such speaking to natives etc.

Responses from Other Latin American countries.

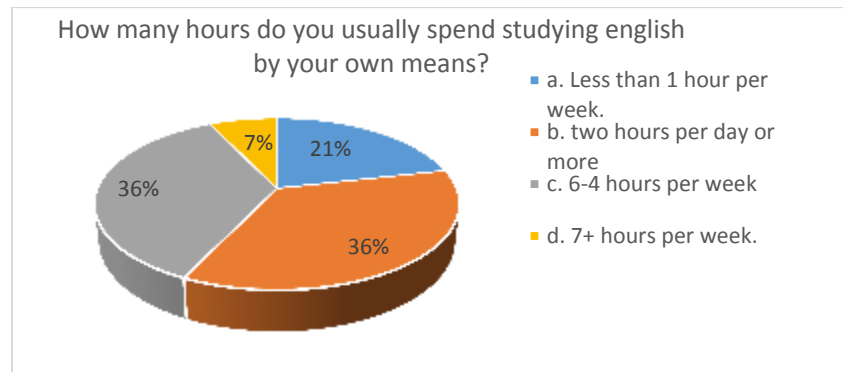


Figure 37. Amount of hours spend that respondents from Latin American countries spend Studying English by their own means.

The option "b" and "c" were the most chosen ones. By one hand, 36% of them said to study 2 hours per day or more, which is really good. But, on the other hand, also the 36 % of them said to study just from 4 to 6 hours per week, which is not much. Furthermore, the 21% of them said to study less that one hour per week which is very little.

Nevertheless, on the question 9, most of them said they needed 1 to 3 months to improve their English. This explains why some of them do not see the need to keep studying specific topics to improve their English.

Responses from other European countries

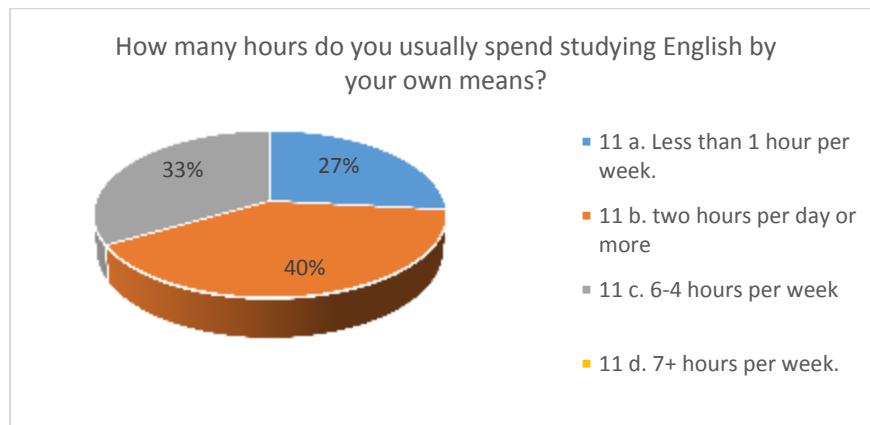


Figure 38. Amount of hours that European respondents spend

40% of the respondents said to study 2 hours per day or more. Which involves a good amount of time to study. Also, the 33% of them said to study between 4 to 6 hours a week.

On the other hand, the 27% of them said to study less than 1 hour per week. The opinions in this matter are quite different.

studying English by their own means.

Conclusions.

For most of Colombians and participants from different countries from Latin America and Europe is important to study 2 hours per day or more; on the contrary this was the less marked option for Germans who seem not to dedicate too much to study the language since most of them come to US with a really good basis.

Generally speaking, the results for each group were quite different since the time to study the language could depend on schedule of the participant and also on the interest to improve the language.

12. Which of the following situations do you feel describes you more?

- a. I came to improve my English, and that is why avoid speaking my home language

- b. I want to improve my English, but I also want to make friends, and that is why I speak my home language with friends because I think we can communicate better.
- c. I make an effort to speak English with both friends and native speakers, but fill in with my native language when we can't communicate well.

