



TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

ENGLISH MAJOR

MODALITY: RESEARCH REPORT

THEME:

**TEACHERS' ROLES IN AN INSTITUTIONAL TELETANDEM PROGRAM AT
TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI**

Research report before obtaining the bachelor degree in National and Foreign language
Pedagogy, English Major

Author:

Noroña Obaco Wenceslao Rodrigo

Tutor:

Amparo Jesús de Romero Palacios, MSc.

PUJILI-ECUADOR

AUGUST 2023


TUTOR'S ENDORSEMENT

In my capacity as a supervisor of the research report entitled “**Teachers’ roles in an institutional teletandem program at Technical University of Cotopaxi**”, and researched by Noroña Obaco Wenceslao Rodrigo, ID number 2100887823, for obtaining the bachelor’s degree in National and Foreign language Pedagogy, English Major.

I CERTIFY THAT:

This research report has been fully revised and has the requirements and merits to be submitted for evaluation by the assigned revision Committee and its presentation and defense.

Pujilí, August, 2023



MSc. Amparo Jesus de Romero
ID: 0501369185

COMMITTEE APPROVAL

The research report entitled “**Teachers’ roles in an institutional teletandem program at Technical University of Cotopaxi**”, has been revised, approved, and authorized for printing and binding, before obtaining the bachelor’s degree in National and Foreign language Pedagogy, English Major; this meets the substantive and formal requirements to hand in for the presentation and defense.

Pujilí, August, 2023



MSc. Abata Checa Fanny Mercedes

ID: 0502278740

Committee president



PhD. Tovar Viera Vicente Rodrigo

ID: 0502414089

Committee,
Member 1



MSc. Chiluisa Chiluisa Marcia Janeth

ID: 0502214307

Committee, Member 2

COPYRIGHT REFUSE

I, Noroña Obaco Wenceslao Rodrigo confer the rights of this undergraduate research report and authorize its total reproduction or part of it, as long as it is under the regulations of the Technical University of Cotopaxi.

Pujili, August, 2023

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wenceslao", is written over a horizontal dotted line.

Noroña Obaco Wenceslao Rodrigo

ID: 2100887823

GRATEFULNESS

To God for always standing beside me blessing my life.

To the Technical University of Cotopaxi and to the National and Foreign Languages career as well as all the teachers who conform for contributing to my professional development.

*To my tutor **MSc. Amparo Jesús de Romero** for her patience, guidance and wisdom to successfully complete this research.*

Thanks to all of you.

Wenceslao Noroña

DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this project to my parents Jorge and Marisol who have always supported me unconditionally in all aspects of my life.

Also, thanks to my siblings Walter, Jorge, and Mateo for being emotional support through the dark times.

To Elizabeth Woolridge Grant (a.k.a Lana del Rey) for always inspiring me and being the love of my life.

To the wonderful friends I made here: Cris, Isaac, Conie, Maca, Gene, Dayana Michelle, Jane, and Robincito.

Wenceslao Noroña

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY
ENGLISH MAJOR

THEME: TEACHERS' ROLES IN AN INSTITUTIONAL TELETANDEM PROGRAM AT TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI.

Author:

Noroña Obaco Wenceslao Rodrigo

Tutor:

Amparo de Jesús Romero Palacios. MSc.

ABSTRACT

Teletandem is a learning modality in which students from different linguistic and cultural contexts collaborate through digital platforms. It has evolved into an innovative alternative for foreign language education globally. That is why the aim of this investigation is to examine how do teachers' roles impact the effectiveness of the institutional teletandem program at the Technical University of Cotopaxi. This investigation used a qualitative approach. A semi structured interview was applied to both teachers and students. To analyze the data, thematic analysis was used in order to determine the common themes in the participant's answers. Then, the triangulation method was used to compare the answers from the perspectives of teachers and students. The results show that the role of educators has a significant impact on the effectiveness of the institutional teletandem program at the Technical University of Cotopaxi highlighting the importance of intercultural training for educators who play a key role in preparing students for interactions. Additionally, variability in approaches and learning objectives among educators is identified. It is crucial to establish an ongoing dialogue between educators and students about their experiences with Teletandem to enhance the effectiveness of the program. It is concluded that the effective execution of teachers' roles significantly influences the active participation and engagement of students in Teletandem interactions.

Keywords: teletandem – teachers – students – interaction – meetings.

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY
ENGLISH MAJOR

THEME: TEACHERS' ROLES IN AN INSTITUTIONAL TELETANDEM PROGRAM AT TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI.

Author:

Noroña Obaco Wenceslao Rodrigo

Tutor:

Amparo de Jesús Romero Palacios. MSc.

RESUMEN:

El teletándem es una modalidad de aprendizaje en la que estudiantes de diferentes contextos lingüísticos y culturales colaboran a través de plataformas digitales, y se ha consolidado como una alternativa innovadora en la educación de idiomas extranjeros. Es por ello que el objetivo de esta investigación es examinar cómo inciden los roles de los docentes en la efectividad del programa institucional teletándem en la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi. Esta investigación utilizó un enfoque cualitativo. Se aplicó una entrevista semiestructurada tanto a docentes como a estudiantes. Para analizar los datos, se utilizó el análisis temático con el fin de determinar los temas comunes en las respuestas de los participantes. Luego, se utilizó el método de triangulación para comparar las respuestas desde la perspectiva de docentes y estudiantes. Los resultados muestran que el rol de los educadores tiene un impacto significativo en la efectividad del programa institucional teletándem en la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi, destacando la importancia de la formación intercultural de los educadores, quienes juegan un papel clave en la preparación de los estudiantes para las interacciones. Además, se identifica variabilidad en los enfoques y objetivos de aprendizaje entre los educadores. Es crucial establecer un diálogo continuo entre educadores y estudiantes sobre sus experiencias con Teletándem para mejorar la efectividad del programa. Finalmente, se concluye que la ejecución efectiva de los roles de los docentes influye significativamente en la participación activa y el compromiso de los estudiantes en las interacciones de Teletándem.

Palabras clave: teletandem – estudiantes – profesores – interacción – reuniones

INDEX

TUTOR’S ENDORSEMENT	ii
COMMITTEE APPROVAL.....	iii
COPYRIGHT REFUSE	iv
GRATEFULNESS	v
DEDICATION	vi
ABSTRACT.....	vii
RESUMEN:	viii
INDEX	ix
1. General Information.....	1
2. Problem Statement.....	2
3. Objectives	4
3.1 General objective:.....	4
3.2 Specific objectives:.....	4
4. Activities and system of tasks in relation to the objective set	4
Table 1. Activities and task system in relation to the objectives proposed.....	4
5. Justification.....	5
6. Scientific and technical foundation.....	6
6.1 Background	6
6.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	8
6.2.1 Teletandem.....	8
6.2.2 The teacher’s Role in Teletandem language teaching	9
6.2.2.1 Guiding role	10
6.2.2.2 Linguistic role	12
6.2.2.3 Technological role	14
6.2.2.4 Mediation role.....	15
6.3 Challenges for teachers in Teletandem programs	17
6.4 Activities integrated by the teachers in EFL and Teletandem lessons	19
7. METHODOLOGY.....	21
7.1 Research approach.....	21
7.2 Research Method or level.....	21

7.3 Research context.....	22
7.4 Data collection procedure.....	22
7.5 Data analysis.....	23
8. Analysis and Discussion of Results	25
8.1 Category: Guidelines and expectations for the meetings	27
8.1.1 Subcategory: Behavioral aspect.....	27
8.1.2 Subcategory: Preparing students.....	28
8.2 Category: Learning goals	29
8.2.1 Subcategory: Implicit objectives	29
8.2.2 Subcategory: Structured guide.....	30
8.2.3 Subcategory: Learning from the experience.....	30
8.3 Category: Themes to talk to in the sessions	32
8.3.1 Subcategory: Cultural topics.....	32
8.3.2 Subcategory: English book topics.....	32
8.3.3 Subcategory: Free choice topics	33
8.4 Category:	34
Language practice exercises	34
8.4.1 Subcategory: Practicing during classes.....	34
8.4.2 Subcategory: Practicing in a minimum percentage	35
8.4.3 Subcategory: Not practicing at all	35
8.5 Category: Cultural exchange activities.....	36
8.5.1 Subcategory: English book themes.....	36
8.5.2 Subcategory: Lack of vocabulary and knowledge.....	36
8.5.3 Subcategory: Knowledge-sharing.....	37
8.6 Category: Linguistic support.....	38
8.6.1 Subcategory: Internet resources.....	38
8.6.2 Subcategory: Skill practicing.....	39
8.7 Category: Blending Teletandem.....	40
8.7.1 Subcategory: Book content.....	40
8.7.2 Subcategory: No integration	40
8.8 Category: Digital tools	41
8.8.1 Subcategory: Pandemic experience	41

8.8.2 Subcategory: Level of expertise	42
8.8.3 Subcategory: Technological problems.....	42
8.9 Category: Error correction and feedback	43
8.9.1 Subcategory: Feedback before interactions	43
8.9.2 Subcategory: No feedback	43
8.10 Category: Reflective activities	44
8.10.1 Subcategory: Reports.....	44
8.10.2 Subcategory: Discussions	45
8.10.3 Subcategory: No reflective activities.....	45
9. Research Impacts	47
10. Conclusions and Recommendations	48
10. 1. Conclusions	48
10. 2. Recommendations	49
11. References	51
12. Annex	55
Annex 1: Instrument validation format	55
Annex 2: Informed consent - students.....	58
Annex 3: Informed consent – teachers.	59
Annex 4: data collection instrument - Interview for teachers	60
Annex 5: Data collection instrument - Interview for students	63

INDEX OF TABLES

Table 1. Activities and task system in relation to the objectives proposed.....	4
Table 2. Activities developed by the teacher in Teletandem session.....	10
Table 3. Orientation and mediation on Tandem sessions.....	13
Table 4. Challenges that affect teacher to fullfil the role.....	17
Table 5. Organizational proposals for a Teletandem program.....	20
Table 6. Participant codes.....	25
Table 7. Categories & Subcategories.....	26

INDEX OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Functions for teachers to support students' autonomy.....	12
--	----

1. General Information

Theme: Teachers' roles in an institutional Teletandem program at Technical University of Cotopaxi.

Starting Date: April 2023

Ending Date: August 2023

Place of Research: Pujilí, Cotopaxi, Zona 3, Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi.

Sponsoring Faculty: Extension Pujilí.

Sponsoring career: National and Foreign Language Pedagogy English.

Macro project of the career: Formative processes in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in the educational institutions of the province of Cotopaxi.

Project coordinator:

Name: MSc. Amparo de Jesús Romero.

Phone number: 0983883918

E-mail address: amparo.romero@utc.edu.ec

Researcher:

Name: Noroña Obaco Wenceslao Rodrigo

Phone number: 0939812170

E-mail address: wenceslao.norona7823@utc.edu.ec

Knowledge area: Education

Research line: Education and Communication for human and social development.

Research line of the career: Personal and professional development of the English teacher.

2. Problem Statement

Currently, Teletandem is well known for being one of the best options to learn a second language, as it allows speakers from different cultures and parts of the world to interact, communicate and share with each other. In fact, “Teletandem is a new distance and computer-assisted mode of learning foreign languages in-tandem that makes extemporaneous use of oral and written production, reading and listening comprehension and webcam images of the participants” (Telles & Vasallo, 2006, p.193). Therefore, several universities and educational centers have opted to create links with others so their students can benefit from the process.

For example, the UTC (Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi) whose students have been interacting with students from UM (University of Miami) to learn Spanish and English respectively. The main basis of the whole interaction is settled on the fact that all speakers who participate are native speakers, which means that the feedback received will be from someone who has natural management of the target language (Cando & Tovar, 2021).

Over the years, several studies have been conducted on how Teletandem sessions should be addressed. Nevertheless, in most cases, there is not a clear path to lead the way on how these encounters between students should profit. My former experience as a university student and participant of Teletandem sessions allow me to know that there are a lot of inconveniences when developing those sessions.

Some of them include that teachers do not prepare specific topics and materials with students for the interactions. Logically, if the students go unprepared to address the meeting, then, they will not be able to “fluid”, and the meeting can lack stability. Telles (2015) explains why this does not work out by saying “the practice of conducting telletandem mediation sessions requires knowledge about intercultural contact, discourse, and communication” (p.607).

In the same way, another problem is teachers not involving deeply in the Teletandem sessions. The consequence of this is stated by Telles (2015) “without teacher mediation, Teletandem interactions may fall into shallow performances of sedimented and pre-given representations of self and other” where students could hardly obtain significative

learning as they are not being pushed by an educator. Finally, it can also be said that teachers do not integrate the information students get from the interactions with language learning. This is shown by Suzy & Cavalari (2019) “telecollaborative exchanges can be a powerful learning instrument when integrated into the FL curriculum and given adequate institutional support” (p.558).

