



# Meta-communication Devices Used in a Multilingual EFL Telecollaboration for Secondary School Students

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## ABSTRACT

Telecollaboration is used where limitations of time and place are eliminated to pave the way for global education while it provides learners with intercultural understanding and multilingual contexts where knowledge knows no boundaries. The present study aimed at running a telecollaboration course in order to realize what meta-communication devices (MCDs) proposed by Bahtina (2013) were utilized in the students' interactions and what role English language played in this regard in a multilingual setting. The consequences of such instruction and the possible dilemmas were also taken into account. Therefore, 24 secondary school students from Turkey and Iran were non-randomly selected, grouped based on similar personality traits, and enrolled in a ten-session online course exchanging ideas and carrying out relevant tasks. As the results of the transcribed data of the video-recorded BigBlueButton and interviews revealed, MCD2 (development of a shared cognitive system) and MCD4 (development of a mechanism for dealing with misunderstandings), allotted 40% (maximally) and 11% (minimally) of the interactions, respectively. MCD1 (development of understanding and actions intended for a common goal, 29%) and MCD3 (development of linguistic understanding giving meaning to words, 15%), were the other two devices used in the interactions. English was the main medium of communication or lingua franca allotting 77% of the whole interactions. The results of this study might have promising insights for cultural understanding and language learning opportunities which could be a springboard for young learners who tend to pursue their academic studying overseas..

**Keywords:** Telecollaboration; Meta-communication devices (MCDs); Lingua franca; Intercultural awareness; Secondary students.

## 1. Introduction

We live in a digital age where thoughts and ideas are spread over the confinement of the borderlines in a fraction of a second where knowledge knows no boundaries through a shared language. This phenomenon is a facilitative asset nearly covering all fields of education and bears prolific results for the individuals involved. The advent of the Internet and its introduction into teaching languages has helped language teachers, educators and learners delve into a new era sharing ideas and thus learning different languages along with cultural and social matters that indeed aide the learning process. In this regard, a myriad of theories, technical terms and practical tips for teachers are presented each focusing on the effects of technology use on

teaching and learning practiced all over the globe. Among such terminologies, telecollaboration is a recent practice which flexibly combines social, cultural and individual diversity into account. Here, the learners share thoughts and communicate through a mutual language in many cases English, and discover for themselves what it takes to become a potential language learner fostering autonomy and self-independence. Furthermore, they advance in their academic career outside of the classroom walls nearly building a virtual one accessible at different times and locations. Telecollaboration describes any combination of text-based, multimodal-enhanced, asynchronous, synchronous, monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual collaboration (Ware, 2018).

## 2. Literature Review

A plethora of studies approve the educational potential of telecollaboration for the development of language skills (Guth & Helm, 2010; Lee, 2011; Polisca, 2011; Tian & Wang, 2010) and intercultural competence (Belz & Müller-Hartmann, 2003; Derivry, Stratilaki, Potolia & Boughnim, 2015; Helm, 2009; Hoffstaedter & Kohn, 2015; O'Dowd, 2005, 2006). Little research is available on online collaboration projects in primary and secondary education (Peiser, 2015) while most of the research results on telecollaboration exchanges so far refer to university students and tertiary education (Pol, 2013).

More recently telecollaboration has been related to the development of awareness of pedagogical knowledge (Dooly & Sadler, 2013; Guth & Helm, 2010), and "multimodal communicative competence" (Hauck, 2010), or multiliteracies (Hauck, 2010; Guth & Helm, 2010) leading to the concept of "telecollaboration 2.0" (Guth & Helm, 2010; O'Dowd, 2016) and how telecollaboration contributes to communicative competence (Canto, Jauregi, Berg & Van den, 2013; Guth & Helm, 2010;) intercultural awareness (Belz & Thorn, 2006; Canto, Graaff & Jauregi, 2014) and motivation (Jauregi, Graaff, Berg & Kriz, 2012).