12. Which of the following situations do you feel describes you more?

(60 responses)

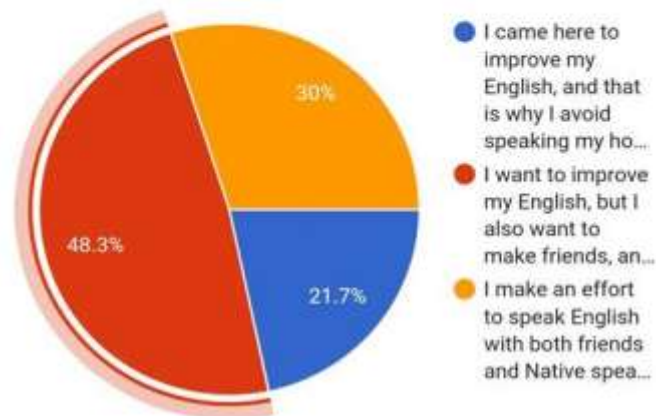


Figure 39. Situations that best describe the participants regarding to the will to speak their home language.

48,3 % of the respondents said they want to learn the language. But, for them, it is important to communicate with friends who speak their home language, since they feel they can communicate better.

On the other hand, 30 % of them said to make an effort to speak with natives and just fill in with their home language when needed it. Only 21,7 % of them said to avoid speaking their home language as much as possible.

Responses from Colombians.

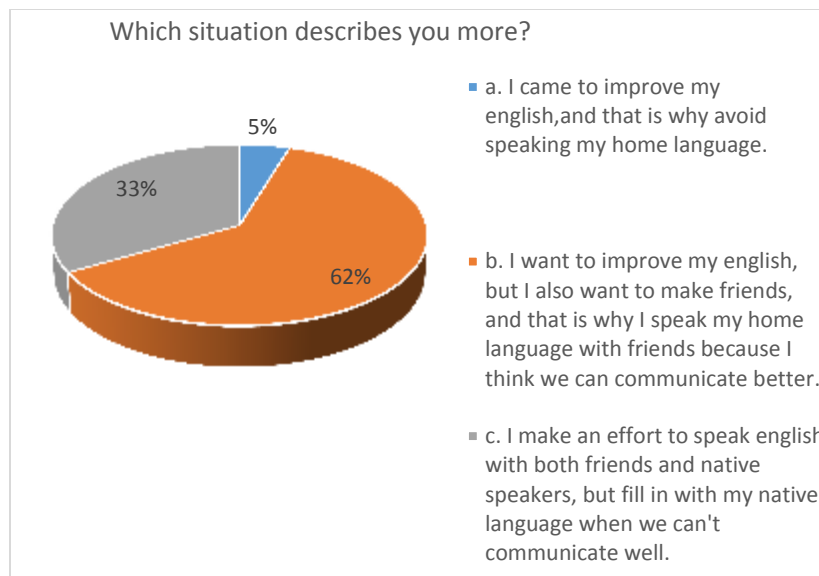


Figure 40. Situation that best describe Colombians regarding to the will to speak Spanish.

The 62% want to improve their English, but also they feel like the best way to socialize is to make friends that speak Spanish. Which does not help the process of learning English. By contrast, just the 5% of them think that avoiding speaking Spanish is the best way to learn English. However, the 33 % make an effort to speak English, and only speak their native language when needed.