As a result, addressing this topic correctly could highly impact how teachers are carrying out their teaching, making them reflect on whether they should prepare something specifically for the meetings (a topic to talk about), or continue with an improvised approach during the sessions (participants talk about any topic concerning their own interest). The consequences of not taking these considerations as a problem could end in a bad or not adequate teaching process, but also in students not getting to get the best out of the sessions.

Talking and practicing with a native speaker is not something that all language learners can afford, doing it using technological tools from a comfortable space is a plus, as it also turns out to be quite cheaper. It would be a shame to have such a learning opportunity and not banging into it. With that being settled, the research question regarding this problem is: **"How do teachers' roles impact the effectiveness of the institutional Teletandem program at the Technical University of Cotopaxi?"**

3. Objectives

3.1 General objective:

- Examine how teachers' roles impact the effectiveness of the institutional Teletandem program at the Technical University of Cotopaxi.

3.2 Specific objectives:

- To describe the specific roles and responsibilities of the teachers involved in the Teletandem program at the Technical University of Cotopaxi.
- To analyze how the effective execution of teachers' roles influences participation and engagement of students in Teletandem interactions.
- To propose improvement alternatives for the Teletandem program through the analysis and utilization of collected data.

4. Activities and system of tasks in relation to the objective set

Table 1. Activities and task system in relation to the objectives proposed.

Specific objective	Activities	Verification Means
To describe the specific roles and responsibilities of the teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research papers on the topic. • Read the researched papers. • Analyze information • Select information • Write relevant information 	Theoretical Framework
To analyze how the effective execution of teachers' roles influences active participation and engagement of students in Teletandem interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the instrument (interview) • Validate the instrument • Apply the instrument • Analyze the information 	Analysis and Discussion

To propose improvement alternatives for the Teletandem program through the analysis and utilization of collected data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborate conclusions and recommendations. 	Conclusions and Recommendations

5. Justification

Foreign language education has undergone a transformation in the global educational landscape, with the Teletandem program emerging as an innovative response to the changing demands of language teaching and learning. Originating in the 1960s in Germany, this approach has spread widely on a global scale, affording students the opportunity to virtually interact with native speakers, bridging linguistic and cultural boundaries (Vassallo & Telles, 2006). In Latin America, this approach has found a solid footing, notably in the Ecuadorian context, where its adoption is evident in educational institutions like the Technical University of Cotopaxi.

Within the framework of the Technical University of Cotopaxi, this research delves into the effectiveness of the Teletandem program, a modality that has gained increasing relevance within the academic environment. As students face the need to communicate effectively in international contexts, language education has evolved beyond traditional classrooms. However, to achieve true language immersion and cultural interaction, comprehending how educators' roles impact students' Teletandem experiences is essential. As emphasized by Cavalari and Aranha (2019), the multifaceted role of educators in this context demands thorough analysis, as they must balance traditional teaching with mediating autonomous virtual collaboration.

Optimizing the implementation of the Teletandem program at the Technical University of Cotopaxi is imperative. While this approach has proven effective in promoting

language learning and intercultural competence, understanding how educators fulfill their roles and align with educational objectives is critical for ensuring continued success. Variability in approaches and learning objectives among educators can influence students' experiences, underscoring the importance of clear guidance and alignment with educational goals (Salomão, 2011). Open communication and reflection on Teletandem experiences also emerge as recommended strategies to fortify the approach (Hansell, Pörn, & Bäck, 2021). In a world where cross-cultural communication is essential, this research becomes a significant effort to enhance educational quality and foster deeper understanding among students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

6. Scientific and technical foundation

6.1 Background

Tandem learning, whose origins date back to the 1960s in Germany, has evolved and spread globally as an alternative and complementary approach to formal foreign language (FL) education (Vassallo & Telles, 2006). Initially utilized in intensive bilingual courses, the term "tandem" described a conversational practice between individuals speaking different languages, typically conducted at the end of language classes (Little & Brammerts, 1996). Over time, this concept has evolved to denote a learning approach characterized by curricular openness, intercultural nature involving diverse languages and cultures, interpersonal aspect conducted in pairs, and socially symmetrical character promoting role alternation. By the late 1980s, the first theoretical texts on this topic emerged (O'Rourke, 2007; Vassallo & Telles, 2009). In the global context of foreign language education, the integration of technology has led to innovative pedagogical approaches such as telecollaboration in language learning. A prominent example of this is the concept of Teletandem, which involves collaborative interaction among language learners from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds, facilitated by digital platforms. Cavalari and Aranha (2019) delve into the pedagogical implications of integrating Teletandem into foreign language curricula, with a particular emphasis on the multifaceted role of educators. Their study revolves around the dual responsibilities of instructors: conventional English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction in traditional

face-to-face settings and the mediation of virtual autonomous and collaborative learning through Teletandem.

In the Latin American context, foreign language education has evolved through technological integration, highlighting innovative approaches like telecollaboration and tandem language learning. The latter, originating in Germany in the 1960s, has gained traction in the region as a complementary mode to formal learning. Researchers such as Cavalari and Aranha (2019) have explored the integration of Teletandem into curricula, emphasizing the pivotal role of educators in mediating collaborative virtual interactions. In a similar vein, Salomão (2011) examined the beliefs of Brazilian educators in Teletandem interactions, underscoring its significance in regional education. These studies reflect the Latin American adaptation of modern pedagogical approaches and the promotion of intercultural competence in language learning, with challenges including internet access and the transformative role of technology in education.

In the Ecuadorian context, foreign language education has witnessed the integration of innovative pedagogical strategies, including telecollaboration and tandem language learning. These approaches, inspired by global trends, have been embraced by educational institutions to enhance language acquisition and intercultural competence. Scholars like Cando Guanoluisa and Tovar Viera (2021) have explored the implementation of Teletandem projects at the Technical University of Cotopaxi, evaluating its impact on language learning, culture, and motivation. Additionally, the integration of e-tandem modes into language curricula, as studied by Zuña Tenemaza et al. (2023), highlights the ongoing efforts to align modern teaching methods with Ecuador's educational landscape. These endeavors reflect the country's commitment to fostering language proficiency and cross-cultural understanding in the increasingly interconnected global environment.

The results and aims of these previous investigations offer teletandem as an excellent technological tool for the learning and practicing of a second language. In the global context, new learning approaches have arisen around the role of instructors. In a regional aspect, the concept of telecollaboration has been wider acknowledge, and in a national context exists an effort to integrate these teletandem practices within the curriculum. All the elements mentioned before are important features for teachers, instructors, and

educators in order to carry out the teletandem meetings with their students in the best possible way to get the most successful learning results of the interactions.

6.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

6.2.1 Teletandem

In the contemporary educational landscape, the symbiotic interplay of education and technology has become an inseparable dyad. This synergistic convergence serves to elevate the caliber of knowledge dissemination, effectuating innovation and efficiency in pedagogical practices. Consequently, education has recognized the imperative to assimilate modernized approaches to language acquisition. In this vein, the concept of Teletandem emerges as an ingenious framework for acquiring foreign languages, ingeniously integrating technological apparatus.

Teletandem, also known as tandem learning, as articulated by Tardieu and Horgues (2019), denotes an inventive and distinctive pedagogical instrument harnessed by language educators. Its primary purpose is to address the paucity of authentic, real-world communication opportunities in the target language within conventional classroom settings for L2 learners (p.1). The tandem approach encompasses two distinct modalities: the face-to-face tandem, which entails physical interaction between two individuals situated in the same geographic location.

Concurrently, the e-tandem variant augments language learners' prospects for skill enhancement, facilitating practice in linguistic competencies. This format transpires through online video conferencing platforms such as Skype or Zoom and occasionally extends to encompass interactions within social networking realms (Griggio, 2018 as cited in Serrato & Padilla, 2020, p. 418). Culminating within this conceptual trajectory is the term "teletandem," encapsulating the synergy between telecommunication technologies and tandem pedagogy.

“Teletandem may be defined as a process of cooperative language learning by means of electronic communication. In a Teletandem partnership, students are expected to help each other learn the languages in which they are proficient users.

Teletandem context involves pairs of native and non-native speakers of different languages working collaboratively” (Santos & Consolo, 2018, p.330).

The operative framework of this methodology hinges on the principle of autonomous learning. Within this paradigm, the acquisition process of a second language (L2) transcends the exclusive realm of pedagogical stewardship by the instructor. Instead, learners shoulder substantial responsibility in the pedagogical trajectory, delineating their unique learning objectives, curricular content, and the array of learning tools and materials to be employed (Santos & Consolo, 2018).

6.2.2 The teacher’s Role in Teletandem language teaching

Presently, language educators bear augmented and multifaceted responsibilities, transcending the conventional purview, as elucidated by Castillo (2018, p. 260), wherein their roles have evolved from mere conveyors of language content and skill development to encompass more intricate and consequential tasks.

This transformation becomes particularly pronounced in the context of Teletandem, accentuating educators' role as orchestrators of intercultural engagement, integrators of technology, coordinators, and collaborative facilitators.

Initiating this transformative role, educators assume the mantle of facilitators and coordinators, vested with the duty of structuring the Teletandem program. Their remit encompasses fostering collaborative engagement with students, steering them towards the adept deployment of strategies that engender gradual progress (Klen & Tiraboschi, 2018, p. 113).

Moreover, educators delineate the program's objectives, parameters, and anticipatory criteria for language exchange activities. These instructors aptly pair students based on congruence in language proficiency, mutual interests, and aligned learning objectives.

Ergo, the preparatory phase that precedes the actual interactive sessions—wherein students interface with their Teletandem counterparts through computer-mediated channels—incorporates a series of indispensable procedures and prerequisites.

The meticulous fulfillment of these requisites is instrumental in assuring the sessions' efficacy and gratification. In this crucial juncture, educators play a pivotal and indispensable role.

According to Cavalari and Aranha (2016), there are three key procedures that are the teacher's responsibilities:

- To prepare students (for example through tutorials or pilot sessions)
- Blending Teletandem sessions into the curriculum by integrating tasks
- Incorporating various assessment practices (self-assessment, peer assessment, and teacher assessment) (Cavalari & Aranha, 2019).

The key points mentioned above can be distributed according to 4 roles that the teachers responsible for the groups involved in the Teletandem sessions will have to play throughout the program. In the present research these roles have been divided into guiding role, linguistic role, technological role and mediation role.

6.2.2.1 Guiding role

By focusing on the process during each session, teachers should establish clear guidelines and expectations for Teletandem sessions. This includes defining the purpose of the sessions, setting specific learning goals, and establishing appropriate communication etiquette. For that reason, the following activities can be developed by the teacher:

Table 2. Activities developed by the teacher in Teletandem session.

Activities	Objective	Description
Guided Discussions	To encourage both sides to share thoughts, opinions, and experiences, promoting meaningful dialogue	Teachers provide discussion prompts or themes to guide the conversation. These prompts can be related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - specific topics - current events - cultural aspects
Language Practice Exercises	to target specific linguistic areas such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, or fluency	Can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - role plays - dialogues - vocabulary games - grammar drills

Collaborative Projects	To work together towards a common goal	Can involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creating presentations - videos - written assignments - topics of mutual interest
Cultural Exchange Activities	promote cultural understanding and exchange	This can include discussions about traditions, customs, festivals, or food from each other's cultures. Students may share photos, videos, or presentations showcasing their cultural heritage.
Error Correction and Language Feedback	to develop the language to be learned	Teachers help clarify misunderstandings, offer suggestions for improvement, and encourage the use of more accurate language expressions.
Reflective Activities	evaluate their own language learning progress and intercultural competence	Can involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Journaling - self-assessment questionnaires - reflective discussions with the teacher or partner
Multimedia Resources	to enhance the learning experience	Such as audio clips, videos, news articles, or online resources. These resources can stimulate discussions, provide authentic language input, or expose tandem partners to different cultural contexts.
Assessments and Progress Monitoring	to evaluate the language development and progress	This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - oral presentations - written assignments - language proficiency tests
Wrap-up and Reflection	to summarize the key points covered and encourage reflection	Both students reflect on what they have learned, discuss challenges encountered, and set goals for future sessions.

Source: Rampazza (2023)

In every activity the teacher must provide guidance and constructive feedback to enhance the language skills of the students and track their improvement.

On the other hand, it is important the implementation of a pedagogy for autonomy in teaching curriculum, this promotes the development of student autonomy, providing better educational results. Mynard (2011), identifies the functions that teachers can take on to support students in their development of autonomy, shown in Figure 1.