Various methodological approaches have shaped telecollaboration research and they revolve around three areas of inquiry namely (a) language development; (b) intercultural communication; and (c) identity (Ware, 2018). As for the first one, synchronous platforms such as Multi-User Domain Object Oriented (MOOs) and instant messaging can promote metalinguistic awareness and foster a variety of strategies for negotiating meaning, including translation, paraphrase, elaboration, and clarification requests while asynchronous forums tend to promote mostly learner attention all tapping language proficiency and metalinguistic awareness in general (Ware, 2018). The second inquiry takes account of cultural exchanges and a number of interrelated factors, including linguistic proficiency and style, institutional and social expectations, discourse and pragmatic norms, and logistical and technological contexts (Hauck, 2010; Schenker, 2012).

In the third platform non-institutionalized learning, in which individuals use multiple languages to engage with others while participating in their own domains of interest such as gaming, fanfiction, social networking, blogging, advocacy work, and other special interest groups take place (Ware, 2018).

According to O'Dowd (2018), the tasks used in a telecollaborative study should be based on the *progressive exchange* model involving 3 interrelated task types moving from information exchange to comparing and analyzing cultural practices and finally leading to a telecollaborative project. As the learners work together, they develop transversal skills like digital literacy and intercultural communicative competence alongside with working on their foreign language competence. When second language learners communicate with one another, they are obliged to engage in the lingua franca, which, in this case, is English (Guth & Helm, 2010). Fifty-five tasks for different target languages, proficiency levels, interaction tools and communication constellations have been developed for telecollaboration exchanges (Jauregi, 2015). O'Dowd and Ware (2009) have classified tasks into twelve types which include information exchange, comparison and analysis, and collaboration and product creation. These tasks are subject to three stages of task sequencing namely: Introduction phase, Comparative phase, and Intense negotiation phase. Any task in telecollaboration must be meaning-based with an emphasis on two-way communication and interaction which could enhance authentic and naturalistic setting and help learners swift into

intercultural learners (Byram, 2012; Canto et al., 2014) misunderstandings and miscommunication can also help intercultural awareness form among learners when they face unexpected reactions and turns (Canto et al., 2014).

According to O'Dowd (2016), any telecollaboration exchange might happen for two main purposes which require authentic interactions with native or other speakers of the language and first-hand experience of real intercultural experiences. The first is said to be technologically and geographically constrained (Belz & Reinhardt, 2004; Hanna & De Nooy, 2009; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009) with the second goal receiving more attention (Guth & Helm, 2010; Kramsch, 2014). Despite the rapid growth of the Internet and the use of Internet communication tools at the end of the 20th century, there remains a distinct digital divide in many regions of the world (Warschauer, 2004) and that is why Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) might be taken for granted in many countries while others use it extensively. What needs to be taken into account is that for integrating technology into language learning curriculum and extending its dimensions, intercultural aspects should be considered and as Byram (2012) states, being intercultural or interculturalism must be regarded as one of the optimal goals of foreign language teaching and learning, for which telecollaboration seems to be a potential candidate.

When learners are engaged in negotiating meanings and exchanging intercultural concepts, they can grow mutual understanding which can yield to a common ground enabling them to share ideas and use English, for instance, for purposeful interactions. According to Bahtina (2013), such interactions can be mediated through some non-automatic communication strategies referred to as meta-communicative devices (MCDs) that can structure knowledge and optimize communication. When MCDs are activated, learners can reflect on their linguistic knowledge and interact with their interlocutors in the process of language learning with an adopted level of proficiency. MCDs are based on Ehlich and Rehbein (1986) about how common understanding can be achieved through the lenses of functional pragmatic approach to discourse.

MCDs can be utilized at different levels based on Ehlich and Rehbein's model (1986) and are generally of four types namely:

MCD1: This device focuses on the development of understanding with an underlying set of actions that are intended to arrive at a shared social goal (*e.g. What we need to do is X*).

MCD2: It aims at achieving a shared cognitive system of alignments in specific settings (*e.g. If you write in Farsi, you must write from right to left*).

