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# **THE POTENTIAL OF SELF-REFLECTION IN THE LEARNING PROCESS OF COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION SKILLS**

**BY  
MARGARITA CANAL ACERO**

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED 2016



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# **THE POTENTIAL OF SELF-REFLECTION IN THE LEARNING PROCESS OF COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION SKILLS**

by

Margarita Canal Acero



**AALBORG UNIVERSITY**  
DENMARK

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## CV

Margarita Canal is a psychologist specialized in conflict resolution (Universidad Javeriana). She is also a psychoanalyst, having trained at the Colombian Psychoanalytical Society, which is affiliated with the International Psychoanalytical Association. She has been enrolled in the Learning and Philosophy Department of Aalborg University as a PhD fellow since 2010.

Currently, Margarita is an Assistant Professor at the School of Management of the Universidad de los Andes, where she is also the Academic Coordinator of the graduate Specialization in Negotiation.

Her research interests lie in the area of negotiation and in the area of management education. With regard to the former, she studies the personal and interpersonal skills related to collaborative negotiation as well as how to identify and take advantage of negotiation profiles. With regard to the latter, she is particularly interested in researching the value of certain methods such as e-learning portfolios and self-reflection as a mental capacity for students' learning and as a means for providing them with meaningful and personalized assessments aligned with a student-centered approach.

She is an active member of INTRA (International Teaching and Research Association) and regularly participates in The Negotiation Challenge (TNC) as a judge or team coach of this competition.





# ENGLISH SUMMARY

## PURPOSE

This study seeks to understand how self-reflection can contribute to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills in management education as well as how self-reflection as a mental capacity works. In order to accomplish this aim, the research looks for evidence of what reflection allows students to learn in terms of collaborative negotiation skills and studies the psychic characteristics that students draw on when reflecting. This is used to conceptualize six psychic characteristics found through the analysis and what these findings imply for supporting students' learning of collaborative negotiation skills.

## METHODOLOGY

The majority of the empirical information of this research was collected from the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course taught in 2013, which is part of a one-year graduate Specialization in Negotiation at Universidad de los Andes, in Colombia.

Two levels of analysis are developed in the study. The first level explores how reflection contributes to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills with regard to consolidating skills useful for collaborative negotiation, generating self-awareness of personal qualities, and re-evaluating beliefs and paradigms. The sample of this level is 28 students and the unit of analysis concerns most of the questions of the last reflection prompt: Self-reflection on my profile as a strategic negotiator. This prompt is the sixth reflection that students have been asked to complete in their e-learning portfolios.

The second level of analysis focuses on identifying the main psychic characteristics that the five students of the sample utilize when reflecting. The unit of analysis consists of four written reflections from students' e-learning portfolios and two interviews with each student.

This level of analysis is developed with the help of psychoanalytical knowledge, particularly from an intersubjective approach to psychoanalysis. Applied psychoanalysis searches for evidence of students' psychic characteristics in their written reflections and interviews. This study also offers a conceptualization of the six psychic characteristics, which were developed through the method of abduction, where certain initial parameters were considered initially but where additional concepts were developed through the second level of analysis.

### **CONTRIBUTIONS**

The current research contributes to a more accurate way of understanding reflection as a mental capacity, based on the conceptualization of the six psychic characteristics connected to it, namely: 1) making contact with oneself, 2) connecting to others, 3) reality perspective, 4) understanding and expressing emotions, 5) balanced narcissism, and 6) change process.

The current study provides a more realistic view of what reflection can add to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills, proposing that reflection makes learning evident to both teachers and students.

The individualized process undergone with each of the five students in the second level of analysis led to the identification of students' negotiation profiles. This method together with the knowledge of the six psychic characteristics connected to reflection allows management teachers to assess students in meaningful and personalized ways that are aligned with a student-centred approach.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS**

The processes that students engage in when reflecting about themselves are not exclusively confined to the educational sphere. These processes feature a certain degree of overlap between teaching and activities such as coaching, mentoring, and therapy, since the dialogues established between the students and the teacher through the written reflections are of a very personal and sensitive nature. These kinds of processes, in which self-reflection is a central and systematic

part of a course, focus on both personal and professional development. In that order of ideas, it will be important to make students aware of these processes and to offer alternative activities in case that some decline to participate in them.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS**

It is important that management scholars and teachers who use reflection or journaling as part of their teaching practices know what to expect when they ask students to reflect about themselves. They are certain to find differences in students' reflection outcomes and receive essays that reveal students' traits, feelings, and fears. Therefore, teachers must be prepared to assess students' reflections and to do so with coherence and respect. This process includes the possibility of assessing students' learning, taking into account their psychological characteristics in order to better support their personal development



# DANSK RESUMÉ

## AFHANDLINGENS FORMÅL

Denne afhandling undersøger, hvorledes selvrefleksion kan bidrage til at lære collaborative negotiation skills indenfor lederuddannelse; dvs. hvordan selvrefleksion bidrager til at tilegne sig viden om og færdigheder i at samarbejde med modparten i forhandlingssituationer. Afhandlingen søger desuden at forstå, hvorledes selvrefleksion fungerer som mental kapacitet. For at nå frem til dette mål undersøges empiri om, hvordan refleksion bidrager til at lære collaborative negotiation skills. Derudover undersøges de psykiske karaktertræk, som de studerende baserer deres refleksioner på. Dette anvendes til at konceptualisere seks psykiske kendetegn, der er udledt af analysen, samt til at udlede de implikationer, dette har, i forhold til at støtte studerendes læring af collaborative negotiation skills.

## METODE

Hovedparten af de empiriske data i dette forskningsprojekt blev indsamlet under et kursus i Theory and Strategies of Negotiation, afholdt i 2013. Dette kursus er en del af en etårig kandidatspecialisering i Forhandling (Negotiation) ved Universidad de los Andes i Colombia.

Igennem studiet er der blevet arbejdet med to analyseniveauer. Det første niveau undersøger, hvorledes refleksion bidrager til at studerende tilegner sig collaborative negotiation skills i forhold til at konsolidere færdigheder, der er nyttige i forhold til at kunne samarbejde med modparten i forhandlingssituationer og i forhold til at skabe bevidsthed om egne personlige kvalifikationer. Desuden undersøges, hvorledes refleksion bidrager til at reevaluere meninger og paradigmer. Datagrundlaget for dette analyseniveau er 28 studerende, og analysen omhandler de fleste af spørgsmålene i refleksionspunktet: Selvrefleksion over min profil som strategisk forhandler, som er det sjette refleksionspunkt, som de studerende er blevet bedt om at besvare i deres e-learning portfolier på kurset.

Det andet analyseniveau fokuserer på at kunne identificere de fremherskende psykiske karaktertræk, som fem studerende i denne del af undersøgelsen benytter sig af, når de reflekterer. Analysematerialet består her af fire skriftlige refleksioner fra de studerendes e-learning portfolier, samt to interviews med hver af de fem studerende. Analysen på dette niveau er udviklet med udgangspunkt i psykoanalytisk viden, hvor der specielt tages udgangspunkt i en intersubjektiv tilgang. Med anvendelsen af psykoanalysen søges efter bevis på de studerendes psykiske kendetegn i deres skriftlige refleksioner og i interviewene. Studiet leder til konceptualisering af seks psykiske kendetegn, som er udviklet igennem abduktion. Det vil sige, at analysen tager sit udgangspunkt i nogle grundlæggende begreber inden for psykoanalysen. Samtidigt udvikles begreberne yderligere igennem niveau 2 – analyserne.

## **PERSPEKTIV**

Forskningsresultaterne bidrager til en klarere forståelse af refleksion som mental kapacitet, og som er baseret på konceptualiseringen af de seks psykiske kendetegn, nemlig: 1) At komme i kontakt med sig selv, 2) at relatere til andre, 3) realitetsperspektivet, 4) at forstå og udtrykke følelser, 5) narcissisme samt 6) forandringsprocesser.

Afhandlingen leverer et mere realistisk bud på, hvordan refleksion kan bidrage til collaborative negotiation skills, idet den lægger op til at forklare, hvordan refleksion gør læringen synlig for både lærere og studerende.

Den individualiserede proces, der er foretaget med de fem studerende i analysens niveau 2, har ført til identifikation af studerendes forhandlingsprofiler. Sammen med kendskabet til de seks psykiske kendetegn ved refleksion giver denne metode undervisere inden for området mulighed for at bedømme studerende på en meningsfuld og individuel måde, som er i overensstemmelse med/ aligned med en studenter-centreret tilgang.

## **IMPLIKATIONER FOR STUDERENDE**

De processer, som studerende gennemgår, når de reflekterer over egen praksis, gælder ikke kun i uddannelsessammenhænge. I processerne er der en vis grad af overlap mellem egentlig undervisning og aktiviteter som coaching, mentorarbejde og terapi, eftersom den dialog, der opstår mellem studerende og underviser i de skriftlige refleksioner, er af en meget personlig og følsom karakter. Processer, hvor selvrefleksion er en central og systematisk del af et kursus, fokuserer på såvel personlig som professionel udvikling. Med denne viden som udgangspunkt vil det være vigtigt at gøre de studerende bevidste om processerne og at tilbyde alternative aktiviteter i de situationer, hvor nogle vil afslå at deltage i refleksionsprocessen.

## **IMPLIKATIONER FOR UNDERVISERE**

Det er vigtigt at forskere og undervisere inden for ledelse, som bruger refleksion eller dagbogsføring som en del af deres undervisningspraksis, er klar over, hvad de kan forvente, når de beder studerende om at reflektere over egen praksis. De vil helt sikkert finde forskelle i resultaterne af de studerendes refleksioner, og få tilbagemeldinger, som vil afsløre de studerendes særlige interesser, følelser og frygt. Derfor må undervisere være indstillet på at bedømme de studerendes refleksioner med respekt og i den ånd, de er skrevet. Denne proces omfatter også muligheden for at bedømme de studerendes læring med deres psykiske karaktertræk in mente, og dermed støtte deres personlige udvikling.





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# **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The current chapter aims to contextualize why I focus this research on the potential of self-reflection in the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills.