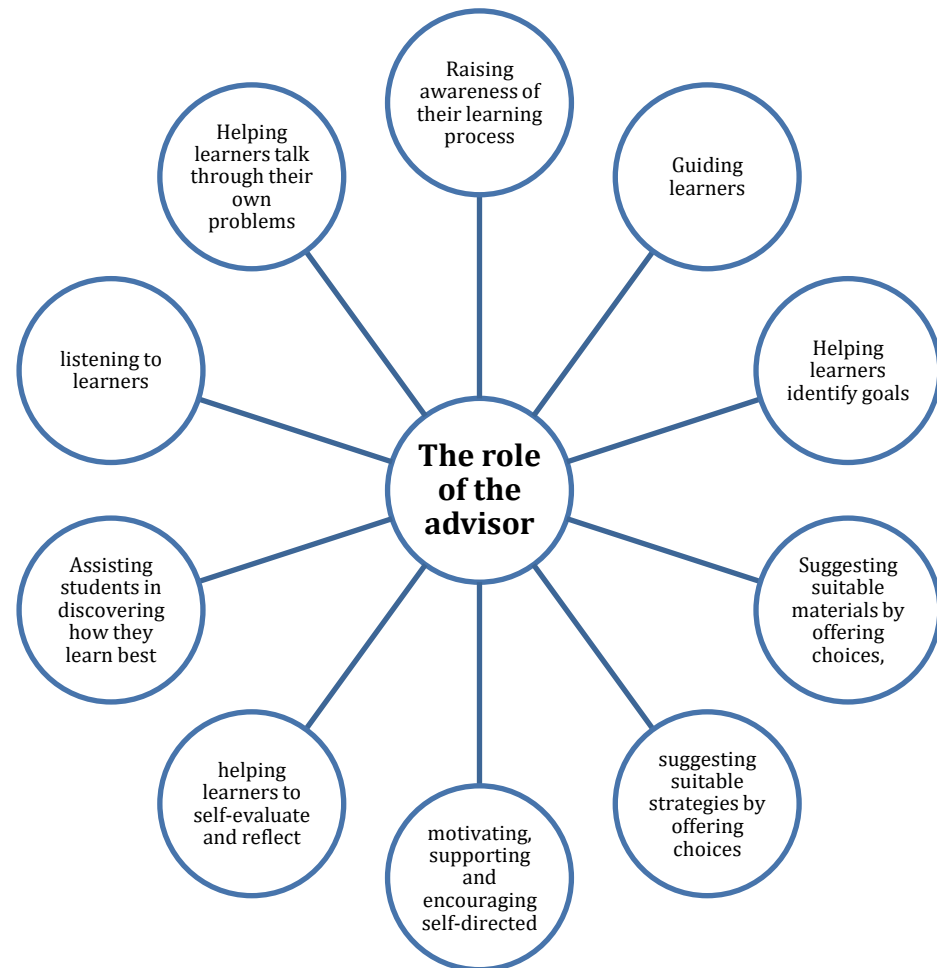


Figure 1. Functions for teachers to support students' autonomy.

Source: Modified from Mynard (2011)

6.2.2.2 Linguistic role

Once teachers have mastered the digital tools involved in Teletandem sessions, it is up to them to prepare the students. Teachers provide linguistic support to the students before, during and after the sessions. In addition, they provide “materials such as: sample writing, audios, questions to help understanding the vocabulary; and they give encouragement and motivation to students if they are less motivated” (Huilca, 2022, p. 23).

It is also important to remember that they constantly provide resources and strategies for independent language practice.

Teachers are responsible for blending Teletandem sessions to the curriculum. Thus, teachers develop activities and materials that focus on language development, intercultural communication, and collaborative learning.

The curriculum is often aligned with the student's language proficiency levels and specific learning objectives. Therefore, during the conversation session, both Teletandem partners have the opportunities to practice and apply the language structures, vocabulary, and grammar concepts they are learning in their formal language classes.

To have a successful Teletandem project, no matter in which type of institution, there are two essential elements related to difficulties that may arise during the execution of the sessions: "students' lack of vocabulary knowledge about social issues and the differences in groups' topics" (Castillo, 2018, p.270), teachers in charge of Teletandem programs must be aware of them in order to generate, on an ongoing basis, the appropriate measures to minimize their influence.

Regarding the possibility that students may present a lack of adequate vocabulary, Telles (2015), proposes a structure for orientation and mediation sessions.

Table 3. Orientation and mediation on Tandem sessions.

Session	Period	Purpose
Orientation sessions	conducted by the teachers before Teletandem sessions start	focus on what tandem learning is about and its principles - autonomy, reciprocity, and non-mixture of languages. Basic language learning strategies and ways of behaving for learning foreign languages are also presented to the students by the teacher.
Mediation sessions	conducted by the teachers after each Teletandem session	focus on aspects of the target languages, the students' learning processes and the cultural aspects and themes that emerge (implicitly or explicitly) during the interactions.

Source: taken from Telles (2015)

The practice of conducting Teletandem sessions allows students to break down barriers in communication in the learned language. The opportunity to interact with a partner from another country or cultural background through Teletandem often increases students' motivation and engagement in language learning.

The authentic communication experience and the personal connection with their tandem partner create a purposeful and enjoyable learning environment. This motivation can help students overcome communication barriers and build their confidence in using the language.

6.2.2.3 Technological role

Teachers must prepare themselves first, to understand in depth the factors involved in this new digital tool. Therefore, they need to understand and be able to control digital tools with ease to support their students before, during and after the sessions, so they can use the skills developed and increase their confidence in the use of the foreign language.

The teacher should have the necessary expertise to change the classroom from a static to a dynamic learning environment so that students can communicate with others, in their classes and in other environments around the world (Cerviño & Vera, 2020).

It is important that teacher master the technologies involve in Teletandem so that they can deal with potential technical problems. They support their students in navigating the technological tools and platforms used for communication.

They address technical issues, provide guidance on effective use of digital tools, and promote digital literacy skills. This is one of the advantages of an institutional integrated Teletandem system, because if the students have any problem, for example, connection, audio, video or accessibility problems, the teacher can help them and not interrupt the sessions, to guarantee the success of the session.

In the research carried out by Zuña, et al., (2023), teachers stated that,

An e-tandem integrated into the language curriculum would help to minimize technological problems in sessions. It means that when this program is part of the regular classes, the educational institutions have to provide the necessary equipment such as laboratory and good internet connection for the development of the interaction. (p.8)

Although each teacher will be responsible for preparing himself/herself in relation to the execution of the Teletandem sessions, it is also up to the institution to provide the necessary tools to the teachers so that they can be trained and have quality equipment. In this way, working together, is the only way to reach the success of the program and guarantee the greatest educational benefit for the students.

Another technological aspect to be considered, is the protection of student data. When using platforms such as Google, Skype or Zoom for the development of Teletandem sessions, it is important to remember to protect student data.

The challenge for the group of responsible teachers and the educational institution is to develop an institutional policy that regulates the acquisition or use of technology, the rules regarding the privacy of student data, the freedom given to teachers or students to choose the technology personally determines or influences the practices of telecollaborative activities (Simon, Kleban, & Rodrigues, 2017).

6.2.2.4 Mediation role

In the realm of language education, assessment practices represent a critical dimension through which educators gauge and provide feedback on the linguistic performance and advancement of students. The evaluative scope extends to encompass oral and written assignments, oversight of communication records, and contemplative dialogues with tandem partners.

Particularly significant within the mediation paradigm is the responsibility of mediators to perpetuate a continuous feedback loop that is anchored in facets encompassing linguistic precision, fluency, cultural comprehension, and holistic development.

Aligned with the insights of Cavalari & Aranha (2019), an intriguing facet emerges in the form of student-generated diaries subsequent to each Teletandem oral session (TOS), supplemented by instructor feedback anterior to ensuing sessions.

This iterative process engenders a one-to-one discourse wherein educators navigate the contours of individual student progression.

The reflective diaries, as underscored by Ramos & Carvalho (2018), have manifestly emerged as a mediator-practiced strategy, stimulating the exchange of written compositions amongst interactants, thus fostering peer correction dynamics. Additionally, this pedagogical tool assumes the role of illuminating instances of 'other partnerships,' thereby contributing to a contextualized comprehension of their introduction (Ramos & Carvalho, 2018, p. 44).

Further expounding on the temporal dimensions inherent to the Teletandem process, Ramos & Carvalho (2018) accentuate that the mediation sessions materialize subsequent to the interaction sessions. This sequential arrangement delineates a discernible chronology wherein mediation is positioned as a subsequent phase, infusing depth and dimensionality to the linguistic exchange endeavor.

In essence, the nexus between evaluation practices and mediation within the Teletandem milieu constitutes a multifaceted dynamic wherein pedagogical strategizing converges with personalized feedback and reflective instruments, all of which collectively invigorate the process of linguistic and intercultural exchange. They “noticed that the mediator’s intervention is extremely necessary and, the preference for a language teacher to intermeditate the process becomes more evident” (p. 43). Also, the authors indicate that:

“This is the mediator’s role—the one who can, at this time and place, intervene by stimulating reflection and raising awareness on the part of the interactants of the need to set specific learning goals, whether related to linguistic contents, such as grammar and vocabulary, or related to intercultural aspects, such as social practices and behaviors, or related to the strategies of teaching and learning languages and strategies to overcome the difficulties agreed between the partners. At this point, it’s reiterated the importance of Teletandem as a context of reflection upon the process of teaching and learning languages and, therefore, as a unique experience in teachers’ training.” (p. 43)

The mediation sessions manifest as a pivotal juncture yielding substantial dividends, both in the intermediate and extended temporal spheres. Within this domain, learners are afforded a distinct opportunity to elucidate intricate facets that have engendered uncertainty, rectify errors, and inculcate enhancements to their performance. This

dynamic unfolds with pronounced import not solely for subsequent sessions within the Teletandem framework but equally resonates within broader contexts characterized by the application of the acquired language.

Such mediation encounters epitomize an incubator for ongoing refinement, nurturing a trajectory of gradual proficiency escalation. In this milieu, the intricacies of language comprehension, application, and interaction are dissected, navigated, and substantively fortified. The proactive engagement within these mediation settings is tantamount to an investment that culminates in the accrual of heightened language acumen and competence, rippling across diverse linguistic contexts and cognitive domains.

In alignment with the assertion of Ramos & Carvalho (2018), this process exhibits an intricate reciprocal synergy. It not only enhances the efficiency of immediate interactions within the Teletandem paradigm but significantly extends its reach, illuminating broader expanses of linguistic utilization. Thus, the mediation sessions transmute into an indispensable locus for ongoing growth, concurrently magnifying the potency and versatility of linguistic mastery.

6.3 Challenges for teachers in Teletandem programs

In this context, it is essential to recognize the advantages and disadvantages of Teletandem sessions in higher education. Cavalari (2018) presents some of the challenges for teachers in relation to telecollaborative media, such as Teletandem, which are summarized in Table 3.

Table 4. Challenges that affect teacher to fulfill the role.

Challenges	Description
Time issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Telecollaborative practice seems to be time consuming - Require additional time and effort from both teachers and students
Lack of institutional interest, recognition and/or funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational institutions may think that these types of programs only represent an economic expense, i.e., they do not see

	them as an investment, and therefore do not allocate the necessary funds
Technological problems related to teacher literacies	- Ensuring that the necessary technology, such as videoconferencing equipment and stable internet connections, is in place
Organization of groups	- Size of student groups, proficiency level of learners - Appropriate tasks
Assessment and accreditation	- What and how to assess telecollaborative learning - Setting independent and collaborative goals - Discussing session logistics with the other schools

Source: Modified from Cavalari (2018)

However, in the research of O’Dowd (2013) strategies are also shown to overcome those barriers (quoted in Cavalari, 2018, p. 422):

- Building-up reliable and steady partnerships: Teachers should identify schools or classes that are a good match in terms of language learning goals, proficiency levels, and cultural diversity. Seek out partner institutions that are committed to the Teletandem process and share similar educational values.
- Raising awareness and prestige of the telecollaborative exchange in the local institution and beyond, meaning that the activity is recognised as important and relevant, and that it is rewarded in internal promotion procedures.
- Using telecollaboration creatively to adapt to local institutions’ needs: Which involves the incorporation of cultural and local content into Teletandem sessions to make them relevant and engaging for students.
- Achieving credit or recognition for the students’ telecollaborative work: Clearly communicate these to the students and ensure they understand the expectations. The assessment criteria should include aspects such as language proficiency, intercultural competence, collaboration skills, and the quality of the telecollaborative output. Assess students' performance based on these criteria and provide constructive feedback.
- Linking telecollaboration to broader international activity at the institution: This could include study abroad programs, exchange programs, or partnerships with

international schools. Highlight the connection between telecollaboration and these programs to showcase the global perspective and intercultural learning opportunities offered to students.

6.4 Activities integrated by the teachers in EFL and Teletandem lessons

In the realm of Teletandem implementation, the instructor's role emerges as pivotal in guaranteeing the synchronization of cultural facets covered within sessions with the cultural components inherently embedded within the curriculum.