Responses from Germans

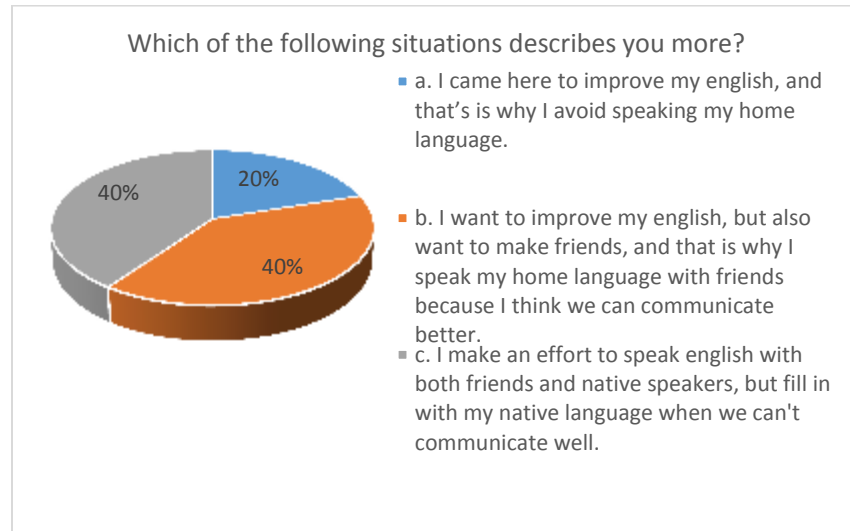


Figure 41. Situation that best describe Germans regarding to the will to speak their home language

Seems like the Germans respondents have two situations that describe their process living in the USA. 40 % of them want to improve their English but they speak their home language with friends. Also, the 40 % make an effort to speak with native speakers and just use their home language when needed it. By contrast, just the 20% of the Germans respondents avoid to speak their home language.

Responses from other Latin American countries

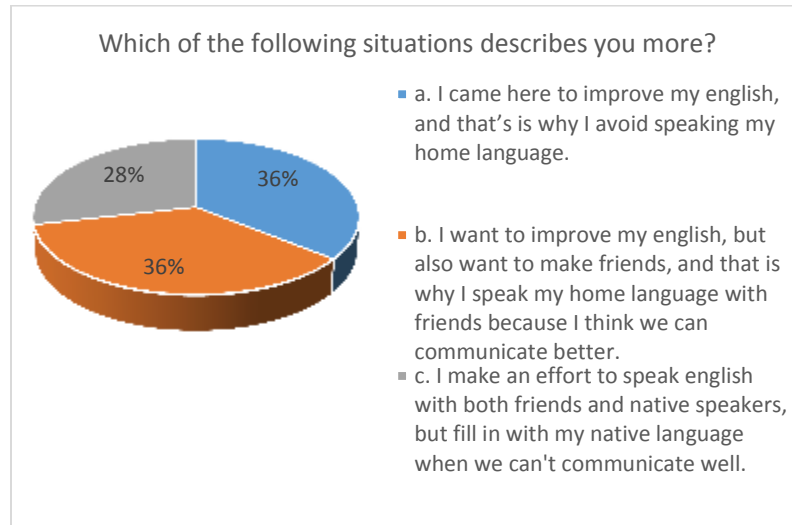


Figure 42. Situation that best describe respondents for Latin American countries regarding to the will to speak their home language

36 % of the respondents marked the option "a" which means they try to avoid speaking their home language as much as possible. Nevertheless, the other 36% marked the option "b" where they say that they speak their home language with friends because they feel they can communicate better. Seems like there is not a strong inclination towards any of the options. Also, the 28% said they try to communicate with natives and friends in English, but when they cannot communicate well they use their home language.