As the research is based on my teaching experience, I consider it important to provide background on the events that preceded my decision to focus my PhD research on the mentioned topic. In order to accomplish this objective, in section 1.2, I put forward the research scope, aims, and questions. In section 1.3, I use personal accounts to explain my interest in the processes of teaching and learning collaborative negotiation skills, as well as my interest in the use of reflection and learning portfolios as part of my teaching practice. I also share how I determined that psychoanalysis would be a helpful method to understand the differences in students' reflection outcomes. These personal accounts are important to understand the origins of the current research questions. In order to supplement the background that I provide in this chapter, in section 1.4, I describe the research problem and how it has evolved. After that, I present the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course from which I collected the majority of the empirical information, as well as the graduate Specialization in Negotiation that the course is part of in section 1.5. Then, in section 1.6, I offer definitions of key terms that I will use throughout the dissertation. Finally, I present a chapter plan in section 1.7.

## **1.2 THE RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS**

This study seeks to understand how self-reflection can contribute to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills in management education as well as how self-reflection as a mental capacity functions.

In order to accomplish this aim, two levels of analysis are developed in the study. The first level explores how reflection contributes to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills with regard to consolidating skills useful for collaborative negotiation, generating self-awareness of personal qualities, and re-evaluating beliefs and paradigms. The sample of this level is 28 students. The second level of analysis focuses on identifying the main psychic characteristics the five students of the sample utilized when reflecting. This level of analysis is developed with the aid of psychoanalytical concepts, particularly those representing an intersubjective approach to psychoanalysis. This way of proceeding led me to conceptualize the six psychic characteristics found through the analysis and to explain their implications for supporting students' learning of collaborative negotiation skills.

I designed the current intervention with the goal of understanding the value of self-reflection to facilitate the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. I draw on theories of self-reflection from the higher and management education fields, incorporating a psychoanalytical approach as well as the specific perspectives of philosophers such as Dewey and Kornblith.

Taking into account the above-mentioned ideas, I explore the problem through two research questions.

### **1.2.1 THE FIRST RESEARCH QUESTION**

How does reflection contribute to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills with regard to the:

- Consolidation of skills useful for collaborative negotiation
- Generation of self-awareness of personal qualities
- Re-evaluation of beliefs and paradigms

## 1.2.2 THE SECOND RESEARCH QUESTION

Which psychic characteristics do students draw on when reflecting, and which of them are most closely connected to students' learning process of collaborative negotiation skills?

The first question allowed me to develop the first level of analysis, and the second question allowed me to do the same with the second level, leading to the following research aims.

## 1.2.3 THE RESEARCH AIMS

The aims of the current research are the following:

- a. I will analyze what self-reflection can add to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills.
- b. I intend to broaden understanding of the self-reflection concept in the management education field through the identification and explanation of some of the psychic characteristics linked to it.
- c. I will conceptualize these psychic characteristics, which are embedded in the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills that was observed in the cases.
- d. I will analyze the consequences of understanding reflection as a mental capacity for the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills, which is connected to other psychic characteristics.

## 1.3 ORIGINS OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

In what follows, I first share the account of how I became interested in the processes of teaching and learning collaborative negotiation skills. Second, I share the accounts about the use of reflection for learning. Third, I describe how I have been employing learning portfolios as part of my teaching practice, and finally, I explain how I came to consider psychoanalysis a method to understand the differences in students' forms of reflection.

### **1.3.1 HOW DID I BECOME INTERESTED IN THE LEARNING PROCESS OF COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION?**

Improving your negotiation skills is a long journey that involves constant reflection, awareness, and openness to feedback. (Thompson & Leonardelli, 2004, p. 7)

In this section of the chapter, I will describe how I became interested in collaborative negotiation and why I place emphasis on the process of learning collaborative negotiation skills in my teaching. I will also give examples of some of the challenges students face when learning collaborative negotiation skills.

I have been teaching negotiation courses since 2004 to both undergraduate and graduate students—primarily at the School of Management of the Universidad de los Andes—and I became interested in collaborative negotiation for two main reasons. The first is because before I started working at the School of Management of the Universidad de los Andes in 2005, I was developing social projects in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. I wanted to promote peacebuilding in my new job, but the way to do so in the context of teaching negotiation skills to Colombian business leaders was unclear.

Frankly, a part of me felt that I was selling my soul to the devil when I accepted that job. Feeling that I would solely be helping current and future business leaders and entrepreneurs become wealthier, I struggled to see any social dimension in my work. I thought that negotiation might help students to learn skills to become more competent at their businesses, especially through value creation, but I was unsure of how to help students to take advantage of other aspects related to negotiation. It was only after several years of experience that I realized that teaching collaborative negotiation could be an excellent means of doing my part to promote peacebuilding in my job.

I recognized that collaborative negotiation was an approach based on building trust and taking into account the needs of all parties involved, seeking to foster relationships centered on mutuality and respect. These realizations led me to think that emphasizing the collaborative negotiation approach in my courses would allow students



to both maximize the available resources in negotiations, and at the same time apply more effective ways to listen to others. The approach would also teach them how to take into account others' needs and feelings. It appeared that the collaborative negotiation approach could enable students to contribute to their organizations' wellbeing and to build long-term, peaceful relationships among organizations and their stakeholders.

Despite my interest in teaching collaborative negotiation, I noticed that it was not easy for students to learn this approach. As Thompson & Leonardelli (2004, p. 7) state in the quote at the beginning of this section, improving your negotiation skills is a long journey.

During this time, I authored a book chapter titled “Del dicho al hecho hay mucho trecho: ¿Cómo pasar del discurso ‘gana-gana’ a una actitud auténtica de colaboración en las negociaciones?” (2012). In this chapter, I share that students frequently believe themselves to be negotiating collaboratively. Moreover, I explain that students readily perceive the advantages of a collaborative negotiation model and usually begin their negotiations with a win-win attitude. However, I document in that chapter that in spite of these facts, students demonstrate true collaborative skills very infrequently. I will refer to some of the reasons why students experience these difficulties in Chapter 3.

I believe that such difficulties indicate a lack of self-awareness on the part of negotiators—including those who receive training in negotiation—which underscores the importance of studying ways to deal with them. During my experience in negotiation teaching, I have tried to help management students to overcome these problems through the support of different methods to enhance their collaborative negotiation skills. Some of the methods I have used and on which I focus in this research are e-learning portfolios and reflection prompts to support students' reflections. The objective of the reflection process has been to increase student awareness of their behavior in negotiations so that they can continue to develop these skills. Moreover, I have been interested in having students recognize their profiles as negotiators in ways that integrate their personal traits with skills for value creation. My assumption has been that students who have a clear idea of their

negotiation profiles will become better negotiators, since knowing their negotiation traits and those skills that they apply best would allow them to take better advantage of them in negotiations.

I have had the opportunity to design and run a graduate Specialization in Negotiation at the School of Management of the Universidad de los Andes. This program features ten courses over a one-year period through which students are able to develop more enduring skills than students who take isolated negotiation courses. I will mention that program presently, as the course that I am referring to in the current research is part of it.

The journey that I have described has been like a roller coaster. Sometimes I am amazed to witness students' transformations: they become not only better negotiators, but also better human beings. At other times, I feel disappointed when realizing how difficult is for students to apply collaborative negotiation skills, even when they have had the year-long process of learning that is the graduate Specialization in Negotiation. Most of the time, those feelings serve to challenge me and keep me busy, since I know that more efforts and research are needed in order to improve the learning environment that I provide to students. At other moments, I take comfort in the words of Freud (1925c), who referred to the three impossible professions: educating, healing, and governing. While I feel as deeply engaged with educating as Freud was with healing, I believe he was right in his reflections concerning the complexity of our respective professions.

### **1.3.2 USING REFLECTION AND LEARNING PORTFOLIOS AS PART OF MY TEACHING PRACTICE**

“We learn by doing, if we reflect on what we do.” (John  
Dewey, 1910)

In the following sections, I first explain how I started asking my students to reflect as part of my teaching practice. Then, I describe how, after several years of including reflection in the courses I teach, I discovered differences in the outcomes of students' reflections, which I did not know how to interpret or handle.

I started using reflection as a pedagogical tool in my courses more than ten years ago. Its implementation was intuitive; I did not search for experiences or theory about the use of reflection in higher education contexts in the literature. I simply included it because like any good psychoanalyst, I wanted students to start thinking and writing to give meaning to their experiences. My hope was that, through reflection, participants of my courses would take better advantage of their learning and apply it to their negotiations. Moreover, at that time I agreed with Dewey's quote found at the beginning of this section that states that learning can happen by way of reflection. Consequently, I thought that asking students to reflect about their negotiations would make them realize the consequences of their behaviors on their lives and surroundings.

After utilizing written reflections as a pedagogical tool in some of my negotiation courses for some time, students began to mention its value for them. However, it was not until 2009 that I became curious about the role of reflection in my teaching practice. At that time, I was the thesis advisor for Quentin Donze. A former student, Quentin researched how different elements in the learning environment (negotiation simulations, workshops, lectures, etc.) promoted collaborative negotiation strategies. He based his study on a negotiation course of mine, which was part of the Master of Environmental Management in 2008. The sample group's most positive feedback had to do with reflection supported by prompts (Donze, 2009).

Ever since that period, I have purposefully fostered learning environments in my courses that emphasize self-reflection supported with the use of prompts in learning portfolios. Students have been expected to enhance their collaborative negotiation skills through this process that seeks to promote the development of written reflections.

In the chapter “¿Cómo pasar del discurso ‘gana-gana’ a una actitud auténtica de colaboración en las negociaciones?” (2010) mentioned before, I explain different skills that management students can use if they want to improve their collaborative negotiation profile. One of the skills I suggest is reflecting with the support of reflection prompts.

Nonetheless, when reading students' written reflections (before starting this PhD), I observed several matters of concern in their outcomes. I noticed that some negotiation students wrote their opinions or referred to theoretical concepts when reflecting, rather than reflecting on themselves. Other students considered the behavior of others when reflecting, remaining detached from their own emotional and mental capacities. This tendency led me to think that perhaps they found it difficult to take responsibility for their mistakes. Moreover, some students wrote about insecurity, guilt, and other similar traits, causing them to struggle to identify positive aspects of their performance as negotiators (Canal & Jørgensen, 2014). However, I also noticed results in students' reflections that were more positive: some became aware of their negotiation skills, interactions with others, emotions, needs, and personal valuation of reflection as a learning tool.