To this end, educators architect purposeful activities that foster intercultural competence, meticulously weaving cultural comprehension in congruence with the curriculum's predefined cultural objectives.

The design of the optimal Teletandem framework, as Hernández, Hidalgo, and Espinosa (2022) affirm, hinges upon variables encompassing course specifications, learners' educational aspirations, and contextual exigencies, thereby necessitating a bespoke approach that accounts for educational diversity and dynamic educational contexts.

This underscores the imperative for instructors to cultivate an intimate understanding of their student cohort, thereby engendering the development of a curriculum that is meticulously tailored to the collective needs of the academic level and the group in question.

The granularity of this pedagogical calibration is instrumental in effectively orchestrating Teletandem sessions that encompass both linguistic and cultural dimensions aligned with the group's distinct learning goals.

The articulation and provisioning of activities and resources within each educational institution assumes an idiosyncratic cadence, finely attuned to the distinct exigencies of the student collective. Consequently, the organizational configurations of Teletandem implementations exhibit heterogeneity, shaped by the contextual attributes of each academic setting. A comparative vantage, as articulated in Table 4, extends across three UNESP (São Paulo State University) entities—Assis, São José do Rio Preto (SJRP), and Araraquara—illuminating the diversity inherent in extant Teletandem systems.

In essence, the instructor's strategic interplay with cultural and curriculum contours delineates the architecture of effective Teletandem execution, reinforcing the dynamic synergy between pedagogical design, intercultural enrichment, and contextual adaptability.

Table 5. Organizational proposals for a Teletandem program.

Activities	Institutions		
	Assis	Araraquara	SJRP
Preparation meeting	face-to-face	face-to-face	face-to-face and by means of tutorial videos
teletandem oral session	one hour; weekly (Skype or Zoom)	one hour; weekly (Skype)	one hour; weekly (Skype)
Mediation (support)	face-to-face meetings after each TOS, or by means of forums	online feedback offered to learning diaries (Moodle)	online feedback offered to learning diaries (Google Docs and Drive) and face-to-face meetings
Questionnaire	-	at the end of the experience (Moodle)	pre- and post-questionnaires (Google Forms and Drive)
Collaborative writing task	-	-	students wrote texts in their mother language and revised texts written in Portuguese (Google Docs and Drive)

Source: taken from Cavalari (2018)

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1 Research approach

In this study, a qualitative approach was utilized. As emphasized by Creswell (2003) and cited by Williams (2007), a qualitative approach is recognized as a methodologically robust framework that unfolds within an authentic context, offering the researcher the capacity to unravel nuanced intricacies through direct engagement with lived experiences (p. 67). The choice of this approach was particularly suitable, considering that the research objectives were primarily aimed at comprehensively delineating and deeply comprehending the multifaceted role of teachers within Teletandem interactions. As the idea is to collect and describe qualitative data this investigation presents a descriptive method.

7.2 Research Method or level

The present study is framed within a case study research design. According to the explanation provided by Heale and Twycross (2017), a case study is characterized as an intensive investigation centered around an individual, a group, or a distinct unit.

This approach aims to obtain knowledge with applicability that transcends the particular instances under scrutiny (p. 7).

The central purpose of this research was to analyze the interaction dynamics between the conventional pedagogical strategies employed by English as a Foreign Language teachers and Teletandem sessions, with the goal of exploring the derived benefits for students.

To achieve this purpose, a triangulation methodology was utilized, combining literature analysis with in-depth interviews with teachers and students. These interviews covered different phases of the process, including preparatory, interactive, and post-interaction stages.

The case study approach proved particularly pertinent in this research, as it not only deepened the understanding of specific dynamics under analysis but also yielded transferable and applicable insights beyond the examined particular cases.

7.3 Research context

This project was executed, involving two instructors of the English course, and a group of four students enrolled in the third semester at the Technical University of Cotopaxi, a public institution located in the Cotopaxi province of Ecuador, specifically in the city of Pujilí. This university has historically fostered inter-institutional linkages, including collaborations with entities such as the University of Miami, as a conduit to facilitate cultural and linguistic exchange initiatives. The selected participants encompassed a diverse demographic, spanning distinct age groups and genders, all of whom actively engaged in Teletandem interactions.

The selection of participants followed a non-probabilistic sampling methodology. As explained by Etikan and Bala (2017), non-probabilistic sampling obviates the quantifiable probability framework that characterizes the inclusion of elements from the population in the study's sample (p. 3). This design choice was rooted in the deliberate selection of individuals directly involved in the Teletandem sessions, thereby embracing a convenience sampling strategy. Drawing on the insights of Wienclaw (2019), convenience sampling, characterized by data collection from participants willing to take part or exhibiting an accessible disposition, was employed as a methodologically appropriate means to gather perspectives (p. 2). The rationale behind this approach was grounded in the practicality and feasibility of accessing data from participants within the immediate academic environment.

The research entailed the establishment of informed consent protocols, meticulously discussed and agreed upon with both instructors and students prior to the commencement of the interview phase (see Annex 2 & 3), as a measure to uphold ethical considerations and foster a collaborative research environment.

7.4 Data collection procedure

The data collection methodology that was employed within the scope of this research project revolved around the utilization of semi-structured interviews. Drawing from the scholarly insights offered by Edwards & Holland (2013), it is discerned that semi-structured interviews encapsulate a methodological configuration that systematically

navigates the exploration of intricate subject matter. This navigation is achieved through an amalgam of supple and intentionally directed open-ended inquiries (p. 6).

The interview-centric approach, as adroitly harnessed, served as an efficacious conduit for harvesting and deciphering qualitative insights. These insights emanated from the dual vantage point of students and instructors, thereby encompassing two pivotal dimensions intrinsically interwoven with the Teletandem program.

The interview protocol was meticulously architected to integrate open-ended inquiries seamlessly harmonized with the theoretical underpinnings furnished by the theoretical framework. It is imperative to underscore that the interview engagements not only extracted participants' demographic attributes, inclusive of gender and age, but also extended inquiries intended to ascertain the academic credentials of educators and the English language proficiency levels of learners.

In addressing the core research inquiry, a dual-pronged interview approach was undertaken. Each interview iteration was bespoke, tailored to draw forth insights germane to the research question. One interview cycle was precision-tuned to encapsulate the experiences and perspectives of UTC's teaching faculty, while the parallel interview trajectory was meticulously dedicated to unraveling the perspectives and experiences of the student cohort ensconced within the same academic institution.

The convergence of these distinct interview datasets engendered a comprehensive and triangulated comprehension of the multi-faceted intricacies that envelop the Teletandem program within the specific context of UTC.

It is worth mentioning that even though semi-structured interviews do not require a validation, a professional from the university made sure to check the questions, grammar and coherence of the instrument. (See Annex 1).

7.5 Data analysis

The interview data, once procured, was subjected to an exhaustive scrutiny, a process underpinned by the employment of thematic analysis as the principal analytical modality. As posited by Caulfield (2019), “the thematic analysis framework engenders an in-depth inspection of the dataset, directed toward the discernment of recurrent thematic motifs,

conceptual nuances, and salient significations that iteratively surface within the corpus” (p. 1).

This analytical approach, akin to a discerning lens, facilitated the profound exploration of participants' perspectives, germane to the primary subject of inquiry.

In order to apply thematic analysis, the selection of both teachers and students for interviews was initially conducted. Using an interview guide, the interviews were developed and audio-recorded, after which the audio interviews were transcribed into text format. Subsequently, an exhaustive reading of the transcribed information was undertaken to become acquainted with the obtained data. Following this, data analysis and processing were carried out, identifying pertinent patterns and relationships. To enhance result validity, triangulation was employed by comparing data collected from both teachers' and students' responses. Finally, the outcomes were composed and presented in a coherent and substantiated manner.

Concomitant with the thematic analysis, an ancillary analytical avenue, namely triangulation, was adroitly incorporated. As prescribed by the conceptual underpinnings expounded by Noble & Heale (2019), triangulation embodies a methodical exertion aimed at apprehending and unraveling the multifarious tapestry of human behavior.

This pursuit is accomplished through the amalgamation of divergent methodological trajectories, thereby conjointly furnishing an encompassing and balanced explication conducive to the readership's comprehension.

This methodological tenet, bedecked in its validation-centric ethos, orchestrated the harmonious confluence of heterogeneous data sources.

The judicious application of triangulation emerged as a pivotal instrument in expediting a robust exploration of the research expanse, epitomizing an analytical scaffolding that adroitly juxtaposed and orchestrated the assimilation of responses gleaned from both educators and students.

The integration of these disparate perspectives, as culled from the interview modality, endowed the study with a panoramic vista, encapsulating a comprehensive composite

image that intricately elucidated the congruence and interconnections pervading the data constellation.

The table below shows the codification of data for the interview participants. In this table, ET stands for “English teacher” while S means "student". The numbers were assigned to the participants in the order they were interviewed. The idea of coding the participants is to remain their identities anonymous.

Table 6. Participant codes

Code	Research subjects
ET1	UTC English teacher – Ph.D. in linguistic and languages
ET2	UTC English teacher – MSc. in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching
S1	UTC Student – 3 rd semester
S2	UTC Student – 3 rd semester
S3	UTC Student – 3 rd semester
S4	UTC Student – 3 rd semester

8. Analysis and Discussion of Results

To answer the research question: “**How do teachers’ roles impact the effectiveness of the institutional Teletandem program at the Technical University of Cotopaxi?**” two interviews were applied, one focused on the teacher’s perspective and the other in the students of the program perspectives in which the relevant information related to the teacher’s role in the Teletandem sessions was analyzed. (See Annex 4 & 5 respectively). Based on the results obtained from the interview guide and following the steps of thematic analysis the most interesting and relevant data collected has been organized in categories and subcategories in order to analyze in a better way.

Table 7. Categories & Subcategories

Themes (categories)	Subcategories
Guidelines and expectations for the meetings	Behavioral aspect
	Preparing students
Learning goals	Implicit objectives
	Structured guide
	Learning from the experience
Themes to talk to in the sessions	Cultural topics
	English book topics
	Free choice topics
Language practice exercises	Practicing during classes
	Practicing in a minimum percentage
	Not practicing at all
Cultural exchange activities	English book themes
	Lack of vocabulary and knowledge
	Knowledge-sharing
Linguistic support	Internet Resources
	Skill practicing
Blending teletandem into the English classes	Book content
	No integration
Digital tools	Pandemic experience
	Level of expertise

	Technological problems
Error correction and feedback	Feedback before interactions
	No feedback
Reflective activities	Reports
	Discussions
	No reflective activities

8.1 Category: Guidelines and expectations for the meetings

8.1.1 Subcategory: Behavioral aspect

ET1: En el ámbito del comportamiento. Primero, que los chicos tienen que llegar a tiempo, deben utilizar bien su tiempo, deben ser muy respetuosos con los otros chicos. En segundo lugar, prepararlos en algún tipo de tópico, un tema que ellos puedan desarrollar. Al inicio se trata por lo regular de ayudarles con lo que son las presentaciones para que los chicos conozcan quiénes son, qué edad tiene, de dónde son, etc. [In the behavioral aspect. Firstly, the students have to arrive on time, they must use their time well, and be very respectful to the other students. Secondly, prepare them for some kind of topic, a theme that they can develop. In the beginning, it is usually about helping them with what the presentations are so that the students get to know who they are, how old they are, where they are from, etc.]

S2: Nos dijo como deberíamos portarnos, algunas frases útiles para romper el hielo, y dijo que seamos nosotros mismos y practiquemos nuestro inglés. Nos dio buenas instrucciones. [The teacher told us how we should behave, some useful icebreaking phrases, and she advised us to be ourselves and practice our English. She gave us good instructions.]

8.1.2 Subcategory: Preparing students

ET2: Se les prepara y ellos saben que preguntar y como hacer las preguntas. Ellos van muy motivados a su entrevista para obtener información. [Students are prepared so they know what to ask. They go motivated to participate in the interview to get information]

S1: En mi primera experiencia en el programa, por ejemplo, fue interesante porque la teacher nos fue preparando de que nos iba a preguntar o sobre qué podíamos interactuar con los chicos, incluso fuimos repasando preguntas, respuestas, o sea, fuimos ya preparados con un tema específico ya para interactuar con los chicos de Miami. [In my first experience participating in the program, for example, it was very interesting that the teacher warned us about on what they could ask us or what we could say, we even got some questions ready, so, we were prepared with a specific topic to interact with the UM students]

S3: Al principio nos pidió llegar 5 o 10 minutos antes, y nos explicó que íbamos a tener 15 minutos hablando en español, y 15 minutos hablando en inglés, también nos comentó que no debíamos cambiar el idioma hasta que acabe el tiempo. [The teacher asked us to be 5 or 10 minutes before the meetings start. Then, she explained to us that we would speak for 15 minutes in one language and then switch to the other, but we could not do it before time.]