MCD3: It yields to an understanding in linguistic realization in the discourse that delivers meanings to the words (*e.g. This is called X and means Y*).

MCD4: It is a mechanism used when misunderstandings happen leading to confusions or asking for clarifications: (*e.g. You mean X*).

This model is in line with other pragmatic models for effective communication (Rehbein & Kameyama, 2003) and is adopted in this study.

Telecollaborative projects draw mainly upon digital tools such as learning management systems (e.g. Moodle and Blackboard), microblogging (Twitter), blogging, podcasting, email services, discussion forums, instant messaging, virtual worlds (e.g. Second Life), chat rooms and audio-and videoconferencing (Antoniadou, 2011; Canto et al. 2013; Chen & Yang, 2016 [2014]; Chun, 2011; Chun, 2015; Guth & Helm, 2010; Lee & Markey, 2014; Schenker, 2012).

As telecollaboration projects have been employed in the US, Spain, Germany, China, Taiwan and the Netherlands in large scales in the last decade (Çiftci & Savas, 2017; Kroon, Jaugary & Thije, 2015), no study has been carried out in an Iranian or Turkish context; furthermore, this study aimed at considering secondary school students since as mentioned earlier, little research is available on online collaboration projects in primary and secondary education (Peiser, 2015) while most of the research results on telecollaboration exchanges so far refer to university students and tertiary education.

Therefore, the aim of the present research was to explore the utilization of meta communicative

devices of a telecollaboration project at a secondary education level with a focus on real intercultural experience (O'Dowd ,2016) in a multilingual (Farsi, Turkish, English) context in one hand and consider the challenges learners faced while participating in this study using English as lingua franca on the other hand through a video communication platform. Therefore, the following questions were asked for this study:

1. What role does the lingua-franca, in this case English, play in telecollaboration interactions?
2. Which types of meta-communicative devices (MCDs) have been often utilized in the telecollaboration study in the context of this study?
3. How is intercultural awareness accounted for?
4. What challenges do the students in a telecollaboration context face with?

### 3. Method

This study, as many other studies related to telecollaboration, used a mixed method design. A personality trait test was administered prior to the study to group the learners in the most appropriate group or Room. All the interactions were video-recorded and transcribed for the purpose of differentiating the MCDs types, their frequency of occurrence and the type of linguistic medium used. Furthermore, detailed interviews were done to account for the challenges the learners encountered.

#### 3.1. Participants

In order to carry out this study, 24 secondary school students (6 male and 6 female Turkish and 8 male and 4 female Iranian) aged between 16-18 were non-randomly selected from some schools in Turkey and Iran to enroll in a telecollaboration study (August-September, 2018). All the participants were intermediate English learners, equivalent to A2/B1 level on the Common European Framework of Reference (2001) scale, who had sat a proficiency test prior to participating in the study and were preparing for top ranking European universities and therefore needed a band score of 5 to 7 in the IELTS exam. All the participants were required to have sufficient computer literacy prior to participating in the study and therefore, had taken a computer course in advance (ICDL, intermediate module).

#### 3.2. Materials and Instruments

Myers Briggs (MBTI) personality trait test (2014), a multiple choice test with a reliability coefficient of 0.82 as half-split estimates showed, was once administered prior to the instruction to group the participant with most similar personality types for fair turn taking. Furthermore, unstructured twelve-session interviews concerning participants' feelings, reactions, attitudes, challenges, comments and feedback on the whole process were conducted prior, during and posterior to the instruction to gain insights on the aspects, shortcomings, and issues that the researchers might not have considered.

For the telecollaboration instruction, The BigBlueButton (<https://bigbluebutton.org>) application was utilized which is an open source program enabling different individuals to chat, video conference, share files and get involved in synchronous learning environment where all learning activities can be recorded and saved. Moreover, EXMARaLDA (**Extensible Markup Language for Discourse Annotation**, 2016), a set of free software tools for creating, managing and analyzing spoken language corpora, was used to transcribe the conversations.