I did not know the reason for the previous differences in the content of students' reflections, nor how to understand them. I began to question what all this implied for students' learning processes and for me as a teacher.

It occurred to me that the diversity in students' reflection styles speaks to differences in individuals' psychological processes and that reflection could not be understood in isolation from other psychological processes.

As a corollary, I realized that reflection does not necessarily lead to learning—or at least not to the same kind of learning—for each student. I began to dwell on the importance of providing students with a clear structure for learning, and at the same time to understand why students' reflections took such a variety of forms.

Believing it necessary to understand the reflection process from both a theoretical and empirical perspective, I chose to focus my PhD on the potential of self-reflection for the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills.

### 1.3.3 USING LEARNING PORTFOLIOS IN MY TEACHING PRACTICE

Continuing with the personal accounts, in this section I describe why I decided to structure the reflection processes of my courses through e-learning portfolios.

As I mentioned before, I started to use reflection as part of my teaching practice long ago, believing that reflecting would help students to enhance their learning. However, reflection was not an isolated practice in those courses; for reflection to have any value, I believed that it was important that students do it continuously. That is why I implemented a process by which students have an assessment at the beginning of the course, develop various reflections by answering the questions of the reflection prompts, and receive written feedback from me. This was intended to allow students to develop their reflection skills and perceive changes in their ways of negotiating.

When I started to teach blended learning courses, I received support from the CIFE (Education Research and Training Centre). CIFE was at that time the office at the Universidad de los Andes in charge of advising faculty on pedagogy and technology, and it is now the School of Education. It was then (in 2008) that I learned that the collections of written reflections that students develop over time are called learning portfolios, or e-portfolios if they are in a digital format.

When the School of Management of the Universidad de los Andes opened the graduate Specialization in Negotiation in 2010, we decided to develop it as a blended learning program. Defined as the combination of two different environments for learning—in-person class and online interaction—a blended learning model represents a unique approach to delivering an educational process. This model is also called hybrid or mixed, implying the convergence of two well-defined and established environments of interaction for learning that have historically been separated (Graham, 2006). Thus, in a blended learning model there is not only a coming together of face-to face and virtual dynamics, but also a rich interaction in which the best features from both scenarios are made available. When the students are not in

the classroom, they continue their learning through different activities supported by tools in the University's virtual space.

Together with CIFE's team, I developed an e-portfolio for the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course on SICUA PLUS, the virtual platform of the Universidad de los Andes. We created a file titled Portfolios on SICUA PLUS to store the reflection prompts, outcomes of students' reflections, and feedback received from me.

When I began this dissertation in 2010, I learned that learning portfolios have been used in management education and other academic fields. One of the applications of portfolios that I had the opportunity to observe closely was the one used by professors doing the Master of Pedagogy of the Learning and Philosophy Department at Aalborg University.

#### **1.3.4 PSYCHOANALYSIS AS A HELPFUL METHOD TO UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCES IN STUDENTS' REFLECTION OUTCOMES**

This is the last personal account that I present, and I focus on the importance that I give to understanding why students' reflections take such a variety of forms, as I mentioned earlier. An additional focus is on how these questions led me to consider psychoanalysis a helpful method to understand the differences in students' reflection outcomes.

As I already mentioned, before starting the current research, I observed a variety of aspects in students' written reflections when they were learning negotiation skills. Sometimes, the ways that students reflected demonstrated their degree of awareness of their negotiation skills and thus their ability to use them; their awareness of their mistakes and efforts to correct them were also demonstrated. In other cases, students' reflections indicated that they struggled to identify positive aspects of themselves, or that a certain remove kept them from observing themselves. I believed that this affects the possibilities of taking advantage of the reflection outcomes in the challenge of learning collaborative negotiation skills.

As I stated earlier, it occurred to me that the diversity of students' ways of reflecting speaks to differences in individuals' psychological processes. I began to think that reflection could not be understood in isolation from other psychic characteristics. Following this line, in the "Reflection for Learning" chapter, I claim that more research is needed to understand reflection's potential for learning, specifically studies from the psychological perspective, as these will help to clarify how individual psychology influences reflection. I support my claim with Kornblith's (2012) and Rogers' (2001) suggestions that studying reflection from a psychological perspective may provide a better vantage point from which to comprehend the extent to which reflection allows people to change.

I certainly echo Rogers' and Kornblith's call for further research to understand the potential of reflection. However, rather than study reflection from a general psychological approach or from a cognitive perspective as Kornblith (2012) recommends, I decided to research self-reflection from a psychoanalytical perspective as part of this PhD. I had studied and practiced this approach for many years, as I believe in the value of psychoanalysis for understanding human beings' mental states.

I mentioned previously that I did not know how to interpret or handle the differences in students' reflections. It later occurred to me that analyzing these differences through the lens of psychoanalysis would help me to understand and find ways to improve my assessment of students' reflection processes.

A person draws on their psychic characteristics when they reflect, while others use other capacities. My interest lies in presenting the different psychic characteristics associated with the reflection process that were found in the second level of analysis.

As students draw on different psychic characteristics when reflecting, I argue that they do not all engage in the learning process in the same way and that they have distinct learning outcomes. This is the substance of the second level of analysis in my fieldwork: the in-depth cases. In Chapter 7, I describe six psychic characteristics linked to reflection using applied psychoanalysis as a conceptual framework.

## 1.4 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND ITS EVOLUTION

The previous background provides a general idea of my process teaching negotiation and privileging the use of self-reflection as part of the learning tools. It also evidences some of the challenges I have experienced while on this path. In what follows, I seek to describe how these experiences ended up shaping the research problem and how it has evolved.

I began this dissertation with the main challenge of studying the potential of reflective inquiry in the process of learning collaborative negotiation skills. My interest was in obtaining a more accurate idea of what self-reflection could allow students to achieve in the negotiation courses that I taught.

Soon after I started the research, I realized that the concept of reflective inquiry mentioned before was not clearly defined in the literature of the higher education field. Moreover, this concept did not capture the process of reflection that I was seeking to facilitate with the support of learning portfolios. The way in which I understand self-reflection (as will be explained presently and fully developed in Chapter 4) resulted in an improved way of conceiving the learning processes that I wanted to focus on through the current research.

I have been interested in studying the potential of reflection in the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills ever since, as I mentioned in section 1.3.1, I became familiar with the results of the aforementioned research conducted by Donze (2008). In this research, reflection stood out among the various tools I was using in a negotiation course. Several years of using reflection as a pedagogical method also made me wonder about its benefits for learning. As I mentioned previously, my focus when using reflection as a teaching method was related to collaborative negotiation, as I noticed that students often learned this approach with difficulty.

My own initial considerations concerning self-reflection were that it is an important process that is relevant to the internalization of knowledge and that it has the potential to consolidate collaborative



negotiation skills. Moreover, I considered it essential to focus the research on the possibilities that reflection might bring for learning those skills connected to the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels, since they tend to be most challenging for students. This is because, as I will discuss in Chapter 3, they must be aware of themselves and make adaptive changes before they are able to put these skills in practice. In line with this, I also conceived self-reflection as a complex process compared to other activities such as learning content and applying knowledge to problems. Self-reflection implies not only a cognitive process; it may also imply a process of analysis that takes into account awareness of one's own and other peoples' feelings, needs, and behaviors, as well as the dynamic interaction of such processes. With this in mind, it was important for me to study and to understand reflection in detail. I wanted to explore the possibilities of self-reflection regarding the facilitation of learning collaborative negotiation skills, which is why at the beginning of this research I looked to answer the following question:

In what manner does reflection contribute to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills with regard to the:

1. Consolidation of personal skills useful for collaborating.
2. Generation of self-awareness of experiences and paradigms.
3. Application of theory to practice.
4. Connecting with one's feelings and needs and/or with those of others.

#### **1.4.1 NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM**

I also mentioned previously in section 1.3.4 that before starting this dissertation, I observed a variety of aspects in students' written reflections when they were learning negotiation skills, which intrigued me. This was because I knew neither the source of the differences in students' reflection outcomes nor how to understand them. I also wondered about the consequences of such differences in terms of students' learning processes and for me as a teacher.

All of these considerations led me to believe that I was dealing with a variety of psychic characteristics that students may (or may not) draw on when they reflect. It also occurred to me that if students do not use the same psychic characteristics when reflecting, perhaps they do not engage in the learning process in the same way and, therefore, will not necessarily learn as a result. Taking these challenges into account, it became important for me to answer the following question:

What are the ways of reflecting that students are using in their learning portfolios, and which of them may best support students' learning process of collaborative negotiation skills?

I also considered the above-mentioned challenges to be connected, as exploring the different ways in which students reflect may complement investigation into what self-reflection can add to the learning process of negotiation skills. These connections stemmed from my assumption that some ways of reflection may be more related to learning negotiation skills than others.

The previous research questions underwent further changes while I was developing the analysis of the empirical information, and the final versions of the research questions are those that I presented before in sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. Furthermore, in the next chapter, I will describe the modifications that I made to these questions and my reasons for doing so.

## **1.5 THE THEORY AND STRATEGIES OF NEGOTIATION COURSE AND THE GRADUATE SPECIALIZATION IN NEGOTIATION**

In this section, I first present the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course and then the graduate Specialization in Negotiation. I will describe the main contents of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, as well as the learning goals, methodologies, and evaluation system used to assess and grade students. This course is fully described in its syllabus (Canal & Casas, 2013).

## **1.5.1 THE CONTENT OF THE THEORY AND STRATEGIES OF NEGOTIATION COURSE**

The Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course aims to provide students with the fundamentals of bilateral negotiations from a theoretical and practical perspective. Students become familiarized with theoretical concepts and practical tools that will help them to carry out strategic negotiations between two parties. The course covers topics such as distributive, integrative, and mixed negotiations, focusing on strategies to capture value. It also looks at the negotiation process, considering the objectives of each phase and strategies to accomplish them. In addition, it covers the need to plan negotiations thoughtfully as well as the importance and nature of effective communication. Other subjects in this course include ways to identify the negotiation capacity in dispute cases as well as the skills needed to face those situations. Finally, the course gives importance to the role of self-reflection in strengthening the negotiation profile.