S4: Nos enseñó sobre que se va a tratar, que se va a incluir, como comportarnos y cómo actuar en la interacción. [The teacher taught us about what the meetings were about, what topics/themes were going to be addressed, and how we should act and behave during the interaction.]

In the interviews, practices and perspectives of both teachers and students regarding preparation and guidance for Teletandem sessions are evident. These excerpts illustrate how teachers approach students' preparation and how students perceive these practices.

From the interviews with the teachers, the importance of instilling values of punctuality and respect in students, as well as preparing them on relevant topics for the sessions, is highlighted. Teachers strive to ensure that students are well-prepared to interact.

This involves guiding them in formulating questions and developing topics that enable substantial and enriching conversations.

On the other hand, in the interviews with the students, a general appreciation for the guidance and preparation provided by teachers is observed.

Students acknowledge that the guidance varies depending on the teacher and the course. Some teachers establish specific guidelines and topic recommendations, while others adopt more flexible approaches. Students value when clear instructions are given on how to behave, what questions to ask, and how to approach interactions.

In conclusion, the interviews reveal that teachers play an essential role in preparing and guiding students for Teletandem sessions.

Their focus on behavioral values and providing discussion topics is appreciated by students, who feel that this preparation enhances the quality of their interactions. However, there is variability in how this preparation is approached, as some teachers are more detailed in their guidance than others.

Ultimately, teachers' focus and dedication have a significant impact on students' experience in the Teletandem program. According to Cavalari et al (2016). "The tutorial is a vital procedure in Teletandem for, more than informing students about some procedural aspects of the project, it is intended to assist students in understanding the learning potential of Teletandem practice."

In this case, the tutorial would be explaining to students what the meetings are about and what is the purpose of the program itself which idea is reinforced with students' information as most of them say that their teachers clarified how to behave during the interactions.

8.2 Category: Learning goals

8.2.1 Subcategory: Implicit objectives

ET2: Solamente se les dice a los estudiantes que el objetivo es que ellos puedan practicar el idioma, que no se sientan cohibidos de practicar, preguntar. De ahí como objetivo

sería algo más implícito porque después de las sesiones lo que hacemos es tomar esa información y redactarla, para que el estudiante ponga atención y esté atento a la información y esa información pueda ser transmitida en un escrito, en un dialogo o discusión dentro del aula. [Students are told that the objective for them is to practice the language, to not feel restrained from talking or asking. Actually, the objective is implicit because after the meetings what we do is take the information from the meetings and redact it so the student pays attention to that information and it can be shared in a written assessment, a dialogue, or a discussion in the classroom.]

S2: Es más algo implícito, pero con el objetivo de ampliar nuestro vocabulario y que perdamos el miedo a expresarnos en inglés en frente de alguien más. [The objective is implicit, but with the idea to expand our vocabulary, and not be afraid of expressing in English in front of others.]

8.2.2 Subcategory: Structured guide

S1: La primera vez que nos reunimos con los chicos de Miami la profe nos dio una guía estructurada de un tema específico que teníamos que desarrollar, entonces si nos guío en ese aspecto. [The first time we met with the MU students the teacher offered us a structured guide that we had to carry out during the session, so, she guided us on that aspect.]

8.2.3 Subcategory: Learning from the experience

S3: Se estableció que debíamos interactuar y escuchar la pronunciación para mejorar nuestro speaking y listening. [It was established that we should interact and listen to the pronunciation in order to enhance our speaking and listening skills.]

S4: Solo nos dicen para aprender de la otra persona, pero algo como aprendan el presente simple así no, sino que solo aprendan de la experiencia. [The teachers just told us to learn from the other person, but there is no goal like “practice the present simple”, instead just learn from the other.]

According to the statements of the instructors, a discrepancy is evident regarding the clarity and explicit articulation of learning objectives. ET2 indicates that students are informed that the objective is to practice the language and to feel comfortable inquiring and participating. Nonetheless, it underscores that these objectives are more implicit and that subsequently, the information from the sessions is synthesized and conveyed through written activities, dialogues, or classroom discussions.

In contrast, the student interviews reflect a diverse perception of the objectives. Some, like S1, emphasize that instructors have provided guidance through structured guidelines for specific topics to be developed during the sessions.

Others, like S2, consider the implicit objective as expanding vocabulary and overcoming the fear of expressing themselves in English before others. S3 comments on the emphasis placed on enhancing speaking and listening skills through interaction and pronunciation. S4 notes that instructors merely suggest learning from the experience without establishing specific linguistic objectives.

In conclusion, the interviews reflect a lack of uniformity in the communication and definition of learning objectives within the Teletandem program. While certain instructors offer guidance and structures, others opt for more implicit objectives based on interaction and experience. This variability may influence students' perception and achievement of the objectives.

According to Little et al (2005). "setting a learning goal is an essential aspect of autonomous language learning." However, UTC teachers do not set specific learning goals for their students. Instead, it is an implicit process where students just interact but they are not aiming to learn anything specifically. It has been argued by different researchers in the scope of Teletandem Project (Cavalari, 2009, 2010; Kami, 2011; Silva, 2012; Luz, 2012) how vital goal setting is for motivation, continuation of partnerships and for the learning process itself.

8.3 Category: Themes to talk to in the sessions

8.3.1 Subcategory: Cultural topics

ET1: Se considera varias temáticas, por ejemplo, hablemos de la cultura americana y la cultura ecuatoriana, que los chicos más o menos hagan un bosquejo de que podrían hablar de la cultura ecuatoriana, yo qué sé, festividades, platos típicos, fechas importantes, tal vez el tipo de presidente o en el ámbito político, como es su universidad, cuáles son las tradiciones en sí que se manejan y se practican. [Different themes are considered, for example, American and Ecuadorian culture. Students could do a draft about Ecuadorian culture talking about festivities, typical dishes, relevant dates, or even about the current president in a political aspect, but also how their university is, and what traditions they practice.]

8.3.2 Subcategory: English book topics

ET2: Son temas del libro que estamos tratando, por ejemplo, si en la unidad estamos hablando de daily routines nosotros utilizamos ese tema para formular preguntas y también saber las daily routines, por ejemplo, de las personas extranjeras y ver una comparación, ver sus hábitos, que es lo que hacen y comparar con los chicos con su daily routine. [The topics for the meetings are themes from the English book we are working with, for example, if we are studying “daily routines” we use that topic to formulate questions and learn the topic, for example, to know what are the daily routines of the MU students and compare it with ours.]

S2: Nos da a elegir el tema con respecto a lo que estemos estudiando, esa vez nos hizo elegir sobre lo que habíamos hecho el fin de semana, o nos aconsejó hablar de temas de interés común, ya sea tradiciones o comida típica de allá de acá. [She gave us the choice to select a topic in relation to what we are studying, that time she made us talk about what we had done the weekend, or she advised us to talk about topics of common interest, for example, traditions, or typical food.]

S1: Para la primera reunión nos aginó un tema, por ejemplo, la información básica, en las otras reuniones ya eran temas libres que nosotros podemos elegir o conversar en ese momento. [For the first meeting the teacher assigned a topic, for example, asking about

basic information, but for the other meetings, it was a topic that we could select or talk about at that moment.]

8.3.3 Subcategory: Free choice topics

S3: La primera sesión fue de libre elección, la segunda se trató el tema del libro, que fue del tema de holidays, de la cultura, de lo que se hacía en la otra cultura. [The first meeting was a free election, in the second it was about a topic from the book which was holidays about culture and what was done in the other culture.]

S4: Normalmente ellos nos brindan un tema, pero de ese tema toca saltarse a otro porque el tema suele ser corto y la conversación duran media hora, y de ahí toca buscar otro tema para no tener un silencio incomodo. [Normally teachers gave us the topic, but during the meetings, we have to switch from one topic to another because the first is normally too short and the conversations last half an hour, so we have to find another topic otherwise there will be an uncomfortable silence.]

The excerpts from the teachers' interviews reveal a range of approaches concerning the selection and assignment of topics for Teletandem sessions. ET1 mentions the consideration of various thematic areas, encompassing both American and Ecuadorian culture, as well as political and university-related aspects. ET2 emphasizes that the topics are derived from the English textbook content being studied, specifically linked to the unit's theme.

In contrast, the students' opinions also exhibit diversity with regard to topics. Some students indicate that specific topics, such as education or cultural subjects, have been assigned by their teachers, while others note that they are given the option to choose or that topics naturally emerge during the conversation.

The interviews unveil that, for both teachers and students, the choice and allocation of topics can vary. Some teachers propose specific topics, while others promote free choice or adapt topics based on the conversational dynamics.

Students also experience this diversity, with some being provided assigned topics and others enjoying the freedom to select subjects that interest them. This array of approaches can influence the session dynamics and the level of preparedness among participants.

UTC teachers approach the themes for the meetings in two ways: culture (Ecuadorian or American) and topics from the English book. As highlighted by Biondo (2011) “If we eliminate the use of themes there is the worry that by opting for spontaneous conversation the session could exclude the pedagogical intent and become a simple chat between two friends.”. Therefore, it is essential for students to follow a topic to talk about in the sessions. Most of the students said that for some meetings there was a topic, but for others, it was up to them to decide what to talk about, then, some inconveniences like switching from one topic to another or improvising can take place.

8.4 Category:

Language practice exercises

8.4.1 Subcategory: Practicing during classes

ET2: Eso lo hacemos normalmente durante la clase, durante la clase practicamos el vocabulario, la gramática y luego con ese aprendizaje formulamos las preguntas y ellos están listos para hacer esa interacción, no hacemos como decir una interacción previa para que ellos vayan. [We do language practice exercises during the classes, let’s say, we practice vocabulary and grammar, and with that, we formulate the questions so students are ready for the interaction, but we do not do a previous interaction to the meetings.]

S3: Se realizó un roleplay en la misma clase, una clase antes de recibir el e tándem nos dio como una práctica entre nuestros compañeros. [We did a roleplay a class before participatin in the e tandem. It was like a practice between our classmates.]

S4: En el anterior semestre la teacher Mercedes nos daba lo que sería juegos ya sea para poder avanzar en vocabulario o gramática. [The previous semester one teacher gave us games in order to advance in vocabulary and grammar.]

8.4.2 Subcategory: Practicing in a minimum percentage

S1: Se desarrollan las actividades, pero no, así como quisiéramos, más bien en un porcentaje mínimo, de acuerdo a cada docente. [The activities are developed but not as we would like, rather in a minimum percentage according to each teacher.]

8.4.3 Subcategory: Not practicing at all

S2: En la oportunidad que tuve lastimosamente no hubo tiempo porque fuimos directo a lo que nos correspondía, es decir, conversar. [In the chance I had unfortunately there was no time because we went straight to what corresponded to us, I mean to talk.]

The excerpts from both teachers and students shed light on the provision of linguistic support and preparatory activities for the Teletandem interactions.

According to ET2's perspective, language practice is integrated into the regular classroom activities. This entails practicing vocabulary and grammar, culminating in the formulation of questions for the Teletandem sessions. However, ET2 underscores that no specific preliminary interactions are held solely for preparation.

Conversely, the students' viewpoints unveil mixed experiences. S1 adds that activities are conducted but often fall short of expectations and vary based on individual teachers. S2 reveals an instance where the time constraints during the sessions did not permit prior practice activities. On the other hand, S3 cites a roleplay conducted in the same class as a practice session before engaging in the e-tandem. S4 highlights the implementation of games as preparatory tools for vocabulary and grammar enhancement.

The comparison illustrates a divide between teachers and students regarding the extent and nature of linguistic support. While some teachers integrate language practice within the classroom curriculum, students' perceptions highlight varying degrees of preparatory activities. These findings underscore the potential variation in pedagogical approaches to linguistic support for Teletandem interactions, suggesting that a more consistent and comprehensive approach might enhance the overall experience.

The results show that language practice exercises are not focused on the Teletandem sessions but on language teaching. The teachers should provide “materials such as: sample writing, audios, questions to help understanding the vocabulary; and they give encouragement and motivation to students if they are less motivated” (Huilca, 2022, p. 23). By doing so, the students can feel more comfortable and prepared to overcome difficult situations in the meetings as they had practiced specifically for these kinds of scenarios.

8.5 Category: Cultural exchange activities

8.5.1 Subcategory: English book themes

ET2: Todo depende del tema que esté en el libro y la asignatura porque como yo doy inglés vemos los temas del libro. [It all depends on the topic we are checking in the book and the subject because as I teach English, we review the topics from the book.]

S3: La licenciada hizo que interactuaremos con diferentes provincias y de ahí nos daba a elegir un tema del internet, buscando información en Google sobre la tradición de otro país. [The teacher made us interact with different provinces and from there she gave us to choose a topic from the internet searching for information in Google about the customs of other countries.]