#### 3.3. Procedure

For this study, 24 secondary school students (12 Iranian and 12 Turkish) were enrolled in a telecollaboration English course. They were non-randomly selected from different schools and had an intermediate level of proficiency in English who tended to pursue their education in decent

European universities and therefore were enthusiastic learners. First, they sat a personality test in order to be paired with the best possible matches so that every group member could participate in the discussions without just some taking the floor. Second, they were allocated to 4 different groups or Rooms and retained there to the end of the course for being acquainted with each other. These twelve Iranian (8 females and 4 males) and twelve Turkish (6 females and 6 males) secondary school students were grouped into 4 Rooms using the BigBlueButton (BBB) application for 10 sessions each lasting about 90 minutes (15 hours all together) and carried out information exchange tasks, compared and analyzed their responses and finally conducted negotiations in three phases while they took turns both with their native and foreign counterparts with a focus on intercultural dimension as well as language development. It is worth mentioning that every session was held at least for 90 minutes and in case there were technical problems, this time was extended to compensate for the wasted time. Prior to each activity and task completion, they were given directions and help on how to handle the tasks and what the teacher expected them to do.

All the interactions and conversations were video-recorded through the BBB and later transcribed through EXMARaLDA software for data analysis. These data were later categorized according to Bahtina's (2013) four MCDs.

Once every telecollaboration session was over, the participants were interviewed on their feelings, attitudes towards the practice and the problems they encountered every session as they carried out the tasks while their interviews were also recorded for further analysis. The transcribed data were coded and analyzed by the second author and another Iranian teacher for interrater reliability. Therefore, there were two types of data for analysis; one type was related to BBB interactions that fell into four categories and the second type the detailed interviews about participant's reactions, attitudes and problems. Therefore, they are presented in different tables in this study.

#### 4. Results

As the transcribed data showed, there was quite a vast amount of interactions and conversations to handle and group into the four meta communicative devices' category. Nearly 95 percent of all interactions were transcribed and used in this study since very few conversations were not legible or at least not related to tasks but mainly revolved around technological problems pupils encountered during the sessions which would not easily fall into any of the MCDs by Bahtina (2013). The inter-rater reliability for the categorized data was estimated as Cohen's Kappa = 0.79. For the first question concerning the use and role of English as a lingua franca in this study, it was revealed that surprisingly the amount of class time, in BBB, was mainly spent on English conversations which is not the same for traditional classes where students grab every opportunity to use their native language as much as possible especially when they fall short for words, expressions and ideas as teachers give testimonies. Table 1 provides information on how much of class time was ran in English, Turkish, and Farsi with a slight difference in who the interlocutors were since using native language took place among Turkish-Turkish or Farsi-Farsi speakers only in order to ask for clarifications or confirmations, while English was used among all the 6 participants in each group or Room.

Based on Table 1, on average 76.66 percent of the relevant interactions were carried out in English. Turkish language used 14.72 percent of the interactions and Farsi 10 percent. This implies the dominance of English as the main medium of conversations. As the results of One-way ANOVA followed by Post Hoc test revealed (see Table 2), there was a significant difference between the English group and the other two ( $p = 0.00$ ) while there was not any significant difference between the Turkish and Iranian group ( $p = 0.36$ ).

Table 1. The Amount and Percentage of Time Used in Interactions through Different Languages

Language	Room	Minutes (out of 900)	Percentage	Average
English	Room 1	680	75.55	76.66%
	Room 2	660	73.33	
	Room 3	750	83.33	
	Room 4	670	74.44	
Turkish	Room 1	120	13.33	14.72%
	Room 2	130	14.44	
	Room 3	90	10.00	
	Room 4	140	21.11	
Farsi	Room 1	100	11.12	10.00%
	Room 2	110	12.22	
	Room 3	60	6.67	
	Room 4	90	10.00	