### **1.5.1.1 The course learning goals**

Upon completion of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, students are expected to be able to:

- a. Understand the strategic elements underlying negotiation and put them into practice.
- b. Analyze the negotiation problem and its context in order to select the relevant negotiation strategies to be applied.
- c. Apply knowledge and tools to negotiation planning and to the negotiation process.
- d. Understand one's personal aspects and interactions with others that may bolster or limit one's capacity to negotiate.

### **1.5.1.2 The course methodologies and evaluation system**

This course uses a blended learning approach, meaning that students have face-to-face sessions as well as virtual activities that they carry out autonomously with the guidance of their teachers. Students meet every three weeks for a period of two months. As each meeting is eight hours in length, the total amount of time in the face-to-face

sessions is twenty-four hours. Each hour of classroom time requires that students work at least three hours outside the classroom.

The course methodology encompasses simulations, role-playing, and class discussions. Audiovisual material of the negotiation cases that students simulate are also used and discussed during the sessions. Students are expected to prepare for the class during the virtual sessions with readings that provide a theoretical basis to the learning and by writing essays on the topics that they choose to go deeper in. Students are also required to do a number of written reflections supported with reflection prompts. Through the reflection process, learners analyze negotiation cases and real-life situations through guidance from the prompts. Students also reflect on their written outcomes and the feedback received, especially in the last reflection task, in which they analyze their learning process over the course. Students' written reflection outcomes and the feedback given by the teacher are uploaded to an electronic portfolio on SICUA PLUS.

Students' evaluation in this course focuses on their written plans for the negotiation cases, essays, and reflections, with the reflections being the main products of their learning portfolios. Some of the course tasks are graded (8), while others (3) are not. Most of the activities are developed individually (8), while the rest (3) are done in teams. The table below outlines the course evaluation system.

**Table 1** *Evaluation system of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course*

Item	Mode	%
1. Planning document Case #1	Individual	10
2. Planning document Case #2	Teams	5
3. Planning document Case #4	Teams	15
4. Essay #1 (distributive negotiations)	Individual	10
5. Essay #2 (integrative negotiations)	Individual	15
6. Reflection #1	Individual	0

7. Reflection #2	Individual	0
8. Reflection #3	Individual	10
9. Reflection #4	Teams	0
10. Reflection #5	Individual	15
11. Reflection #6, or Essay #3 (negotiation capacity)	Individual	20

## 1.5.2 THE GRADUATE SPECIALIZATION IN NEGOTIATION

In this section, I briefly describe the graduate Specialization in Negotiation that the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course is part of. I will refer to some aspects of the curriculum (Facultad de Administración, 2013) of this graduate program, such as a) the main areas developed, b) the learning objectives, c) the graduates' profile, and d) the courses. The curriculum of the graduate Specialization in Negotiation was officially approved by the Ministry of Education in Colombia in 2009, with approval renewed in 2014.

As mentioned before, the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course that I am analyzing is one of the ten courses of the graduate Specialization in Negotiation at the School of Management of the Universidad de los Andes. This program is oriented to those whose work requires that they negotiate often or who participate in negotiation processes of great importance within their organizations or those of the stakeholders they work with.

### 1.5.2.1 The main areas of the program are the following:

- a. Negotiation and conflict management.
- b. The organizations and their context.
- c. The individual's development.

### 1.5.2.2 The Graduates' profile

The Specialization in Negotiation seeks to graduate negotiators who are reflexive and capable of understanding the complexities of problems, contexts, and actors within organizations. They are able to negotiate and manage conflicts strategically by optimizing resources

and achieving results with an ethical, creative perspective that fosters relationships over the long term.

**1.5.2.3 The Learning goals of the Graduate Specialization in Negotiation**

Upon completion of this graduate program, students will be able to:

- a. Apply a framework of analysis to understand conflicts and negotiation challenges in organizations.
- b. Identify, plan, implement, and evaluate negotiation strategies and manage conflicts by understanding culture, behavior, personal and organizational environments, and dynamics.
- c. Take full advantage of resources available for negotiation and optimize results, taking into account ethical and sustainability implications.
- d. Understand one's personal aspects and interactions with others that may bolster or limit one's capacity to negotiate and to manage conflicts.

**1.5.2.4 Curriculum of the graduate Specialization in Negotiation**

The table below lists the ten courses that students of the current program must take, all of which are described in detail in the curriculum of the program. This curriculum is fully described in its original version in Spanish (Canal & Casas, 2013).

**Table 2** *Curriculum of the Graduate Specialization in Negotiation*

Cycle number	Course #1	Course #2
<b>First</b>	Theory and Strategies of Negotiation	Organizational Behavior Theory
<b>Second</b>	Effective Communication	Organizational Behavior
<b>Third</b>	Conflict Theory and Analysis	Multilateral Negotiation and Negotiation Teams

<b>Fourth</b>	Conflict Management Organizations	in	The Legal Context of Negotiations
<b>Fifth</b>	Intercultural and International Negotiation	and	Alliances and Negotiation with Stakeholders

The Specialization is divided into five cycles that last two months each, and in each cycle students take two courses.

## 1.6 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

In order to supplement the background that I have been presenting in this chapter, this section features definitions of key terms that I will be using throughout the dissertation.

I include definitions of terms such as negotiation and skills (more specifically, collaborative negotiation skills connected to the inter- and intrapersonal levels). I will additionally refer to learning, reflection, self-reflection, potential, and psychic characteristics.

### 1.6.1 NEGOTIATION

Negotiation is a direct mechanism, useful for reaching goals that require collaboration with others, as well as to resolve conflicts between two or more people, groups, or organizations (Canal & Zapata, 2005).

### 1.6.2 COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION

Collaborative negotiation can be understood as a two-way interactive process by which all parties try to reach an agreement that mutually satisfies their interests. By collaborating, negotiators seek to create value, trying to maximize the available resources at the negotiation table and taking care not to harm their counterparts. At the same time, these kinds of behaviors allow negotiators to build long-term relationships. Owing to how important it is that a negotiator develop collaborative skills, and because it implies learning challenges for students that are not always easy to navigate (as mentioned earlier), I highlight the importance for negotiators of developing those skills connected to the inter- and intrapersonal levels.

### 1.6.3 SKILLS

Becoming a strategic negotiator requires certain basic personal and interpersonal skills. In Chapter 3, when referring to the significant commonalities among the skills needed to negotiate collaboratively, I also highlight the differences found among the authors referred to there. Additionally, I explain that there is no consensus on what to call this set of capabilities. I understand skills as the capabilities that negotiators need to plan their strategies and accomplish them through the tactics and moves that they develop in their practice. In section 2.3.1 of the same chapter, I provide definitions of strategies, tactics, and moves. I also differentiate skills from abilities and competence.

My decision to differentiate the kinds of skills that negotiators need to be successful was inspired by Thompson's proposal about the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels. "Negotiation research at the intrapersonal level of analysis clearly recognizes the multiparty nature of negotiation, but it emphasizes how the inner experience of the negotiator impacts negotiation processes and outcomes, and vice-versa" (Thompson et al., 2010, p. 494). The interpersonal level is also important in negotiation, as it takes into account attitudes and emotional reactions that go beyond the intrapersonal level and that affect the process and outcomes of negotiations, according to Thompson et al. (2010). Furthermore, in section 3.3.1 of the "Collaborative Negotiation" chapter, I share a table that describes three types of skills. Some of them are connected to the substance of the problem, while others are connected to either the interpersonal or intrapersonal levels.

### 1.6.4 LEARNING

I understand learning as an ongoing process that occurs when an individual avails themselves of their capacities in their interactions with people or when receiving information, and is subsequently able to process it. As a result of that process, learning can be evidenced through different dimensions such as the internalization of knowledge, the strengthening of skills, or a change in practices. These dimensions are indicated when the individual applies the learning to new interactions with people or to new knowledge. I will develop this term further in the "Reflection for Learning" chapter.



### 1.6.5 REFLECTION AND SELF-REFLECTION

In Chapter 4, I refer to reflection and differentiate it from self-reflection, explaining that for the research purposes it is critical to move from reflection to self-reflection, putting forward my way of understanding the latter. Kornblith (2012) notes that the reflection process involves thinking about one's own first-order mental states in a "first-person" way. "Self-reflection is a mental activity by which a person observes themselves and the ways in which they interact with others. The consequences of that introspective process will vary from person to person depending on their psychic characteristics, and it may take into account one's own and other people's feelings and needs, as well as integrating experiences and knowledge into the self or questioning beliefs" (Canal & Jørgensen 2014, p. 168). Consequently, a person reflecting on a body of data is not self-reflecting; nor is someone who is theorizing in a "third-person" manner about their own mental states (Kornblith, 2012).

### 1.6.6 POTENTIAL

When I refer to potential, I understand it as a possibility that is latent but in need of some additional element in order to be developed. In the case of the potential of reflection for learning, it means that reflection holds the possibility to develop learning; however, certain conditions are necessary in order for its fruition.

### 1.6.7 PSYCHIC CHARACTERISTICS

I understand psychic characteristic as dimensions of the human psyche that remain relatively stable after the first years of child development and that consciously or unconsciously tend to influence individual ways of being, thinking, feeling, and acting. I prefer to use the word psychic instead of psychological, since the latter tends to encompass just the conscious dimension of the mind. I do not use the word capacity, since this implies the quality of being able to do something.

## 1.7 CHAPTER PLAN

This dissertation is structured in eight chapters, with this introduction as the first one.

Chapter 2 describes the structure of the research, the methodological framework, and the research process. I explain the methodological pillars that I took into account and describe the two levels of analysis of the study. Furthermore, I offer a detailed description of the way in which the two levels of analysis were developed, including the main challenges that I faced. I also offer reflections about the validity of the study, my role as a researcher, and, finally, some ethical aspects of the research.

Chapter 3 provides an understanding of collaborative negotiation through its explanation and the explanation of competitive negotiation. However, since the focus of the current study is on the collaborative approach, its analysis is of greater length. I also expound my decision to focus this research on the collaborative negotiation skills that are important for students to learn. I share the skills—basing myself on the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels—and present the nonviolent communication approach to explain why these skills are crucial for a collaborative negotiator. The reasons to focus on those skills in the current research are also put forward. Finally, I describe certain aspects of a given problem and context that are important to take into account when assessing the suitability of the collaborative negotiation approach.