Respondents from other European countries

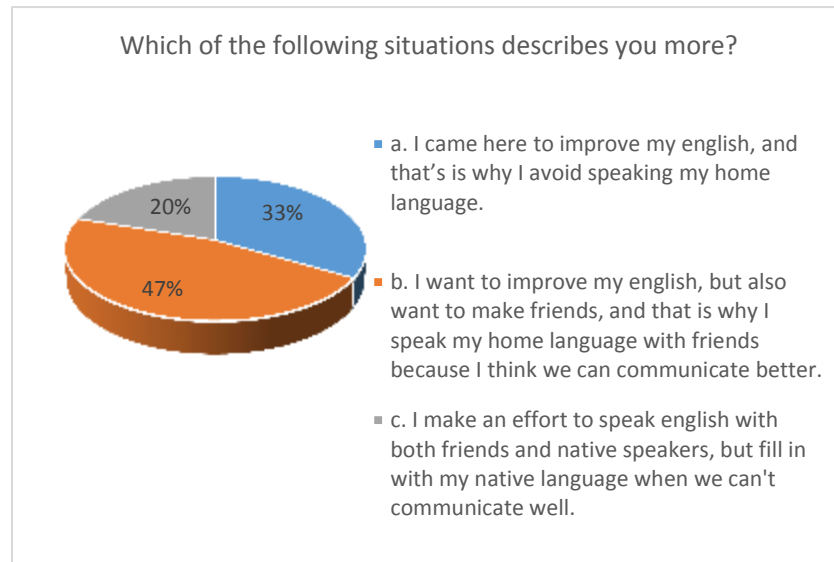


Figure 43. Situations that best describe European respondents regarding to their will to speak their home language

Surprisingly, the 47 % of the respondents said to feel comfortable speaking in their home language with friends. But on the other hand, the 33% of them said to avoid their home language as much as possible. Nevertheless, the 20 % of them said to make an effort to speak English with friends and natives and just use their home language when necessary.

Conclusions:

Speaking the home language with friends is very important for most of the respondents, regardless of the nationality. Still, the Colombian respondents seems to have the biggest percentage (62%) out of all the respondents, at the same time Colombians respondents are the less interested to avoid their home language (5%). Seems like respondents from Latin American countries were the ones who most marked the option “a”, which says to avoid speaking their home language as much as possible.

13. Do you think that speaking your home language slows your ability to learn English?

13. Do you think that speaking your home language slows your ability to learn English?

(60 responses)

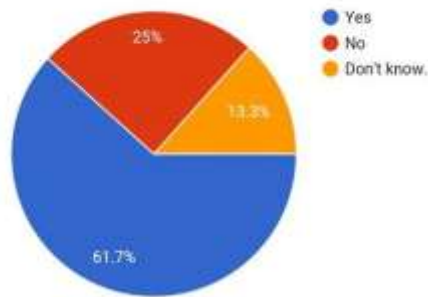


Figure 44. Opinion about the influence generated by speaking their home language

Even though if the most of the respondents said that they speak their home language with friends (question 12), also most of them think that it slows their ability to learn English (61,7 %). On the other hand, 25 % of them think that it does not matter, and 13,3 % do not know.

Res
pon

Do you think that speaking your home language slows your ability to learn english ?

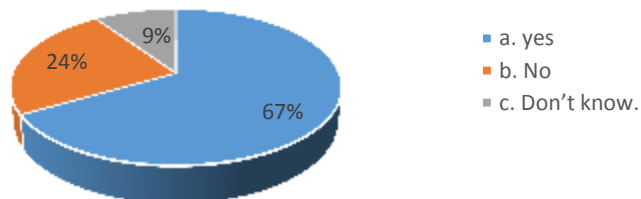


Figure 45. Influence generated by speaking their home language. Colombian case

ses from Colombians.

Most of the Colombian (67%) think that speaking their home language slows the ability to learn English. Even though, most of them speak their home language with friends (62%), which means that this is a problem in the process. Colombians should try to make a big effort to reduce the time spent talking in their home language in order to improve their English skills.

Responses from Germans.

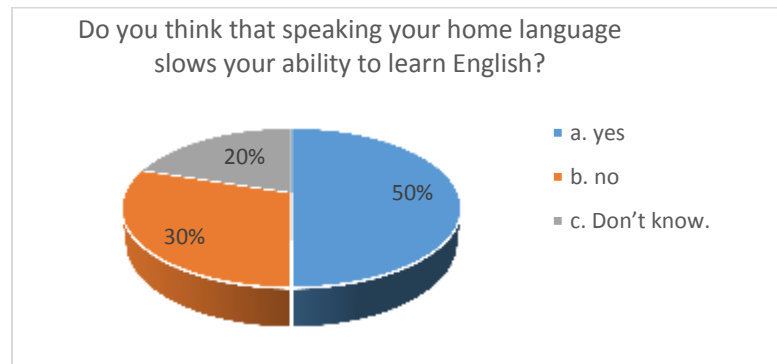


Figure 46. Influence generated by speaking their home language. German case.