Table 2. Multiple Comparisons of Turkish, Persian and English Language Used during the Interactions

		(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
HSD	Tukey	English	Turkish	570.00*	20.81	.00
			Persian	600.00*	20.81	.00
	Turkish	English	-570.00*	20.81	.00	
		Persian	30.00	20.81	.36	
	Persian	English	-600.00*	20.81	.00	
		Turkish	-30.00	20.81	.36	
Scheffe	English	Turkish	Turkish	570.00	20.81	.00
			Persian	600.00*	20.81	.00
	Turkish	English	-570.00*	20.81	.00	
		Persian	30.00	20.81	.39	
	Persian	English	-600.00*	20.81	.00	
		Turkish	-30.00	20.81	.39	
Bonferroni	English	Turkish	Turkish	570.00*	20.81	.00
			Persian	600.00*	20.81	.00
	Turkish	English	-570.00*	20.81	.00	
		Persian	30.00	20.81	.55	
	Persian	English	-600.00*	20.81	.00	
		Turkish	-30.00	20.81	.55	

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Concerning the second question on the use of the four MCDs, the transcribed data revealed some interesting results. The majority of MCDs used in this study were MCD2 (40%) and the minority were MCD4 (11%). MCD1 was the second top used type (29%) and MCD3 ranked the third (15 %) as shown in Table 3. The remaining 5 percent could not fall into any of the four MCDs and concerned technological, technical and net connection issues which occurred during the course and for convenience were excluded by the researches. Each MCD use in this study could be expanded in the following sections.

Table 3. Type and Percentage of MCDs Used

Type	Definition and use	Percentage (out of 95%)
MCD1	development of understanding and actions intended for a common goal	29%
MCD2	development of a shared cognitive system in specific settings	40%
MCD3	development of linguistic understanding giving meaning to words	15%
MCD4	development of a mechanism for dealing with misunderstandings	11%

## MCD1(29%)

This type of device mainly focused on determining the situations and taking actions to arrive at a common goal as the tasks required them do to. This is related to the overall purpose of the interactions and the roles each speaker has. This is the second ranked device used in this study. Linguistic reasoning was abundant in this type and turn taking facilitated the application of this MCD (Table 4).

Table 4. MCD1 Use and Examples

MCD1 use (29%)	Example	Types of interactions
Determining the situation	So I explain it more.	Statements
	Can you say it again?	Questions
	Yes, it is your turn.	Confirmations

## MCD2 (40%)

The majority of meta-communication devices used in this study pertains to interactions where pupils were involved in asking detailed questions concerning personal, cultural, habitual and conceptual information from their peers. As the core of a telecollaboration program demands cultural awareness, this obtained information is shown to be in line with Byram (2012) and Canto et al. (2014) who advocate such environments for getting acquainted with intercultural issues. Here, the pupils exchanged information about specific customs and rituals requiring to know the words in both English and their own language. As the results of the personality test showed, highly motivated and flexible pupils exchanged majority of this device. Table 5 provides different examples of the use of MCD2.

Table 5. MCD2 Use and Examples

MCD2 use (40%)	Example	Types of interactions
Comparing	We also celebrate Qurban in Turkey. How do you celebrate the new year?	Statements, questions
Contrasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• But many Iranian schools do not allow a co-educational system.</li> <li>• You do not celebrate the Christmas, do you?</li> </ul>	Statements, questions
Completing sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A: I think they were....</li> <li>B: costumes?</li> </ul>	Statements, questions
Translation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We call it Nourouz.</li> </ul>	Statements

## MCD3 (15%)

Among other devices, MCD2 might be more involved in language related issues and the misunderstandings that arise because of wrong use of words, erroneous pronunciation, fast speech and erring responses. Here the teacher needed to intervene rather than just observe the tasks being carried out by the pupils. Table 6 provides a better understanding of the interactions using this MCD.