Chapter 4 problematizes the value of reflection for learning. More to the point, the chapter discusses the importance of studying what reflection can realistically accomplish, with consideration of its likelihood of making meaningful contributions to learning. I provide a context for the use of reflection in higher and management education and some of the ongoing challenges of reflection in order to better understand its potential contributions to the learning process. I clarify why for the objectives of my research it is critical to move from reflection to self-reflection. I also analyze certain authors' contributions regarding what reflection can add to the learning process, as well as a philosophical perspective that questions certain positive effects

associated with reflection. Moreover, I present some of the limitations of the research within this area of knowledge, clarifying my view that the main gap in the literature regarding reflection for learning in both the higher education and management education fields is an analysis of what reflection can realistically accomplish.

Chapter 5 provides a theoretical framework of learning portfolios and the ways of organizing material through them. I describe the design of the e-learning portfolios and reflection prompts developed in the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course. I also offer an elaboration of the e-portfolios, taking into account certain parameters of an adequate learning structure in order to examine to what extent the e-portfolios of the course facilitate the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills.

Chapter 6 presents the findings of the first level of analysis. It describes students' learning outcomes from the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, particularly those skills useful for collaborative negotiation that they consolidated. The beliefs and paradigms that they re-evaluated, and the personal traits that they became aware of, are also examined. I explain that the purpose of answering the first research question allowed me to arrive at the following proposition: reflection makes learning evident both for the student and for the teacher. At the end of the chapter, I summarize the findings of the first level of analysis.

Chapter 7 provides a theoretical framework of psychoanalysis as a basis to understand the findings of the second level of analysis. I divide the chapter into three main sections, explaining in the first section how psychoanalysis may help to understand the differences in the ways that different students reflect. In the second section, I present the findings of the second level of analysis—which is focused on the psychic characteristics—and connect these findings to students' forms of reflection that were observed in five cases. In the third section, I conceptualize each of the six psychic characteristics integral to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. The psychic characteristics found are those listed below:

1. Making contact with oneself.
2. Connecting to others.

3. Reality perspective.
4. Understanding and expressing emotions.
5. Balanced narcissism.
6. Change process.

I conclude Chapter 7 with some reflections on possible applications in management education of the conceptualization of the psychic characteristics found.

Chapter 8 gives an overview of the learning attained through the current research, as well as its implications for students and teachers. Although I discuss the findings of the first level of analysis, there is a particular focus on the extent to which the findings of the second level of analysis contribute to a better understanding of reflection as a mental capacity and its significance for supporting students' learning of collaborative negotiation skills. I also explain the relationships between the psychic characteristics linked to reflection and some of the skills that a negotiator needs to develop a collaborative strategy. I intend to build a bridge between the two levels of analysis, establishing common threads and arguing that the second level of analysis supplements the first.

Furthermore, I present some theoretical and methodological contributions of the research by focusing on two aspects: the changes that I have implemented in the graduate Specialization in Negotiation and the ways in which management teachers may benefit from use of the conceptualization of the psychic characteristics associated with reflection for student assessment. I also pose some research questions to supplement and validate the findings of the current research, and I identify some limitations of the current study. I finish the chapter by presenting some conclusions and the implications they hold for students and teachers.

# **CHAPTER 2. THE METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter aims, on the one hand, to explain the methodological pillars that I took into account during the research and, on the other hand, to describe the development of the two levels of analysis. In order to accomplish these aims, in section 2.2 I explain my methodological framework, including the three pillars that support it: case study, applied psychoanalysis, and abduction. In section 2.3, I first briefly describe the structure of the research. Second, I present the question that I seek to answer and the research aim that I seek to achieve through the first level of analysis. Third, I present the sample, the unit of analysis, the parameters, and a detailed description of how the analysis was performed. Lastly, I discuss the main challenge that I faced in that level.

In section 2.4, I do something similar with the second level of analysis. First, I present the sample, the unit of analysis, the parameters, and the criteria used to select the five cases. Second, I offer a detailed description of the way in which this interpretative analysis was developed. Third, I include the main challenges that I faced while carrying out this part of the study. In section 2.5, I offer some reflections about the validity of the study. Then, I discuss my role as a researcher in section 2.6, with some ethical aspects of the research presented in section 2.7.

## **2.2 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

This section of the chapter describes the theoretical perspectives of the research as well as the methodological pillars that are the basis of this study. In order to develop this part of the chapter, as well as the three last sections, I have taken inspiration from the methodological structure of some of the topics found in Rodríguez' (2016) doctoral dissertation. This can particularly be seen in my way of referring to my

methodological frameworks as pillars and the organization of the last sections of the chapter through topics such as validity, ethics, and my role as a researcher.

The present research is qualitative and takes into account various methodological pillars and theoretical perspectives. The first and most general methodological framework is action research, as the research problem arose from my challenges as a negotiation teacher at a management school. Therefore, I designed the intervention with the goal of understanding the value of self-reflection to facilitate the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. The main empirical data of this research has been collected from the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course that I taught in 2013. The only exception is the interviews I conducted with the students of the second level of analysis. This course is part of a one-year graduate Specialization in Negotiation at the Universidad de los Andes, in Colombia, as I explained in the previous chapter.

I draw on theories of self-reflection from the higher and management education fields, incorporating a psychoanalytical approach as well as the specific perspectives of philosophers such as Dewey and Kornblith. In addition, I use a multidisciplinary framework of negotiation that takes into account approaches from management, conflict resolution, and communication fields.

## **2.2.1 METHODOLOGICAL PILLARS**

In order to develop the research, I have taken into account three methodological pillars. They are case study, applied psychoanalysis, and abduction, and I will explain each of them in the following sections.

### **2.2.1.1 Case study**

I develop a case study that comprises two levels of analysis. The first level looks for evidence of the added value of self-reflection for students' learning of collaborative negotiation skills. In the second level of analysis, I use applied psychoanalysis as an interpretative framework to analyze the psychic characteristics connected to the self-reflection process that five students developed in their e-learning portfolios. "Case

study issues reflect complex, situated, problematic relationships. They pull attention both to ordinary experience and also to the disciplines of knowledge” (Stake, 2010, p. 10). This quote of Stake’s is aligned with the ideas of abduction to be explained presently, in the sense that theoretical knowledge serves as a guide for structuring the case study, but also in the sense that theoretical knowledge can be developed through the case study.

A case study in its many variants displays sensitivity to complexity and to individual conditions, and values in-depth understanding of exploring the specifics of situations as well as how things work in practice (Stake, 2010).

### **2.2.1.2 Applied psychoanalysis**

As part of the second level of analysis, I use applied psychoanalysis. This means that based on psychoanalytical concepts I search for evidence of students’ psychic characteristics in their written reflections and in the first interview. I consider applied psychoanalysis a promising perspective for the achievement of one of my research aims, which is to broaden the understanding of self-reflection as a mental capacity that is linked to other psychic characteristics.

My use of a psychoanalytical framework has the purpose of understanding differences among students’ reflections, which allows me to find answers to my research questions, particularly the second one: Which psychic characteristics do students draw on when reflecting, and which of them are most closely connected to students’ learning process of collaborative negotiation skills?

Psychoanalysis has traditionally sought to provide an understanding of human psychology and to help patients to ameliorate the anxiety caused by their mental conditions through the use of appropriate techniques.

It is familiar ground that the work of analysis aims at inducing the patient to give up the repressions (using the word in the widest sense) belonging to his early development and to replace them by

reactions of a sort that would correspond to a psychically mature condition. (Freud, 1937, p. 257)

It should be noted that although the psychoanalytical approach was originally developed to understand and heal people suffering from mental pathologies, its scope also covers the normal functioning of human beings. This is important to clarify since I treat students' written reflections as outcomes developed by people who I do not consider to be psychologically ill. Hence, my purpose here is not to psychoanalyze my students, but to instead use a psychoanalytical approach to answer the aforementioned research question and to achieve some of the aims of the current study.

One of the risks of applying psychoanalytical knowledge to other fields is the tendency to do so mechanistically. This can occur when techniques of psychoanalysis are used to analyze people and elicit change in them outside of a clinical setting. In my view, this use of psychoanalysis is unethical. De Mijolla-Mellor (2005) suggests using the term "interactions of psychoanalysis" instead, drawing attention to the ambiguity of referring to applied psychoanalysis. This designation is seen as problematic because it does not necessarily capture its real purpose, which is to develop hypotheses concerning this method within a field of research different from therapy.

According to De Mijolla-Mellor (2005), the term "interactions of psychoanalysis" seeks to highlight the dual possibilities that this method represents to explore other fields with the aid of psychoanalysis and at the same time to return to the psychoanalytical field in order to enrich it. "This not only provides new insight into the field of application but also helps clarify the essential nature and potential for growth of psychoanalysis itself" (De Mijolla-Mellor, in De Mijolla, 2005, p. 108). While I am sympathetic to the author's proposal about the dual possibilities of using psychoanalysis, I limit myself to using certain psychoanalytical concepts to understand my research problem in the current study. I will not be explaining how the outcomes of my research may contribute to enrich the psychoanalytical field. In line with the previous ideas, I will refer to the method that I use in this research as applied psychoanalysis. However, in order to avoid the risks that psychoanalysis faces when used outside of its original context, in



what follows I offer some clarifications about how I use the psychoanalytical approach.

Basing myself on psychoanalytical concepts, I seek to understand and make propositions regarding the psychic characteristics that students draw on while reflecting. Psychoanalysis will allow me to interpret the empirical data of the second level of analysis, and to conceptualize the psychic characteristics that are closely connected to self-reflection.

Furthermore, the information about the psychic characteristics connected to reflection as well as students' ideas about themselves will allow me to create a portrait of students as negotiators, which I refer to as the negotiator profile. I will elaborate further on how the psychoanalytical perspective is applied in the current dissertation by explaining the use of the method of abduction in the next section and also through the description of how the second level of analysis was developed in section 2.3.

### **2.2.1.3 Abduction**

Throughout the development of the research, I went back and forth between theoretical concepts and empirical material, trying to make sense of the problem under study. I used concepts to understand and interpret the data, and after completing the first and second levels of analysis, I tried to make contributions to some of the fields studied from the knowledge that had been gained. Alvesson & Sköldbberg refer to this way of working as abduction. They argue that during the research process, “the empirical area of application is successively developed, and the theory (the proposed overarching pattern) is also adjusted and refined” (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009, p. 4). The authors further state that in focusing on overarching patterns, abduction differs advantageously from the two other, shallower models of explanation, which are induction and deduction. Although the latter methods are likely more recognized and more well known than abduction, they believe that abduction is the method most commonly used in case studies.