50 % of the German respondents think that speaking their home language slows their abilities to learn English. Still, 40% of them said before the need of speaking their home language with friends.

On the other hand, 30 % of them think that it does interfere. Also 20% of them do not know or have an opinion about that.

Responses from other Latin American countries respondents

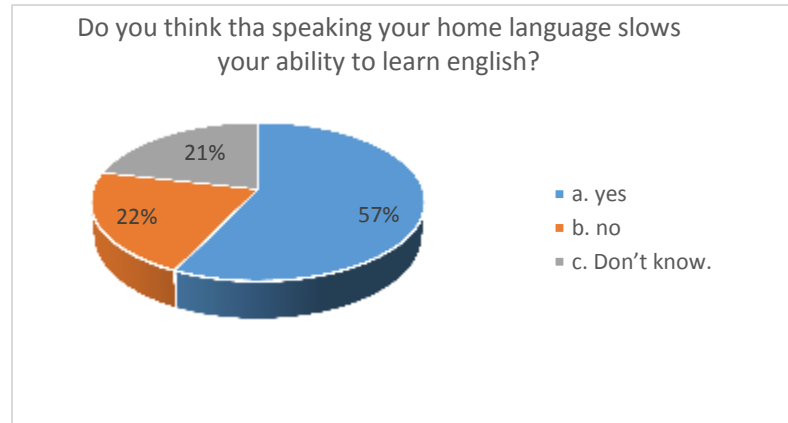


Figure 47. Influence generated by speaking their home language. Respondents from Latin American's Case

The 57% of the respondents think that speaking their home language slows their ability to learn English. Still, the 21 % of them said otherwise and, the 22% of them do not know. Also, analyzing the question 5 where is asked the length of time living in the United states , the 75 % of the ones who marked the option "c", have been living in the USA for less than 6 months. Which means they have not had a full experience of the program, neither a deep language immersion.

Responses from other European countries

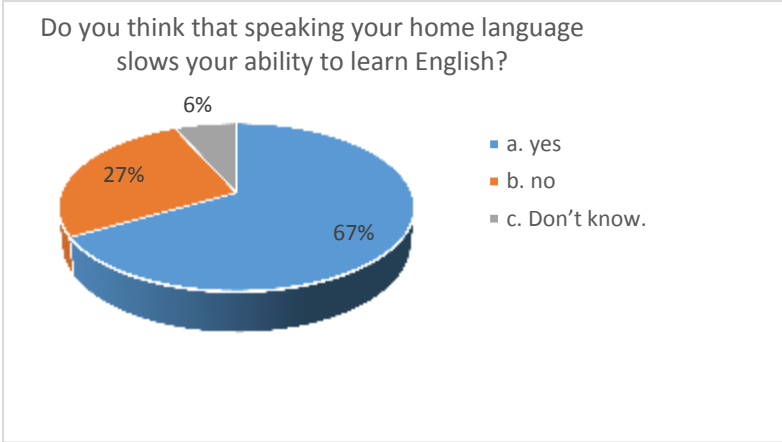


Figure 48. Influence generated by speaking their home language.

The 67 % of the respondents think that speaking in their home language slows the ability to learn English. 27 % of them think otherwise. And 6 % of them do not have an opinion about that.

Also, comparing to the question 5 which ask for how long have been the participant in the USA, most of them said between 12 to 18 months. Furthermore, 47% of them were au pairs in the past which means they are really conscious about the question, since they had a full experience with the program.

*Eur
ope
an
res
pon
den
ts'
cas
e.*

Conclusions:

For most of the respondents, speaking their home language with friends slows their capability to learn English, because they are not having a total immersion. For some of those who speak multiple languages or who already have developed the English skills in a very good level could be not as bad, as for those who are starting to learn a new language, like is the case for most of Colombians. As a result they should try to avoid it or just use when need it, as a way to improve their English skills at a faster rate.

Colombians and respondents from different European countries are the ones who think that speaking their home language is not helpful when learning English.