**Table 6.** MCD3 Use and Examples

MCD3use (15%)	Example	Types of interactions
Adapting	I'm gonna beat you...I am going to win.	Statements
Rephrasing	I am half in love with gadgets... I mean I love them.	Statements
Providing examples	You study geology for example studying about earthquakes?	Statements, questions

MCD4 (11%)

This MCD, the least used device in this study, aimed at monitoring the perceived meanings by using recovery strategies of asking for clarifications (Table 7).

**Table 7.** MCD4 Use and Examples

MCD4 use (11%)	Example	Types of interactions
Asking for repetitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What?</li> <li>• Can you say it again?</li> </ul>	questions
Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. X...can you explain it?</li> <li>• Do you live in the capital city?</li> </ul>	questions

In order to account for the third research question regarding intercultural awareness, it can be implied that since the focus of tasks in this study were on both language and culture specifically, MCD2 dominated the conversation and information exchanges shedding light on many intercultural issues the teenagers in this study were faced with. As the data analysis of meta communication devices reveal, this study facilitated cultural awareness as pupils carried out tasks about rights and ritual of specific cultures and customs. Therefore, this dimension of telecollaboration, namely intercultural awareness, was accounted for. The interviews also revealed the pupils were culturally aware of the differences once the course was over.

#### 4.1. Challenges and outcomes

Detailed personal and within group interviews were carried out during the course which aimed at tapping the issues the teacher and the researchers could not see clearly in order to resolve some issues we came across; yet some of the issues were unattended to and it is hoped that this study paves way for further research where such matters could be taken care of. The following is what the interviews reported:

Many participants were not formerly well acquainted with learning spaces like the BigBlueButton and felt a type of alienation and technophobia toward such applications at first. Not knowing enough about the language and culture of their foreign interlocutors made them feel less confident and more inquisitive about the issue. Even though the participants had an intermediate level of proficiency in English, they sometimes could not get their messages across due to an unfamiliarity with how to work and take part in such atmospheres which was thoroughly eliminated by the end of the course. Majority of the participants gave testimonies that at first they did not take such instruction seriously and had serious issues with their parents regarding the use of such programs instead of taking part in real classrooms.

Some technological problems namely the speed of the internet service (low net speed in Iran) intimidated the Iranian pupils and delayed their answers and different schooling systems (e.g. co-education or segregation) made it difficult to arrive at a shared understanding of ideas and viewpoints accompanied by a special register used by different genders.

Nevertheless, some prolific outcomes were attained at the end of the course: The pupils enjoyed a different learning environment once they experienced BBB and insisted on continuing such tradition afterward at the end of the course. Furthermore, familiarity with a different culture,

right reported from the natives, increased their tolerance of differences and cultivated a sense of awareness in them. The pupils learned that without the need for a teacher or a syllabus, they could join different groups online to exchange ideas and practice English. Finally, there were more than just language and culture learning which broadened their views to learning in general and helped them mix more with people who were linguistically and geographically distant.

## 5. Discussion

To account for the first research question, the obtained results revealed that English as a lingua franca was the highest used medium in the course (76.66 %) and the secondary school participants tried their best to take part in the tasks and discussions in English; this is in line with Guthand Helm, (2010), suggesting that telecollaboration courses push learners to communicate in English where different languages are also present. Concerning the second question, four types of MCDs were differently used in the interactions with MCD2 (40%) and MCD4 (11%), being the highest and lowest used devices, respectively. As with MCD2, we can draw the conclusion that the shared cognitive system of the learners was developed and getting engaged in these interactions helped them achieve this. On the other hand, the development of a mechanism to deal with misunderstandings was not obtained which suggests that learners still did not gain enough confidence to ask for classifications or did not know how to attend to such problems in English. MCD1 and MCD3, respectively allocated 29 % and 15% of the all interactions and some transcribed data pertained to technical issues which were not considered at all. The second highly employed MCD was related to taking actions and developing understanding to arrive at a common goal. The learners were already willing to work collaboratively to complete the tasks and therefore, develop this metacognitive aspect of the project. The third place seems to be given to MCD 3, where learners worked together to figure out the meanings of the words even though they frequently failed to respond to misunderstandings.