S4: Ella nos ayuda ya que en los temas que nos da nos posteriormente nos dice cuestiones culturales, también nos da tips o trucos para poder intercambiar ideas con la otra persona. [She helps us since in the topics we address we talk about cultural aspects later on. She also gives us tips or tricks to be able to exchange ideas with the other person.]

8.5.2 Subcategory: Lack of vocabulary and knowledge

S1: No pudimos tocar esos temas porque ya se desarrolla mucho el vocabulario, en estos temas no tenemos todo el conocimiento para poder conversar amablemente de esos temas. [We did not approach those topics because the vocabulary is more complicated. In this topic we do not have enough knowledge to talk pleasantly in that area.]

8.5.3 Subcategory: Knowledge-sharing

S2: Totalmente porque a medida que intercambiamos nuestro conocimiento con alguien más a la vez podemos reforzar lo que creemos saber de ese lugar, y al dar nuestra opinión expandimos nuestra forma de hablar. [Totally, as we exchange our knowledge with someone else we can reinforce what we believed about that place, and we can offer our opinion and our way to talk.]

The interviews provide insights into the influence of cultural topics in Teletandem sessions, highlighting both the guidance of instructors and the perceptions and experiences of learners.

In the interview with ET2, emphasis is placed on the alignment of thematic selection with the content of the textbook and the subject matter being taught. In contrast, student perspectives unveil a range of viewpoints.

Student testimonies underscore diverse approaches. S1 articulates that certain cultural topics were not addressed due to lexical intricacies, whereas S2 underscores how knowledge-sharing bolsters comprehension and enables the expansion of linguistic expression. S3 recounts an instructor's facilitation of interactions across diverse provinces, allowing students to select topics through online searches, thus nurturing the exploration of foreign traditions. S4 spotlights the provision of cultural support and intercultural communication enhancement guidance by instructors.

In conclusion, the interviews underscore the significance of infusing cultural themes within Teletandem sessions. While instructors can furnish direction and resources, student comprehension and engagement with these themes may fluctuate contingent upon vocabulary familiarity and personal interest.

Recognition of disparities in proficiency levels and perspectives remains pivotal for an efficacious and enriching Teletandem experience. According to the student's responses, the teachers suggest talking about cultural features during the sessions as it is an interesting aspect for both sides. However, it is not mandatory.

On the other hand, one of the teachers explains that it all depends on the topics from the book. If the topics are in concordance, it is logical for students to talk about them. Biondo (2011) suggest that some themes are productive for learning about the culture and ideological aspects of a people and in this sense, we need our partner's collaboration and involvement. Similarly, Escribano & Gonzales (2014) indicate that students gain first-hand insight into the target culture by having authentic conversations with native speakers. These "authentic conversations" come from participants' own experiences and perceptions which are normally guided by the culture they belong to or feel identified with.

8.6 Category: Linguistic support

8.6.1 Subcategory: Internet resources

ET2: Con los estudiantes que tengo inglés con ellos sí se realiza eso, a ellos les doy una página donde ellos van practicando a la vez listening, van practicando lo que hemos visto en el libro también para que ellos vayan practicando su adquisición del idioma, pero páginas en sí relacionadas para poder interactuar con personas extranjeras con temas no. [I offer linguistic support to the students I have the English subject with. I offer them a website so they can practice listening but also what we had seen in the book, and at the same time so they practice their acquisition of the language. But I have not recommended them pages to interact with foreign people.]

S2: Nos recomienda entender artículos del internet o del propio libro para utilizar el vocabulario. [The teachers recommended we understand internet articles or from our own book to understand the vocabulary]

S3: Nos enviaba links, también a revisar unas páginas y buscar en YouTube en caso de necesitar más información. [The teacher sent us links. Also, some websites, and to look in YouTube videos in case we needed more information.]

S4: Nos ayuda con recursos visuales electrónicos, por ejemplo, videos, para aprender mediante lo tecnológico. [The teachers help us with visual electronic resources, for example, videos to learn through the technology.]

8.6.2 Subcategory: Skill practicing

S1: Nos hacen writing, listening e incluso pronunciar oraciones, o sea sí, si nos ayudan en ese aspecto. [The teachers made us do writing, listening, and even pronouncing some sentences, so, they help us in that aspect.]

Based on the empirical findings, it became evident that a noticeable deficiency in linguistic support was evident on the part of instructors prior to the Teletandem sessions. This observation aligns with the assertion posited by Hansell et al. (2021), who underscore the dual responsibility of educators. Notably, they are not only tasked with stewarding their designated pedagogical realm but also charged with cultivating students' linguistic proficiency within the target language, which, in this instance, is English.

Nevertheless, the pedagogical assistance extended by instructors is characterized by a lack of explicit intentionality, materializing as a more generalized provision. The pedagogical intervention offered by instructors remains circumscribed within the confines of prescribed educational resources, primarily tethered to the materials encompassed within the instructional curriculum. Conversely, even though online resources were shared, their efficacy lacks strategic specificity, falling short of a deliberate alignment with domain-specific focal points.

The aggregated insights provided substantiated the necessity for a refined pedagogical paradigm, wherein instructors adeptly orchestrated calibrated linguistic scaffolding. This approach entailed the deliberate provision of targeted linguistic support, strategically arranged in preparation for the forthcoming Teletandem interactions.

The articulated pedagogical framework entailed a discerning integration of conventional instructional methodologies and the innovative facets intrinsic to the Teletandem milieu. This symbiotic amalgamation forged a comprehensive and enriched milieu for language acquisition. The assimilation of Teletandem into the English classes emerged as a potential avenue to achieve this pedagogical integration.

8.7 Category: Blending Teletandem

8.7.1 Subcategory: Book content

ET1: Sí, pero no al 100 por cierto, pero, por ejemplo, si tomamos algún ejemplo del libro donde estamos hablando de la cultura, puedo yo alinear eso al tópico que los chicos van a desarrollar, entonces de alguna manera ya tienen un poco de vocabulario, tienen frases, collocation words, algo de la gramática que les permita desarrollar, y eso aplicarle en el e tándem. [I integrate it but not 100%, for example, if we take a theme from the book where we are talking about culture I can aline that topic with what students are going to develop in the meetings, so in a way they have some vocabulary, for instance, phrases, collocation words, and some grammar to use in the meetings.]

ET2: Justamente es por los temas, por ejemplo, si estamos viendo el tema de daily routines entonces las preguntas van a estar enfocadas en investigar y obtener información sobre la daily routine que tienen ellos, y luego ellos realizan un escrito, entonces también es producción del writing. Un escrito con esa información que ellos obtuvieron. Entonces compaginamos esa parte siempre con la enseñanza del idioma inglés. [All depends on the topic, for example, if we are reviewing the topic of “daily routines” then the questions are going to be focused on investigating and getting information about the daily routines that the MU students have, then students do writing with the information they got. Then, we collate the information with the language teaching]

S3: Sí las integraba puesto que lo que nos dijeron en las sesiones era lo mismo que nos decía la profesora. [The teacher integrated it as what we received in the sessions was the same as in classes.]

8.7.2 Subcategory: No integration

S1: Bueno, bajo mi punto de vista no hay integración porque cada uno recibe su sesión y ya no se toca más el tema. [Well, in my point of view there was no integration because each one received the session and did not address the theme anymore.]

S3: Sí las integraba puesto que lo que nos dijeron en las sesiones era lo mismo que nos decía la profesora. [The teacher integrated it as what we received in the sessions was the same as in classes.]

S4: En sí no tanto, hacemos la reunión y cuando esta termina se sigue con la clase planificada en el silabo. [Not really. [We participated in the meetings and when these were over we continued with the class planned in the syllabus.]

Teachers' integration of contents is based on the book's topics and the own syllabus developed by the teacher. The students' point of view establishes that there is no such thing as integration, at least not a clear one. Mantara et al (2021) indicates that blended learning refers to the use of technology with a mix of pedagogical methods or philosophies. Therefore, Teletandem uses technology to take place, but it is not integrated into the learning curriculum of the institution it will be difficult for teachers to integrate both activities as they are not directly related. The approach adopted revolved around the specific thematic content under consideration. For instance, in the context of examining subjects such as daily routines, inquiries were tailored to probe and acquire insights into the participants' respective daily routines. Subsequently, the students engaged in a writing task, which, in turn, facilitated the development of written proficiency. This involved utilizing the acquired information to craft a written composition. Thus, there was a deliberate amalgamation of thematic exploration and English language instruction within this framework.

8.8 Category: Digital tools

8.8.1 Subcategory: Pandemic experience

ET1: Bueno, ha sido de gran ayuda el hecho de ingresar dentro de la pandemia, porque si bien es cierto que de alguna manera hemos utilizado computadoras, proyectores, programas, plataformas, y cosas por el estilo, pero no lo hacíamos al 100 por ciento como fue en el tema de la pandemia, eso permitió que de alguna manera los docentes mejoremos nuestro proceso de enseñanza. [Well. It has helped a lot the fact to ingress in pandemia because in a way we improved our knowledge of computers, programs, and platforms and that fort of things.]

S4: Según lo que vimos en la pandemia ellos utilizaban de la forma adecuada para seguir aprendiendo con la tecnología. [According to what we witnessed in the pandemic the teachers use the technology in an adequate way to keep learning with it.]

8.8.2 Subcategory: Level of expertise

ET2: Creo que no mucho porque creo que se necesita tener mucho conocimiento como se soluciona ese tipo de problemas, creo que en tecnología tengo algo básico para poder solucionar esos problemas. [I think I do not master much technology I think you need a wide knowledge about how to solve certain problems. I think that when it comes to technology, I have basic notions to solve problems.]

S1: Tienen un manejo adecuado de plataformas ya que nos mandan a investigar/consultar, o que incluso podamos deberes o interactuar por medios de estas plataformas. [The teachers have an adequate level of digital platforms as they send us to investigate, or even to do homework or interact using these tools.]

8.8.3 Subcategory: Technological problems

S2: Han sido muy condescendientes cuando no he tenido el equipo necesario. Digamos no ha funcionado la cámara o el micrófono me han sabido comprender. [The teachers have been very condescending when I have not had the necessary equipment. Let's say when my microphone or camera was not working, they understood the situation.]

As Teletandem takes place in a virtual environment it is fundamental for teachers to manage technological tools and platforms with certain proficiency. Biondo (2011) explains that Teletandem is an alternative proposal of tandem learning which makes use of technological tools available in the internet for videoconferencing, such as Skype, MSN, ooVoo, among others.

For instance, among UTC and MU students Zoom has always been the used platform. Students and teachers agree on the fact that the pandemic forced teachers to work in virtual spaces, and as a consequence, they improved their dominance over these. The UTC teachers claim to not have the best expertise in technological tools. However, students state that their teachers' knowledge has been enough so far and they do not present disagreement.

8.9 Category: Error correction and feedback

8.9.1 Subcategory: Feedback before interactions

ET2: En este caso yo casi no he tenido mucho acceso a poder ver los errores de los chicos. En alguna ocasión ingresé y yo creo que no, no lo he hecho, así un feedback de las cosas, pero sí he hecho un feedback antes de las presentaciones en ver que las preguntas estén bien. Nosotros lo elaboramos en el aula, y ahí sí les doy un feedback. [In this case, I have not had much access to see the students' mistakes. On some occasions, I logged into the session, but to be honest I have not done feedback. Although I have offered feedback before the meetings by checking the students' questions. We elaborate the questionnaires in classes and then I offer the feedback.]

8.9.2 Subcategory: No feedback

S1: Cuando acaban las sesiones no se toca más el tema. [When the meetings are over, we do not address the theme anymore.]

S4: No hay feedback como tal. Cuando acaban las sesiones se continua con las clases normales. [The is no such thing as feedback. When the sessions end, we continue with the normal classes.]

According to Mantara et al (2021) the main focus is the teacher in maximizing his role as a learning facilitator is to provide interventions in the form of feedback when students make mistakes. But if teachers do not log into the sessions, it is impossible for them to even imagine in which specific aspects of the language their students are struggling with. Mantara et al (2021) in relation with the before add that giving feedback on a digital platform is easily done.

Through zoom or through google meetings, teachers can still both intervene directly and provide feedback when something goes wrong, and giving this feedback itself becomes the focus of the learning process. Nevertheless, feedback does not only come from the teacher as highlines by Serrato et al (2020) students appreciated obtaining feedback from native speakers: “...Someone who knows the language very well can correct you and teach you new things”

8.10 Category: Reflective activities

8.10.1 Subcategory: Reports

ET1: Hacer que ellos hagan un reporte, dicho reporte se ha compartido dentro del aula para que ellos fortalezcan a través de las experiencias a través de comentar las mismas como estas han ayudado al proceso de aprendizaje, dependiendo del tema. Insisto, en otros momentos se les puede mandar a que escriban algo, un journal, un seguimiento del proceso, y claro, también para motivación a los chicos que sea una parte de la evaluación, como un task. [To make students do a report. This report is shared in classes with their classmates. The idea is to make students strengthen their skills by asking them to comment on their experiences and how these experiences have helped them in their learning process. I insist, on other occasions, they could write something, a journal, a process monitoring, of course, to motivate students these activities are a part of the evaluation process as a task.]