14. Would you recommend other people to move to an English speaking country as a way to improve their English skills?

14. Would you recommend other people to move to an English speaking country as a way to improve their English skills?
(60 responses)

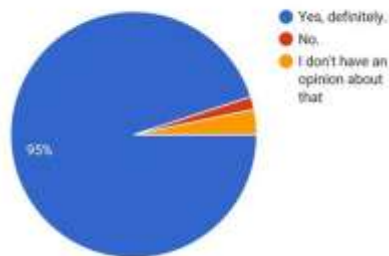


Figure 49. Respondent's opinions regarding to recommending other people to move to an English speaking country.

The 95 % of the respondents would recommend other people moving abroad as a way to improve their English skills. Even though, if some of the participants, struggle at the beginning of the program. Regardless, than for some of them it took them more than one year to be able to perform the language confidently.

This is the question in what most of the groups agree, regardless of nationality and time spent in the country.

Survey conclusions

The survey helps to get to know some of the reasons why some people within the exchange programs display better results than others, besides the attitude, one of the major reasons is the previous contact they had with language. Indeed English is the second language for many countries, but some of them (like Germany) make sure that most of the population is able to perform the speaking and listening skills which are the most important when it comes to communicating with English natives.

Most Colombians have difficulty with the English language, because it seems like they are behind the average, even in comparison to other Latin American countries. The information collected from some questions was very different each other in regards to responses from Latin American countries and Germans. Most of them had different experiences that were not covered with basic education, whereas Germans for example seems to have a strong education system that allows the student to develop very consistent skills.

People should try to learn English as much as possible before traveling to USA. In that way they will not feel the cultural shock as strong as it usually is for those who do not have strong basis in the language.

It is very important that even though the participants feel homesick they should try to avoid speaking their home language since it slows the learning process in most of the cases.

An exchange program seems to be a perfect way to improve English skills, despite the many problems some of them have to face in the first months because of the lack of skills in the Language.

ANEXE 4.

FULL INTERVIEW TO ROGER BRIGSS.

The conversation will be separated regarding the different topics addressed during the meeting. Also the pictures shown below correspond to the visit done to Chautauqua when the work they do was explained in a practical way.

Illustration 33. Set of wag bags are constantly left in the trails. Basically if climbers and people in general, like to spend time outdoors, they also

have to make sure not to leave trace, which means pick up their fecal remains.



Illustration 34. Some of the signs left to aware the hikers and climbers about the trail projects



Illustration 35. Illustration 36. View of the second flatiron



Illustration 37. . Roger Briggs (Founder of the Boulder Climbing Community) and Angie Rodriguez climbing the third flatiron



Illustration 38. Climbing the third flatiron. Picture taken half way.



illustration 39 . On the summit of third flatiron



Briggs' words.

Tourism topic

I really think that the idea of ecotourism is to get people out there, to get an experience out of the city, out in the nature, so they have to build infrastructure for that, and such an example in Latin America could be Costa Rica. The problem with American culture, is that we have an economic interest to make money out of tourism. This has value, but just with only those economic interests in mind... we have to realize that they are destroying the environment, if they do not have sustainable trails and a sustainable infrastructure they do not have a valuable business future, so I think everyone is waking up to that.

Boulder Climbing community.

With the work we are doing, it is very easy to get support, we just have to spread the word. But once we talk to people about we are doing, everyone thinks it is great, and we do not have problems raising money and they want to help. They want to give money, and there is the city, the government, and the land managers think it is great too, because their problem is to manage those lands. They have to fix trails, and our trail crew is fully capable of doing

that, moving a lot of heavy rocks, so we are solving a problem for them and they are paying us.

The Access Fund partners with us in insurance, and they keep track of all of the pay checks. We just raise the money, line up the work, hire the crew etc.... also we have a volunteer program, usually there are 1 or 2 people with our crew, because it could be dangerous work sometimes, it is not like when you are volunteer with 20 other people, so that is why we only like to have 1 or 2 with them to assist. They have to know what they are doing, be fit and strong, and what is why we like to have climbers.