“Induction has its point of departure in empirical data and deduction in theory. Abduction starts from an empirical basis, just like induction, but does not reject theoretical preconceptions and is in that respect closer to deduction” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009, p. 4). According to the authors, one of the differences is that abduction includes understanding as well.

I identify the psychic characteristics that students draw on while reflecting by taking into account certain initial parameters. These parameters together with an open-minded attitude allowed the two psychoanalysts who supported me (with the first step of the second level of analysis) and me to discover additional psychic characteristics that were not considered initially. In this way, I sought to create a dynamic flow between theory and facts where theory transcended facts in order to achieve scope, to use another expression from Alvesson & Sköldbberg (2009). “‘Facts’ thus serve to occasion the theory, while continually playing the role of critical tuning instrument and fount of new ideas for the theory” (p. 4).

Abduction, therefore, allows me to maintain a continuous and dynamic flow between theory and the empirical reality essential to the process of the current research. For instance, as mentioned before, in the second level of analysis I identified students’ psychic characteristics by taking into account certain initial parameters. Then, I conceptualized the psychic characteristics integral to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills through the following steps:

- a. I summarized evidence of each of the psychic characteristics identified in the second level of analysis.
- b. I used conceptual bridges to establish connections between the evidence of the psychic characteristics found through the second level of analysis and certain psychoanalytical concepts. Terms related to the evidence and the parameters that I took into account to develop the analysis (explained in Chapter 1) will be presented.
- c. I defined each of the psychic characteristics, taking into account the evidence from the second level of analysis, the parameters, and psychoanalytical concepts that are closely connected to the psychic characteristics.

I repeated the previous process with each of the six psychic characteristics that I observed in the second level of analysis.

In this way, I used what Alvesson & Sköldberg (2009) denominate “a repeated process of alternating between (empirically-laden) theory and (theory-laden) empirical ‘facts.’ This means a hermeneutic process during which the researcher, as it were, eats into the empirical matter with the help of theoretical preconceptions, and also keeps developing and elaborating the theory” (pp. 5-6).

Abduction starts from an empirical basis, just like induction, but does not reject theoretical preconceptions and is in that respect closer to deduction. The analysis of the empirical fact(s) may very well be combined with, or preceded by, studies of previous theory in the literature; not as a mechanical application on single cases but as a source of inspiration for the discovery of patterns that bring understanding. The research process, therefore, alternates between (previous) theory and empirical facts whereby both are successively reinterpreted in the light of each other. (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 4).

Taking into account the previous methodological pillars, the current research is developed through a case study that fosters a dynamic approach in which I go back and forth between theory and empirical data (abduction). The current case study also uses applied psychoanalysis, particularly in Chapter 7: Reflection As a Mental Capacity.

## **2.3 THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, I explore the problem through two levels of analysis. The first level intends to answer the first research question, which is, How does reflection contribute to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills in relation to:

- a. Consolidation of skills useful for collaborative negotiation.
- b. Generation of self-awareness of personal qualities.

c. Re-evaluation of beliefs or paradigms.

This level also seeks to achieve the first of my research aims, which is: analyze what self-reflection can add to the learning process of collaborative negotiation.

The second level of analysis advances the second research aim: I intend to broaden the understanding of the concept of self-reflection in the management education field by identifying and explaining some of the psychic characteristics linked to it. Through the second level, I seek to answer the second research question: Which psychic characteristics do students draw on when reflecting, and which of them are most closely connected to students' learning process of collaborative negotiation skills?

The majority of the empirical data of this research was collected in the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course taught in 2013, as I mentioned earlier. It consists, on the one hand, of the written reflection outcomes from students and the qualitative interviews that I held with those who were part of the second level of analysis. On the other hand, the empirical material features the reflection prompts provided to guide students' learning processes, which are part of the e-learning portfolio of the course.

Although most of the empirical material comes from this course, it is important to clarify that I asked my former students for their support after the course had finished. The process with the two levels of analysis also began following the conclusion of the formal teacher-student relationship. I will further refer to this in section 2.6 when I explain some ethical aspects of the study.

### **2.3.1 THE STRUCTURE OF THE FIRST LEVEL OF ANALYSIS**

The first level of analysis seeks to answer the first research question. Due to the importance of the categories of this research question, I will now list them.

**2.3.1.1** The first category, consolidation of skills useful for collaborating, permits the documentation of those inter- and intrapersonal skills for collaborative negotiation that a student should be able to use by the end of the course. These skills are thoroughly explained in Chapter 3: Collaborative Negotiation.

**2.3.1.2** The second category, generation of self-awareness of personal qualities, allows for the documentation of the process that students develop when they are able to take a step back from their experiences in order to understand their strengths and weaknesses when negotiating, as well as their personal traits and profile as negotiators.

**2.3.1.3** The third category, re-evaluation of beliefs and paradigms, seeks to document how students question some of the beliefs and paradigms that influence their negotiation processes. Some paradigms may limit learning; for instance, the idea that there is always one winner and one loser in negotiations may prevent students from engaging collaboratively. Students who are able to re-evaluate this paradigm may be more open to applying a collaborative approach in their negotiations.

I chose the previous categories based on two of the learning objectives of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course.

- a. Be able to apply knowledge and tools to negotiation planning and to the negotiation process.
- b. Be able to understand one's personal aspects and interactions with others that may bolster or limit one's capacity to negotiate.

I also selected the categories listed above due to the important role that each plays when analyzing how students apply their knowledge of personal qualities, beliefs, and skills to collaborative negotiations.

The table below lists the original categories in the left column and the updated categories in the right column. I will presently explain the reason for the changes.

**Table 3** *Categories of the first level of analysis.*

Original categories of the first research question	Updated categories of the first research question
1. Consolidation of personal qualities that are useful for collaborative negotiation	1. Consolidation of skills useful for collaborative negotiation
2. Generation of self-awareness of experiences and paradigms	2. Generation of self-awareness of personal qualities
3. Application of theory to practice	3. Re-evaluation of beliefs and paradigms
4. Connecting with one's feelings and needs and/or with those of others	

The first category was focused on the consolidation of personal qualities; however, the findings evidenced more outcomes connected to the consolidation of skills for collaborative negotiation. The aspect of personal qualities was therefore moved to the second category, as it was awareness of their personal qualities that students achieved and not their consolidation. Additionally, for category #3: application of theory to practice, evidence was found that could easily be classified in other categories. As it was possible to observe different references to application of theory to practice across the findings, I decided not to consider it as a separate category. This process of modifying the categories sought to have them reflect the findings of the first level of analysis in a more adequate way.

Furthermore, I decided that it was clearer to split category #2: generation of awareness of experiences and paradigms, into two separate categories. This was done because the evidence of paradigms was focused on how students questioned or re-evaluated them, which is slightly different from generating awareness of them. Moreover, I found scant references to generating awareness of experiences, with students sometimes mentioning them as a means to refer to the process. The evidence of generation of self-awareness was also more linked to students' personal qualities as negotiators than to experiences and paradigms, as I mentioned above. Finally, I decided to include the original category #4 as part of the updated category #1, since

connecting with one's feelings and needs and/or with those of others is one of the interpersonal skills of a collaborative approach, as I describe in Chapter 3.

The findings of the first level of analysis will be presented in Chapter 6: Students' Learning of Collaborative Negotiation Skills.

### **2.3.2 THE PROCESS OF THE FIRST LEVEL OF ANALYSIS**

In order to develop this part of the analysis, I have taken almost the entire course as a sample, which means 28 students out of a total of 32, as mentioned earlier. The unit of analysis is reflection prompt number six: "Self-reflection of my profile as a strategic negotiator." This prompt was chosen because it is the last task that students develop in their learning portfolios, and its purpose is that students analyze the evolution of their learning process of collaborative negotiation skills and the achievement of their learning objectives. This prompt seeks to help students look critically at the negotiation knowledge and skills that they obtained through the course and to document the factors that allowed them to do so. For this last task, students review all of the reflections in their learning portfolios, including the feedback received from their teacher. This is described in more detail in Chapter 6.

The process of the first level of analysis is divided into five stages:

- Selecting the questions.
- Searching for evidence .
- Refining the findings .
- Analyzing the findings, and
- Making changes to the chapter.

These stages are elaborated below.

#### **2.3.2.1 Selecting the questions:**

I selected the questions from the unit of analysis—reflection prompt #6—that would be most relevant to answer the above-mentioned research question. The chosen questions were those that were most closely connected to the process of consolidating personal

traits and skills from the collaborative negotiation approach. I considered nine questions of the sixteen total questions of the prompt.

### **2.3.2.2 Searching for evidence:**

In order to have a third point of view for this part of the analysis, I asked for the help of a colleague named Gerardo Rey who works at CIFE (Education Research and Training Centre) at Universidad de los Andes. A psychologist with a master's in education, Gerardo has ample experience in the evaluation of education processes. His way of working with the data was to read the outcomes of the written reflections and look for evidence of the categories mentioned above. He documented his findings with a qualitative research software (Atlas T2). He also highlighted those quotes from students that helped to illustrate the findings.

### **2.3.2.3 Refining the findings:**

Gerardo and I held approximately six meetings on the context of the information he was looking for. In those meetings, he presented notes and graphics of the findings, and I highlighted the information that was most relevant to answering the first research question. At each meeting, we gained insights into aspects of collaborative negotiation and self-reflection that allowed me to refine the analysis. The visual presentation of the progress facilitated organizing the results into categories. At each meeting, we exchanged ideas on conceptual and methodological elements necessary to achieve the research aim. For instance, we had initially identified a variety of results on paradigms that students re-evaluated. However, it was possible to refine the results by focusing on those paradigms most closely connected to questioning the use of a collaborative approach to negotiations.

### **2.3.2.4 Analyzing the findings:**

I reviewed the original categories and found some sub-categories, which I explain in Chapter 6. Reading the findings many times in order to refine them, I then wrote the chapter on this first level of analysis. There, I described relevant findings of each category and illustrated them through examples taken from students' written reflections.