S3: Nos mandan a hacer informes de que nomás preguntamos, como fue, que nomás se nos preguntó. Todo en base al cuestionario. [The teacher assigned us to do a report about what we asked, how it went, and what the MU students asked us. All in relationship with the questionnaire.]

8.10.2 Subcategory: Discussions

ET2: Después del e tándem lo que nosotros hacemos es discutir que les pareció, qué aprendieron, qué encontraron de novedoso. [After the e tandem we discuss what were their impressions, what did they learn, or what did they find novel.]

S2: Solemos hacer discusiones. [We usually do discussions.]

8.10.3 Subcategory: No reflective activities

S1: Últimamente no, pero en las sesiones del semestre pasado sí solíamos hacerlo. [Lately no, but in the previous semester we used to do it (reflective activities).]

S4: según mi experiencia, es que después de las sesiones e tándem solo informamos que sí se realizó la sesión y eso es todo. [According to my own experience, after the sessions e tandem we just inform what we had done in the session, but that is all.]

Reflective activities were integral to the post-teletandem session phase, wherein students embarked on activities that encompassed introspection and contemplation. The pedagogical design encompassed the facilitation of reports and discussions by the instructors subsequent to the Teletandem meetings.

This approach effectively engendered a conduit for students to engage in retrospective analysis of the salient occurrences during the Teletandem encounters. Notably, Cavalari (2016) underscored the potency of diaries as a refined instrument capable of gauging potential challenges encountered by students within this domain.

The cogency of maintaining diaries permeates two interconnected objectives. Firstly, diaristic practice is instrumental in nurturing the ethos of autonomous learning, wherein continuous introspection fosters an evolving engagement with the learning process. Secondly, diaries bestow an invaluable window for foreign language (FL) educators to appraise instances warranting pedagogical intervention during interactions. This strategic alignment between reflective diaristic engagement and pedagogical intervention is germane to the dynamic landscape of Teletandem pedagogy.

Aligned with this paradigm, the concept of mediation sessions emerges as a salient aspect. Telles (2015) expounded on the facets of mediation sessions, elucidating that these sessions, orchestrated by instructors subsequent to each Teletandem interaction, pivot around pivotal dimensions.

This encompasses a focus on elements intrinsic to the target languages, the trajectory of students' learning endeavors, and the undercurrent of cultural dimensions and themes that percolate—whether implicitly or explicitly—throughout the interaction trajectory. This theoretical tenet is buttressed by the articulation of Cavalari (2019), who espouses the perspective that mediation pursuits endeavor to furnish students with an academically nurtured contextual scaffolding. This scaffolding, elucidated through teacher-guided mediation, serves as a compass for contemplation, affording students the opportune space to ponder over their teaching and learning encounters during the Teletandem sessions.

The next argument answers the research question: "How do teachers' roles impact the effectiveness of the institutional Teletandem program at the Technical University of Cotopaxi?" The role of educators has a significant impact on the effectiveness of the institutional Teletandem program at the Technical University of Cotopaxi. The analysis of interviews conducted in Teletandem sessions has revealed several key aspects to comprehend the impact of the sessions on learning. Firstly, educators play a crucial role in preparing students for these interactions, guiding them in behavior, question formulation, and session navigation. However, there is variation in approaches, as some educators provide structured guidelines while others opt for more flexible frameworks. It means, some teachers can allow their students to improvise during the sessions from the beginning to the end. Some educators emphasize language practice and fostering comfortable interactions, though these objectives often remain implicit. This discrepancy leads to differing perceptions among students; some appreciate the provided guidance, while others find objectives lacking definition as the teachers do not specify the purpose of the sessions. Cultural themes integrated into Teletandem sessions are also relevant. Some educators encourage exploration of cultural topics such as festivals, culinary traditions, and cultural practices during interactions. However, certain students find that vocabulary complexity hinders discussions on specific cultural subjects.

Additionally, the level of linguistic support from educators during interactions varies among students. While some students mention the use of role-playing or interactive activities as preparatory techniques, others highlight the lack of linguistic support beyond prescribed textbook content.

The interviews highlight diverse approaches and perspectives within the Teletandem program. Educators have a pivotal role in guiding students, but there are variations in articulating objectives, incorporating cultural themes, and the interactions themselves. These findings underscore the importance of clear communication, thoughtful linguistic support, and adaptation of strategies to individual differences, all contributing to a successful and enriching Teletandem experience.

9. Research Impacts

The conducted interviews shed light on several dimensions of research impacts, highlighting their significance in shaping educational practices, learning objectives, cultural understanding, and linguistic interaction.

The outcomes encompass an assessment of tangible results arising from academic inquiries. The analysis of interviews with educators and students unveils a tapestry of impacts spanning both the microcosm of the classroom and the broader realm of intercultural communication.

The preparatory aspects elucidated by educators underscore their pivotal role in guiding students through effective interaction strategies. The diverse approaches reported by instructors, ranging from structured guidance to flexible frameworks, signify nuanced ways in which they ready students for tandem sessions. Nevertheless, student perspectives reveal a disparity in linguistic support, as some express a lack of linguistic assistance beyond textbook content.

Moreover, the interviews provide insights into the realm of learning objectives. Discrepancies emerge regarding the clarity and communication of these objectives. Educators emphasize implicit language practice and interaction as key objectives, while

student responses depict a spectrum of perceptions regarding the specificity and articulation of these goals.

Cultural integration emerges as an influential component of research impacts in the tandem context. Educators foster the exploration of cultural topics, cultivating intercultural awareness and understanding among students. However, the complexity of vocabulary and depth of cultural knowledge may limit the breadth of discussion on cultural subjects.

The dynamics of interaction gain relevance as students recount their experiences in tandem sessions. Some students report pre-session language practice activities, such as simulations and games, serving as preparatory exercises. Nonetheless, evident variation exists in the linguistic support provided by educators, affecting students' ability to effectively engage in intercultural dialogue.

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

10. 1. Conclusions

In the Teletandem programs, the roles of the teacher are multifaceted and crucial in facilitating a productive tandem learning experience. Teachers serve as interaction facilitators, intercultural mediators, activity designers, goal setters, feedback providers, promoters of autonomy, adapters, and creators of a supportive environment. This is concordance with the roles described in the theoretical framework: guiding, linguistic, technological, and mediation roles. Their responsibilities encompass guiding students' communication, promoting cultural understanding, designing engaging activities, setting clear learning objectives, offering constructive feedback, empowering autonomous learning, adapting to individual needs, fostering a positive atmosphere, and ensuring effective tandem interactions. These roles collectively contribute to enhancing language skills, cultural awareness, and intercultural communication among students participating in the Teletandem program.

The effective execution of teachers' roles in the Teletandem program significantly impacts students' participation and engagement in interactions. The analysis of interviews conducted in Teletandem sessions has revealed that educators play a crucial role in

preparing students for these interactions, guiding them in behavior, question formulation, and session navigation. However, there is variation in the approaches employed by educators, with some providing structured guidelines while others opt for more flexible methods. Furthermore, a disparity in the clarity and explicit delineation of learning objectives has been identified, influencing students' experiences. Recommended strategies, such as open communication between educators and students, as well as reflection on Teletandem experiences, emerge as approaches to enhance students' participation and engagement in these interactions.

Upon closely examining the roles of educators, learning objectives, cultural integration, and student experiences, key areas that can be strengthened have been identified. Particularly, addressing the variability in educational approaches, ensuring clarity in communicating learning objectives, and fostering open dialogue between educators and students emerge as fundamental strategies to enhance program effectiveness. Furthermore, making preparatory activities more flexible, providing additional resources for linguistic support, and promoting interactive language practices can further enhance student participation and engagement in Teletandem interactions. The valuable insights gained from interviews and discussions underscore the importance of aligning educators' roles with program objectives and creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment, ultimately maximizing the benefits and quality of the Teletandem program experience.

10. 2. Recommendations

To enhance the effectiveness and quality of the Teletandem program, educators are advised to fulfill their multifaceted roles comprehensively. This includes facilitating interactions, mediating in intercultural contexts, designing engaging activities, setting clear objectives, and providing constructive feedback. A proficient execution of these roles will enrich students' linguistic skills and cultural awareness.

It is crucial for educators to communicate session objectives clearly and explicitly, focusing on linguistic practice, cultural exploration, and intercultural communication.

Additionally, they should consider the variability in students' language levels and design flexible preparatory activities to cater to diverse needs and learning styles.

To enrich the Teletandem experience, incorporating a variety of themes, especially cultural aspects, is recommended. Educators can encourage the exploration of traditions, festivals, and cuisine to enhance intercultural understanding. Moreover, providing supplementary resources for linguistic support and crafting interactive activities that enhance linguistic and conversational skills are essential. These recommendations, rooted in educator roles, learning objectives, cultural integration, and student experiences, have the potential to significantly enhance the Teletandem methodology and overall learning quality.

11. References

- Barret, M. (2012). Intercultural competence. *EWC Statement Series*(2), 23-27. Retrieved from <https://theewc.org/content/uploads/2020/02/EWC-Statement-Series-2012.pdf>
- Castillo, A. (2018). Teaching social issues through cinema and teletandem. *Revista Do GEL*, 15(3), 257–278. doi:<https://doi.org/10.21165/gel.v15i3.2409>
- Caulfield, J. (2019). *How to do Thematic Analysis / Step-by-Step Guide & Examples*. Retrieved from Scribbr: <https://acortar.link/ZvYOQK>
- Cavalari, S. (2018). Integrating telecollaborative language learning into Higher Education: a study on Teletandem practice. *Brazilian English Language Teaching Journal*, 9(2), 417-432. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.15448/2178-3640.2018.2.31927>
- Cavalari, S. M., & Aranha, S. (2016). Teletandem: integrating e-learning into the foreign language classroom. *Acta Scientiarum. Language and Culture*, 38 (4) <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/3074/3074448360002.pdf>
- Cavalari, S. M., & Aranha, S. (2019). The Teacher's Role in Telecollaborative Language Learning: The Case of Institutional Integrated Teletandem. *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada*, 19(3), 555-578. doi:DOI:10.1590/1984-6398201913576
- Cavalari, S., & Aranha, S. (2019). The Teacher's Role in Telecollaborative Language Learning: The Case of Institutional Integrated Teletandem. *Rev. bras. linguist. apl.*, 19(3). doi:doi.org/10.1590/1984-6398201913576
- Cerviño, G., & Vera, C. (2020). The impact of educational technologies in higher education. *Gist Education and Learning Research Journal*(20), 155-169. doi:doi.org/10.26817/16925777.711
- Edwards, R., & Holland, J. (2013). *What is Qualitative Interviewing?* Bloomsbury Collentions. doi:DOI10.5040/9781472545244
- Etikan, I., & Bala, K. (2017). Samplind and Sampling Methods. *Biometrics & Biostatistics International Journal*. Retrieved from <https://acortar.link/VgIObA>
- Hansell, K., Pörn, M., & Bäck, S. (2021). Teachers' Interaction in Combined Physical and Virtual Learning Environments: A Case Study of Tandem Language

- Learning and Teaching in Finland. *Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 15(2), 105-127. doi:<https://doi.org/10.47862/apples.98339>
- Heale, R., & Twycross, A. (2018). What is a case study? *Evid Based Nurs*, 21(1). doi:10.1136/eb-2017-102845
- Hernández, M., Hidalgo, H., & Espinosa, N. (2022). Promoting the development of autonomy in the context of Teletandem in language teacher education. *The ESPECIALIST*, 43(1). doi:<https://doi.org/10.23925/2318-7115.2022v43i1a15>
- Huilca, C. E. (2022). *Blending e-tandem learning: Developing Speaking Competence In English Language Teaching (Masters Thesis)*. Latacunga. Retrieved from <http://repositorio.utc.edu.ec/bitstream/27000/8454/1/MUTC-001141.pdf>
- Karabinar, S., & Guler, C. (2013). A review of intercultural competence from language teachers' perspective. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 70, 1316-1328. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.01.193>
- Klen, V., & Tiraboschi, F. (2018). Experiencing Teletandem: A collaborative project to encourage students. *Revista do GEL*, 15(3), 109-130. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.21165/gel.v15i3.2416>
- Lamb, T., Jiménez Raya, M., & Vieira, F. (2007). Pedagogy for autonomy in language education in Europe: a framework for learner and teacher development. . *Authentik*. Retrieved from <https://acortar.link/tyWGej>
- Mynard, J. (2011). The role of the learning advisor in promoting autonomy. *Learner Autonomy in Language Learning*. Retrieved from <https://acortar.link/r6vKxb>
- Ramos, K., & Carvalho, K. (2018). Portuguese and Spanish Teletandem: The Role of Mediators. *Colomb. Appl. Linguist. J*, 20(1), 35-48. doi:<https://doi.org/10.14483/22487085.1205>
- Simon, E., Kleban, M., & Rodrigues, C. (2017). Telecollaboration: foreign language teachers (re)defining their role. *Alsic*, 20(2). doi:DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/alsic.3140>
- Telles, J. (2015). Learning foreign languages in teletandem: Resources and strategies. 31(3). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1590/0102-4450226475643730772>
- Zuñá, M., Yupangui, N., Arias, P., & Cando, F. (2023). Integrating E-tandem Mode in the Language Curriculum in the English Major at Technical University of