Some other things that the BCC does, separate from the trail crew, is the raptor closures in the Boulder Canyon, which is the place for the Golden Eagles¹⁴. they are magnificent birds, and their nest is in area where there are some climbing routes, so every January and February they come and pick one of those nest, and they have to rotate, because if they use the same nest over and over some parasites could be developed, so it is really important that they are left alone and, that they have totally freedom and the climbers are not around during that time. So we put a big sign to close the area... the program that protect the eagles, that enforces the

¹⁴ The golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) is one of the best-known birds of prey in the Northern Hemisphere. It is the most widely distributed species of eagle. They build large nests in high places (mainly cliffs) to which they may return for several breeding years.

closure is the United States forest service, they post the closure, and we have to spread the word to climbers.

There are some different ways to get to a climbing area, but really I just want one, and that one is the best one. But on the other hand, climbers just want to get up there and we just want to choose the best one and, close off all the other ways and let plants grow back, so the impact at least is in just one way that is durable and not moving. So slowly the intention is to map, right now I am involved in a big mapping project in Boulder Canyon. I've been hiking around in Boulder Canyon¹⁵ and with GPS, looking for the most popular cracks¹⁶ and trying to figure out which is the best one single proper way to get up there. That is the best way and established that, in the GPS, we will put that in the Google Earth so we will look at a tridimensional plane and see if how the trail system looks like, look at the parking lots etc.”

History of Boulder

Now focus a little bit more about the history in Boulder and the upcoming problems, Briggs points out.

¹⁵ Boulder Canyon is popular for scenic driving, fishing and rock climbing. Land in this area is a mix of city, county, national forest and private lands

¹⁶ Crack climbing is a type of rock climbing in which the climber follows a crack in the rock and uses specialized climbing techniques.

“A lot of people in the late 1950’s, many of them from the university, really pushed and got involved in the local politics to start buying land. To put a tax to raise money to buy private property and turn it into the city of Boulder Open Space and that’s what they did slowly and they established that; Boulder has invested lots of money now through taxes, and the people wanted to support this tax measures. So we purchased all these lands and we preserved them, and it is pretty built up. That is one of the things that makes Boulder so special, but now the problem is that everyone is coming here, and if we go to Chautauqua meadows in the weekend there are tons of people, it has doubled in the last year or so. And all this population growth will continue in the area. It is really concerning... many people from other states move because of its beauty, and if they’re really into sports and mountains there is no better place to be.

I have seen waves of change in Boulder, back in the 70, the first big change would come when this popular show called “Mork and Mindy” came out, which was filmed in Boulder and, because of its people started to get more interested about this place. For example, back in the 50’ when I grew up there were few people, and the town was being promoted. They wanted people to come visit and live; but then again in the 70’, in fact the local politics they lay down a growth cap, the city county voted about it with a 2% to 2.5% limit, which was very radical at the time, because growing is

the conventional American model. So from that point on, it become harder and harder to move to Boulder. Actually, the town is not being promoted these days, as Boulder doesn't need advertisement at all.

Climbing experiences.

We always lived near Chautauqua, and so I grew up looking at the flatirons. Since I was very little I used to play there, so we were just exploring it, and nobody was there, no trails, nothing.

So when I was about 12, I started rappelling, climbing, reading books about it. So basically it was me and a couple more friends, but still there was a climbing culture in Boulder. It was very small, the Colorado Mountain Club had a school, and so my parents said that I and my brother had to take climbing school. Nobody knew what climbing was about, but it always had this dangerous kind of reputation. It was hard for my parents, but they knew they couldn't stop me from doing it. So I started to know older people, and learning from them, and I was mentored very well from older people. By the time I got to be 18, I was a top climber around here, so I just kind of grew up in that environment

I still climb around here, and climbers always have projects and try to climb as hard as they can. But back when I was constantly climbing there were still first assents. I got to the end of the era where first assents were still available, but now you have to go so

far in to find them, in Patagonia or someplace like that. So we were driven, and we were virgin in something that we have never climbed before as hard as we could. To go back over and over, thinking about the projects in the middle of the night, it becomes obsessive.