These results seem to differ greatly from Kroon, Jaugary and Thije (2015) who conceded that MCD0 (devices accounting for technical problems) was the most frequently used strategy, followed by MCD4, MCD3 and MCD1. Unlike the present study, Kroon et al., (2015) showed that MCD2 was the least used device among all which promotes the development of intercultural understanding. Therefore, more studies are in need to respond for this extreme difference between the results of the present study and those of Kroon et al., (2015). Cultural differences about the context in which these two studies were carried out could shed light on the controversial results.

To account for the third question, there was a focus on cultural awareness, this collaboration study fostered intercultural knowledge where the pupils got more acquainted with different cultural issues and as the interviews showed, they were willing to do more telecollaboration projects with more diverse set of participants and therefore question number three is accounted for. These results are in line with Belzand Thorn (2006) and Canto, Graaff, and Jauregi (2014) who revealed that telecollaboration courses enable the learners to tap the cultural differences in to account and seek to arrive at an intercultural understanding and awareness. Differences about culture, mother tongue and geographical settings do not threaten learning through a shared language, just on the other hand, enable the learners to welcome such differences.

The fourth question tapped the challenges the learners faced and as they gave testimonies, first time experience of online learning, no sufficient cultural information, being enticed to carry out interactions just in English, leaving no room for the writing skill, a low net speed doubled with other technical problems and a different schooling system in general were the pitfalls they faced with.

Therefore, the results of this study might have theoretical and practical implications for both the teachers and researchers in one hand and syllabus designers and policy makers on the other hand to make plans at larger scales for international education without boundaries and the limitations of time and place to better equip learners, especially teenagers, for future graduate studies whose medium is English as an accepted international language. On the theoretical level, better considerations could be accounted for and on the practical level, well-equipped atmospheres

and up-to-date media could be designed and supplied so that education would be timeless and accessible for the majority of people worldwide.

Telecollaboration, as an emerging supplant for traditional settings where copious shortcomings of time and place are observable, could be frequently used in educational settings especially as far as English language learning is concerned. Interacting through such medium, helps the learners develop metacognitive awareness and employ metacognitive devices which in turn have educational advantages and boost their learning ability in general. The order and frequency of the above mentioned metacognitive devices could vary in different contexts but what matters is their educational benefits and opportunities a telecollaboration project provide for such understanding and shared knowledge.

## 6. Conclusion

This study did not have a large scale framework and the participant were only selected from two neighboring countries because of the feasibility of having access to the participants. Furthermore, the time zone difference was taken into account so that the participants would be suited in each Room at the best times of the day possible since they were all secondary students and had classes till three in the afternoon. The syllabus of the ten-session course was mainly designed over specific topics that the researchers had chosen.

Overall, the results of this study seemed to be satisfactory for both the teachers and the participants and this helped the researchers draw the conclusion that a telecollaboration work could bear prolific results even though some technical problems might emerge which are actually inevitable. However, like any research, this study might have some limitations like the number of pupils enrolled, their nationality, gender, age, personality and the way they were grouped in each Room. The syllabus also might bear different results in the use of MCDs and their necessity. It is hoped that by conducting more research in this respect, more light could be shed on the benefits and also possible drawbacks of such online courses. Therefore, teachers, school principals and educators who wish to open up new horizons for avid learners can facilitate Telecollaborative projects and create more room for this type of practice. This will potentiate the young learners to both learn English as in international language an at the same time grow intercultural understanding and a shared system with their peer in different corners of the world. To put simply, English language learning will be accompanied with culture learning and the ability to negotiate meaning in multicultural and multilingual settings where technology is the cornerstone of such practice. However, like any research that could have its own limitations and side effects not seen clearly, more studies need to be carried out in this regard to give a clearer picture of the topic at hand and possibly correspond for the utility of different metacognitive devices employed differently in different contexts.

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