- Cotopaxi. *Mextesol Journal*, 47(2). Retrieved from https://www.mextesol.net/journal/index.php?page=journal&id_article=46422
- Serrato, D. and Padilla, B. (2020). Academic e-tandems as a strategy for English language learning in a Mexican University. *Open Praxis*, 12(3), 417-424. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1275401.pdf>
- Spencer-Oatey, H. (2012) What is culture? A compilation of quotations. GlobalPAD Core Concepts.
- Sugianto, A. and Ulfah, N. (2020). Construing the Challenges and Opportunities of Intercultural Language Teaching Amid Covid-19 Pandemic: English Teachers' Voices. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 5(3), 363-381.
- Suzi, M. and Calavari, S. (2019) The Teacher's Role in Telecollaborative Language Learning: The Case of Institutional Integrated Teletandem. Universidade Estadual Paulista. <https://www.scielo.br/j/rbla/a/Pq78XkhByryZT6j8Lb9JXgh/?format=pdf&lang=en>
- Tardieu, C. and Horgues, C. (2019). Redefining Tandem Language and Cultural Language in Higher Education. https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3-euw1-ap-pe-ws4-cws-documents.ri-prod/languageandcommunication/sample_chapters/intercultural_comm/9781138584617-sample.pdf
- Telles, J. (2015). Learning Foreign Languages in Teletandem: Resources and Strategies. *DELTA*, 31(3), 603-632. https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-qualities-of-a-good-teletandem-partner-and-what-he-she-can-do_fig1_287771506
- Telles, A. (2015) Learning foreign languages in teletandem: Resources and strategies. Universidade Estadual Paulista. <https://www.scielo.br/j/delta/a/yDgwtkLRKj5ftZ86ddKVggm/?format=pdf&lang=en>
- Telles, A. (2015) Teletandem and Performativity. Universidade Estadual Paulista. <https://www.scielo.br/j/rbla/a/R4LG3ZZstMRfXHn8Yr8JpVp/?format=pdf&lang=en>

- Williams, C. (2007). Research Methods. *Journal of Business & Economic Research*, 5(3), 65-72. <https://clutejournals.com/index.php/JBER/article/view/2532/2578>
- Wienclaw, R. (2019) Sacrifice is a step beyond convenience: A review of convenience sampling in psychological research in Africa. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*. <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/sajip/v47n1/21.pdf>

12. Annex

Annex 1: Instrument validation format

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Full name of the validator:**

- **Position and institution where he/she works:**

- **Author of the instrument:**

Wenceslao Noroña (2023)

- **Research title**

Teachers' roles in an institutional integrated E-tandem program at Technical University of Cotopaxi.

- **Objective**

To examine the UTC teachers' role in an institutional integrated e-tandem program at Technical University of Cotopaxi during April – August 2023 academic term.

- **Instrument objective**

To identify what are the roles that UTC english teachers develop during and after the Teletandem meetings.

VALIDATION ASPECTS

- Look at each item and mark with an X in the corresponding square, according to the criteria in each statement.

1. Deficient (If -30% of the items comply with the indicator)
2. Regular (If the items are within 31% to 70% according to the indicator)
3. Good (If +71% of the items comply with the indicator)

Range	Assessment
0 – 8	Deficient
9 – 18	Regular
19 – 27	Good

- Totalize the score according to the presented options (D= 1 R=2 G=3)

Validation aspects for the instrument		1	2	3	Observations
Criteria	Indicator	D	R	G	
PERTINENCE	The items measure what is expected in the research problem.				
COHERENCE	The items answer what is expected in the research problem.				
CONGRUENCE	The items are congruent with each other and with the concept they measure.				
SUFFICIENCY	The items are sufficient in quantity to measure the investigation variable.				
OBJECTIVITY	The items are expressed in observable behaviors and actions.				
CONSISTENCY	The items have been formulated in accordance with the theoretical foundations of the variable.				
CLARITY	The items are written in an understandable language for the subjects to be evaluated				
FORMAT	The items are written respecting technical aspects.				
STUCTURE	The instrument has well-defined instructions and questions.				
FINAL COUNT					

Validity		Yes	No
The instrument is aplicable.			
Applicable based on the observations			
Validated by: _____	C.I.: _____	Signature:	
Telephone: _____	Date: _____		
e-mail:			

Annex 2: Informed consent - students**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE COTOPAXI****CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y
EXTRANJEROS****FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO**

Yo, _____ estudiante de _____ semestre de la carrera de pedagogía de los idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros de la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi acepto participar en el proyecto desarrollado por el estudiante **Wenceslao Rodrigo Noroña Obaco**, supervisado por la **Mg. Amparo Jesús de Romero** el cual se llevará a cabo en el periodo académico Abril - Agosto 2023. De igual manera, declaro que he sido informado que el análisis de los resultados de mi participación se realizará con el objetivo de examinar el rol del docente en la interacción telecolaborativa integrada en las sesiones de teletándem.

Entiendo que bajo ningún medio serán expuestos mis datos personales en el proyecto.

Por lo tanto, acepto y me comprometo voluntariamente a participar en las actividades de recopilación de datos en los que se incluyen mi participación en la entrevista que será dirigida desarrollada por los autores del proyecto de investigación, pues además he recibido una copia del presente documento.

Firma del participante:

Cédula de identidad:

Correo electrónico:

Fecha:

Annex 3: Informed consent – teachers.**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE COTOPAXI****CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y
EXTRANJEROS****FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO**

Yo, _____ docente de inglés de la carrera de pedagogía de los idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros de la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi acepto participar en el proyecto desarrollado por el estudiante **Wenceslao Rodrigo Noroña Obaco**, supervisado por la **Mg. Amparo Jesús de Romero** el cual se llevará a cabo en el periodo académico Abril – Agosto 2023. De igual manera, declaro que he sido informado que el análisis de los resultados de mi participación se realizará con el objetivo de examinar el rol del docente en la interacción telecolaborativa integrada en las sesiones de teletándem.

Entiendo que bajo ningún medio serán expuestos mis datos personales en el proyecto.

Por lo tanto, acepto y me comprometo voluntariamente a participar en las actividades de recopilación de datos en los que se incluyen mi participación en la entrevista que será dirigida desarrollada por el autor del proyecto de investigación, pues además he recibido una copia del presente documento.

Firma del participante:

Cédula de identidad:

Correo electrónico:

Fecha:

Annex 4: data collection instrument - Interview for teachers**Guía de Entrevista Dirigida al Docente de Inglés****Interviewed:** _____ **Date:** _____**Interviewer:** _____

Objective: The present interview aims to identify what the roles that UTC english teachers develop during and after the Teletandem meetings are.

Instructions: Listen carefully to each question and formulate your answers based on your real experiences and sincere opinion.

Section 1: Demographic information

Age:

Genre:

Section 2: Professional formation and experience working in the educational area.

Please, tell me a bit more about your professional formation as an educator and how many years have you been working in the educational area.

Section 3: Experience working with Teletandem programs.

Please, tell me about your previous and current experience working and taking part in Teletandem programs.

Section 4: Guiding role

1. Do you establish clear guidelines and expectations for the meetings with your students? If yes, explain you establish it.
2. Do you define the purpose of the sessions or set any specific learning goals with your students? If yes, explain how you define or set the purpose/learning goal.
3. Do you offer discussion prompts (specific topics) or themes to guide the conversations? If yes, offer an example.
4. Do you develop language practice exercises, for example, role plays, dialogues, or vocabulary games? If yes, explain what activities you develop with your students.
5. Do you promote cultural exchange activities, for instance, discussions about traditions, customs, festivals, or food from each other's cultures? If yes, explain what activities you promote with your students.

Section 5: Linguistic role

1. Do you offer linguistic support to your students, for example, sample writing, audios, and questions to help them understand the vocabulary used in the Teletandem sessions? If yes, what kind of support do you offer?
2. Do you provide your students with resources and strategies for independent language practice? If yes, offer an example.
3. Do you blend Teletandem sessions into the academic curriculum?

4. Do you conduct orientation (before Teletandem) and mediation (after Teletandem)
5. sessions with your students? If yes, explain what topics are addressed in those sessions.

Section 6: Technological role

1. Are you able to control digital tools with ease to support your students before, during, and after the Teletandem sessions?
2. Do you think you have enough expertise to change the classroom from a static to a dynamic language environment? If yes, explain why.
3. If your students would present problems during the sessions, for example, audio, connection, or video accessibility, could you help them?
4. Do you believe the educational institution has to provide the necessary equipment such as laboratory and good internet connection for the development of the interaction? If yes, explain why.

Section 7: Mediation role

1. Do you offer error correction and feedback to your students? If yes, offer an example.
2. Do you ask your students to do reflective activities, let's say, journaling, self-assessment questionnaires or reflective discussions with a partner? If yes, explain a bit more about it.
3. Do you evaluate the language development and progress of your students, for example, ask them to do oral presentations, written assignments, or language proficiency tests? If yes, explain a bit more about it.

Annex 5: Data collection instrument - Interview for students

Guía de Entrevista Dirigida al Estudiante

Interviewed: _____ **Date:** _____

Interviewers: _____

Objective: The present interview aims to identify what some of the roles that the UTC teacher develops during and after the Teletandem meetings are.

Instructions: Listen carefully to each question and formulate your answers based on your real experiences and sincere opinion.

Section 1: Demographic information

Age:

Genre:

Semester:

Section 2: Student's English level

According to the following descriptions provided for the CEFR, what do you think fits better with your level of English?

- A1 (Beginner): Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type.
- A2 (Elementary English): Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance.
- B1 (Intermediate English): Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.

Section 3: Experience participating in Teletandem programs.

Please, tell me about your previous (if) and current experiences taking part in Teletandem programs.

Section 4: Guiding role

1. Does your teacher establish clear guidelines and expectations for the Teletandem meetings? If yes, explain how the teacher establishes it.
2. Does your teacher define the purpose of the sessions or set any specific learning goals for the Teletandem meetings? If yes, explain how the teacher defines or sets the purpose/learning goal.
3. Does your teacher offer discussion prompts (specific topics) or themes to guide the conversations? If yes, offer an example.
4. Does your teacher develop language practice exercises, for example, role plays, dialogues, or vocabulary games? If yes, explain what activities you develop with your teacher.
5. Does your teacher promote cultural exchange activities, for instance, discussions about traditions, customs, festivals, or food from each other's cultures? If yes, explain what activities your teacher promotes with you.

Section 5: Linguistic role

1. Does your teacher offer linguistic support to you, for example, sample writing, audios, and questions to help you understand the vocabulary used in the Teletandem sessions? If yes, what kind of support does the teacher offer?
2. Does your teacher provide you with resources and strategies for independent language practice? If yes, offer an example.
3. Does your teacher blend Teletandem sessions into the academic curriculum?
4. Does your teacher conduct orientation (before Teletandem) and mediation (after Teletandem) sessions with you? If yes, explain what topics are addressed in those sessions.

Section 6: Technological role

1. Is your teacher able to control digital tools so he or she can support you with ease before, during, and after the Teletandem sessions?

1. In your point of view, does your teacher have enough expertise to change the classroom from a static to a dynamic language environment? If yes, explain why.

2. If you presented problems during the sessions, for example, audio, connection or video accessibility, could your teacher help you?

3. Do you believe the educational institution has to provide the necessary equipment such as laboratory and good internet connection for the development of the interaction? If yes, explain why.

Section 7: Mediation role

1. Does your teacher offer error correction and feedback to you? If yes, offer an example.

2. Does your teacher ask you to do reflective activities, let's say, journaling, self-assessment questionnaires or reflective discussions with a partner? If yes, explain a bit more about it.

3. Does your teacher evaluate your language development and progress, for example, by doing oral presentations, written assignments, or language proficiency tests? If yes, explain a bit more about it.