### **2.3.2.5 Making changes to the chapter:**

The Pre-defense held in April 2016 helped me to realize that parameter number three (application of theory to practice) mentioned in **Table 1** was somewhat redundant, as the examples related to this topic could also be grouped in other categories. I therefore decided to organize the findings of that category within the other three categories, having realized that these changes would allow me to organize the findings more coherently. Some of these changes were described when I explained the changes made to the categories, with an additional change explained in the next section.

### **2.3.3 SOME CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED DURING THIS PART OF THE ANALYSIS**

At one point in the analysis, I realized that I was unconsciously looking for evidence that would allow me to answer the first research question in a positive manner. That is, I wanted to find evidence that affirmed the value of reflection for the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. I even created a new category named “the value added of reflection for learning.” I came to realize, however, that I was trying to organize the evidence to fit into that category, rather than letting the data flow. I dealt with that difficulty by taking into account my criteria and thanks to discussions with my advisors.

## **2.4 THE STRUCTURE OF THE SECOND LEVEL OF ANALYSIS**

In this level of analysis, I try to use an interpretative method to answer the following question: Which psychic characteristics do students draw on when reflecting, and which of them are most closely connected to students’ learning process of collaborative negotiation skills?

Five students are the sample of this level, and the unit of analysis is four (out of six) written reflections from the learning portfolios of these students and two interviews that I conducted with them. The reason I chose the four prompts that I did is that they are the ones most closely connected to the learning process of collaborative negotiation

skills, on which I am focused in the present study. I will further refer to this in Chapter 5, which looks at the learning portfolios.

### **2.4.1 THE INTERVIEWS**

The objective of the first interview was to learn how students experienced the process of reflecting in their learning portfolios and what they thought they gained from it. The second interview had the purpose of confirming the analysis made from the psychoanalytical perspective with the five students in order to make any necessary changes. In this part of the empirical work, I used applied psychoanalysis. This means that based on psychoanalytical concepts I searched for evidence of students' psychic characteristics in their reflections and in the first interview.

### **2.4.2 A THIRD POINT OF VIEW**

For the second phase of this analysis, I decided to ask for the support of two psychoanalyst colleagues. I am studying my own case: it is my course and my students. I designed the reflection prompts and the learning environment. For this reason, it seemed important to obtain a third point of view to perform a more complete analysis of the information to enhance the validity of the study.

### **2.4.3 DOCUMENTING THE FINDINGS**

In order to fulfil the third and fourth research aims, mentioned in section 1.2.3 of the introduction in Chapter 7: Reflection As a Mental Capacity I describe, both from a theoretical approach and from an empirical perspective, the psychic characteristics closely linked to self-reflection. In the last chapter, I analyze how to understand the findings of the second level of analysis in light of the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills.

### **2.4.4 HOW HAS THE RESEARCH QUESTION EVOLVED?**

At the beginning of the research, the second question was: What are the ways of reflecting that students are using in their learning portfolios, and which of them may best support students' learning process of collaborative negotiation skills? However, when I finished

the second level of analysis I realized that more than ways of reflecting, which was a general way to refer to students' outcomes, what I had found were psychic characteristics that students draw on when reflecting. I additionally realized that the exploration method used would not allow me to indicate which of the characteristics best enhance the learning of collaborative negotiation skills. Taking into account these reasons, I decided to change the second research question to: Which psychic characteristics do students draw on when reflecting, and which of them are most closely connected to students' learning process of collaborative negotiation skills?

## 2.4.5 THE CRITERIA TO SELECT THE FIVE CASES

When I was teaching the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course in 2013, I read students' reflection #5 (which is an important reflection in the learning portfolio, as it allows students to analyze how they use collaborative skills to create value). I indicated in each reflection if I found it very interesting, interesting, or not very interesting, taking into account a combination of the following aspects:

- a. Level of detail in students' reflections.
- b. Level of students' engagement with the reflection process.
- c. Ways of referring to themselves (first person, plural, third person).
- d. Ways of referring to the difficulties students faced during the simulation of negotiation cases.

After I read students' last reflection (R6), I made a chart for which I chose ten students whose reflection process was interesting to me. I made comments next to the name of each student, taking into account a combination of the following aspects:

- a. Evolution in their ways of reflecting.
- b. Connections made between reflecting and learning.
- c. Connections between the process developed through their learning portfolios and the collaborative negotiation skills learned.
- d. Level of engagement with the reflection process.

I then reviewed the entire portfolio of each of those ten students in order to select around six cases for the analysis. When I finished the review, I decided to choose two students who experienced difficulties in engaging with the reflection process. Both of them agreed to participate. I also invited five students who showed an evolving process through their learning portfolios and who showed engagement with the reflection activities. Three of them agreed to participate in the analysis. With those five cases, I performed an in-depth analysis based on a psychoanalytical perspective. I felt that comparing the ways of reflecting of students who experienced difficulties with reflection with those who engaged in a positive way with the reflection process would increase my possibilities to answer the second research question from different angles.

#### **2.4.6 THE PROCESS OF THE SECOND LEVEL OF ANALYSIS**

I developed this level of analysis following a process with five phases:

- Identifying parameters to analyze the cases.
- The interpretative process.
- Refining the findings.
- Validating the findings, and
- Comparing the cases.

##### **2.4.6.1 Identifying parameters to analyse the cases**

In order to have a common starting point, I wrote some parameters for my colleagues and me to be used in our examination of the written reflections and the first interview. The parameters were a first approximation to the psychic characteristics that I was searching for, taking into account some psychic characteristics that I had already identified in students' reflections from previous courses. I wrote some guidelines on how to take into account the parameters and to provide general support on how to develop this first contact with the empirical material. I included psychic characteristics such as a) making contact

with oneself, b) connecting with others, d) the depressive position, and e) reality perspective.

I also included defense mechanisms such as a) projection, b) rationalization, and c) difficulties in making contact with oneself. For each of the previous parameters, I wrote a preliminary definition. In the guidelines, I suggested looking through the material (students' reflections and the first interview) and identifying psychic characteristics and defense mechanisms related to students' ways of reflecting and to their learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. I also recommended that an open attitude be maintained in order to observe psychic ways of functioning that were not part of the parameters and to include examples that could illustrate the findings.

#### **2.4.6.2 The interpretative process**

As I noted before, in order to have a third point of view, I asked for the support of two colleagues (Claudia Cuberos and Sofía Uribe) who belong to the Colombian Psychoanalytical Society and to the International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA). All three of us have been trained as psychoanalysts.

- a. The psychoanalysts who provided me with a third point of view
  - Claudia Cuberos has a bachelor's degree in psychology and is a psychoanalyst. She has been working as a clinical psychologist for more than 12 years. In her private practice, she specializes in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy for both children and adults.
  - Sofía Uribe has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in social psychology. She, too, is a psychoanalyst. She has treated patients through psychoanalysis and psychotherapy at her private practice for more than 18 years. She also teaches the Self-Development Workshop at the School of Management of the Universidad de los Andes.

Taking into account our psychoanalytical knowledge and the above-mentioned parameters, we reviewed the entire e-learning

portfolio of the students as well as the first interview that I conducted with them. Claudia handled cases 1 and 2, Sofia handled case 5, and I handled cases 3 and 4.

b. The process

While reading the material, we took notes of aspects and ideas that drew our attention about how students performed in their negotiations and how their conception of their performance transformed over the duration of the negotiation course. Reading sentence by sentence, we highlighted paragraphs that illustrated students' beliefs about their mental functioning. This included their perceptions of their interpersonal and job experiences as well as how they perceived the mental functioning of others. During the search for evidence of students' psychic characteristics, we focused on the four reflections that were most relevant to the topic of collaborative negotiation and on the interview. After juxtaposing different expressions of each student, it was possible to identify trends in their ways of thinking, feeling, and reacting. It was subsequently possible to connect them to psychoanalytic concepts (including the parameters) about students' mental functioning.

Then we tried to interpret the psychic functioning of each student in light of the whole picture. That is, we formulated hypotheses about students' psychic characteristics from a psychoanalytic perspective to be accepted, rejected, or nuanced and then rewritten and modified, once considered in relation to the analysis of the complete material of each student. We noticed that the observed characteristics tended to either facilitate or hinder the reflection process and students' accomplishment of their learning goals. Finally, we organized the findings in a document that was discussed in our meetings. We also sought to homogenize the language we used and to ensure that we were all referring to the same kind of phenomena (the psychic characteristics).

c. The contributions

One achievement of our work method was that we arrived at six psychic characteristics that the students drew on while reflecting. Three

of those characteristics were new findings, meaning that I did not consider them in the initial parameters created to facilitate this part of the analysis. The new psychic characteristics were balanced narcissism, change process (working through), and understanding and expressing emotions. There were also two defense mechanisms—rationalization and projection—that I ultimately decided not to include. This was because, on the one hand, we did not find many examples of them and, on the other hand, defense mechanisms have a negative connotation within the psychoanalytical field, since they are frequently related to pathological ways of functioning. Although we found some evidence of the depressive position (one of the considered parameters), I realized that it could easily be integrated into the second characteristic: connecting to others.

The six characteristics that I identified through the second level of analysis are as follows:

1. Making contact with oneself.
2. Connecting to others.
3. Reality perspective.
4. Understanding and expressing emotions.
5. Balanced narcissism.
6. Change process.

I provide a conceptualization of the previous characteristics in Chapter 7: Reflection As a Mental Capacity.

#### **2.4.6.3 Refining the findings**

In this step of the analysis, I first reviewed the cases several times. All necessary changes were made in order to make each student's narrative faithful to the person being described, and to homogenize the language being used. Taking into account the detailed analysis as well as the whole picture of each case, I wrote a final comment on the psychic characteristics predominant in each student, describing their particular ways of reflecting.

In order to write the first section of each case, I additionally composed a narrative depicting the negotiation profile of each student,

including their learning goals as well as their experiences through their learning portfolios and particularly with the reflection process.

#### **2.4.6.4 Validating the findings**

In order to validate the findings and to give feedback to the five students, I conducted a second interview with each of them. During this interview, I presented the initial description and analysis of each of them from the psychoanalytical perspective. The purpose of the interview was to put in dialogue the propositions about their psychic capacities and to learn the students' impressions of the findings. I did not have an interview guide for this interview; instead, I discussed with each student certain aspects that I had identified before the meeting, either because I wished to clarify them or because it was important for me to explore them in more detail.

I found that this interview constituted a way in which the five students continued learning about themselves and structuring their negotiation profiles. Thanks to the outcomes of the second interview, I realized that my interpretations and those of my colleagues captured the people behind the reflection process, and that students appreciated this. In my view, this is one of the reasons why the students only asked me to make minor changes to their narratives. In some cases, though, they agreed with all of the information presented. The interview was also helpful for supplementing the cases.

#### **2.4.6.5 Comparing the cases**

Finally, I made a comparative chart that summarizes the evidence of the psychic characteristics found in the five cases. This chart helped me to round out the cases since in some of them I identified characteristics that I was not adequately highlighting in the narratives of each student. The mentioned comparison is found in table A1, which is part of the appendixes of this dissertation.

In addition to the chart, I wrote an analysis of the information in which I establish relationships and differences among the five cases of this second level of analysis.



### 2.4.7 SOME CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED DURING THIS PART OF THE ANALYSIS

I experienced two main challenges while doing this level of analysis. The first one involved presenting the findings in a way that would be understandable to readers. Since I was using applied psychoanalysis as a method, it was not easy to describe the nuances found in the empirical material using language adequate for readers who are not experts in psychoanalysis. I dealt with this challenge through discussion with my psychoanalyst colleagues, and by seeking to homogenize and simplify the language I used. Furthermore, and in keeping with the abduction method I proposed, I decided to provide some context about psychoanalysis in Chapter 7 before presenting the findings of this level.

The second challenge that I faced in this level of analysis was presenting one of the cases faithfully. The case was Mario, and at some point I realized that I was not being completely fair in my analysis of him. One reason was that although he had confessed his difficulties with reflecting as part of an educational process and tried to change his attitude, Mario's initial attitude of discomfort toward the reflection process prevailed in my mind.

To my surprise, my colleague Sofia regarded Mario's learning process differently, highlighting psychic characteristics that rendered it in an interesting and positive fashion. This was a challenge for me because one of the reasons I chose Mario was because I wanted to include cases that would show differences in the ways of reflecting and engaging in the process developed through the e-learning portfolios. I dealt with these difficulties by reviewing Mario's reflections several times, seeking to consider and harmonize Sofia's and my own ideas about Mario. Following this process, I wrote a narrative about Mario that, in my view, was more balanced. When I shared the narrative with him during the second interview, I realized that it was actually very close to his way of perceiving himself. He made a few comments that I included in the last version of the analysis.

An additional challenge with the same case was related to Mario's characteristic of being reserved, as he described himself. This

led me at times to question the information he shared, and at one point I feared that this trait of his was limiting my ability to obtain the information about him that I needed. I finally realized that it was not his level of transparency that I was unsure of, but about not receiving adequate disclosure from him. In the end, however, the information was sufficient for the research purposes, and, as I previously mentioned, Mario was satisfied with the results.

## **2.5 REFLECTIONS ABOUT THE VALIDITY OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH**

In this section, I describe the activities and aspects that I have taken into account in order to develop the aspect of validity of the current research. I will first refer to the validity of the literature review and then to the validity of the analysis of the empirical materials.

### **2.5.1 VALIDITY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW**

In order to enhance the validity of the literature review, I have included multiple perspectives and disciplines. This method seeks to inform the research problem from a variety of disciplines such as higher and management education, psychoanalysis, negotiation, and Kornblith's (2012) philosophical approach. I also use this multidisciplinary perspective to bridge the two levels of analysis, which I will discuss in the last chapter. Furthermore, I explore the research problem from different theoretical perspectives such as collaborative negotiation, self-reflection, and the intersubjective psychoanalytical approach in order to find possible commonalities between the studied fields.

The use of ideas from management education, psychoanalysis, and Kornblith's (2012) philosophical approach allowed me to question the premise that increased self-awareness through self-reflection enhances students' collaborative negotiation skills. The literature review also seeks to support my way of understanding the potential of self-reflection by taking into account aspects of the learning context and individual psychology.

The concepts identified through the psychoanalytical approach in addition to the findings of the second level of analysis led me to question and revise my prior assumptions. One assumption that has been discarded is that everyone is equipped with the individual psychic characteristics that allow them to make contact with themselves. Another assumption that I have cast aside is that all students are able to sustain the kinds of inner dialogues that I expect them to have when they are asked to reflect about themselves.

## **2.5.2 VALIDITY OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE EMPIRICAL MATERIALS**

### **2.5.2.1 External validity**

In the first level of analysis, 28 students out of the 32 in the course constitute the sample. These 28 students are the ones who agreed to participate in the research and who completed reflection prompt #6, which is the unit of analysis of this level of the research. As for the five students of the second level of analysis, they were not chosen at random. I selected them based on a variety of reasons that I mentioned earlier. I also extended the invitation to participate to seven students, with five of them agreeing to do so.

## **2.5.3 INTERNAL VALIDITY**

### **2.5.3.1 Triangulation of the methods**

For the second level of analysis, I used different sources of information: the outcomes of the written reflections of each of the five students and the first interview that I conducted with them. In addition, I used the knowledge acquired about the students through the different activities and interactions of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course in which they participated.

### **2.5.3.2 Member checking: information sharing with students**

The second interview conducted with the five participants of the second level of analysis sought to discuss the analysis made from the psychoanalytical perspective, particularly the interpretations of students' respective psychic characteristics. After the interview, I

adjusted the information to match students' perceptions of themselves as closely as possible.

### **2.5.3.3 Investigator triangulation**

In order to have a third point of view, I received support from colleagues during the first part of the development of the two levels of analysis, as I explained in the previous sections. The comments of my supervisors as well as the feedback that Associate Professor Søren Willert gave me during the PhD pre-defense have also been taken into account. In addition to these activities, I have read the outcomes of the two levels of analysis carefully and repeatedly, returning to the empirical data to make clarifications whenever necessary.

## **2.6 MY ROLE AS RESEARCHER, DISTANT YET CLOSE: THE UNAVOIDABLE PARADOX**

While the aforementioned activities were developed to enhance the validity of the current study, I am certain that my perspective has influenced my ways of writing and analyzing data. This, of course, has both advantages and disadvantages. I chose to study my own course and students, and I inevitably have personal opinions and feelings about them that may have affected my ways of thinking and proceeding. One advantage is that I was deeply involved with the research, and I had a very complete array of information to develop it. Nonetheless, I am aware that the close relation to my object of study and my blind spots (values, beliefs, and opinions) may have unconsciously interfered with the interpretation of the empirical data.

Taking into account the previous ideas, in my view the notion of validity touches on an interesting paradox: Am I sufficiently grounded in the existing literature to make valid statements? Alternatively, have I produced sufficient and sound empirical work to make contributions? This paradox is a recurring problem for researchers that cannot be avoided. In order to address it, I have tried to make explicit my assumptions, which include the theoretical framework, methods applied, tools used, and the entire history of the educational context in which this research is situated (Creswell & Miller, 2000). I

have clearly set out all of this information in order to make my research transparent so that readers may question its validity.

## **2.7 ETHICAL ASPECTS OF THE STUDY**

In order to conduct the research ethically, I have taken certain actions such as changing students' names and omitting the names of the companies where they worked. Taking into account the recommendations of the Center of Ethics of the Universidad de los Andes, I received informed consent from those students who agreed to participate in the research. In addition, and as mentioned previously, I asked for their support and began the two levels of analysis, including the interviews, after the course and formal teacher-student relationship had concluded. These actions were taken so that students would feel freer when participating and to avoid generating any fears about their grades being affected, which they may have experienced if I had asked for their support before the course had finalized.

Finally, I conducted the current research with a respectful attitude toward my students, keeping all confidential information that they provided during the process to myself



# CHAPTER 3. COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to provide an understanding of collaborative negotiation. I expound the explanations given in the first chapter regarding my decision to focus this research on the collaborative negotiation skills that are important for students to learn. Following that line, another aim of this chapter is to present the skills connected to the intrapersonal and the interpersonal levels that I consider important for a collaborative negotiator to develop and the reasons to focus on those skills in the current research.

In order to accomplish the previous aims, in section 3.2, I describe what negotiation is. I will also share how I understand negotiation and collaborative negotiation, which is one of the two main approaches to negotiation, the other being competitive negotiation. I will present the two approaches for the purpose of clarifying their respective differences and complementarity, and introduce the mixed approach, which combines both. However, since the focus of this study is on the collaborative approach, I will elaborate on this in greater length in section 3.3. In the same section, I will highlight some of the essentials that skilled negotiators need to learn in order to apply a collaborative negotiation approach. I will focus on those skills connected to the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels that tend to be most challenging for students, as they must be aware of themselves and make adaptive changes before they are able to put these skills in practice. In the interest of clarity regarding all terms used in the chapter, in section 3.3.1, I will briefly explain the differences between tactics, strategies, and moves, as well as the reasons to refer to skills instead of competences. I also include a definition of skills. Moreover, in section 3.3.2 I will describe the four components of the nonviolent communication approach in order to explain certain skills, which I suggest are essential when using a collaborative negotiation strategy. Finally, in section 3.4 I will describe certain aspects of a given problem and context that are

important to take into account when analyzing the suitability of the collaborative negotiation approach.

### **3.2 TWO CONNECTED APPROACHES TO NEGOTIATION: COMPETITIVE AND COLLABORATIVE**

The ability to become a strategic negotiator thus requires some basic personal and interpersonal skills. It does not only require the professional knowledge that management students obtain through more regular management courses. (Canal & Jørgensen, 2014, p. 165)

As a starting point in terms of understanding what negotiation is, Zapata and I have argued in an earlier paper (Canal & Zapata, 2005) that negotiation is a direct mechanism useful to reach those goals that require collaboration with others, as well as to resolve conflicts between two or more people, groups, or organizations. Thompson (2011) focuses her definition of negotiation on the process that people turn to when they cannot fulfil their interests without the input of others. “Negotiation is an interpersonal decision-making process necessary whenever we cannot achieve our objectives single-handedly” (p. 2). This definition highlights the nature of interdependence of negotiations.

In the literature there is a common distinction between competitive and collaborative approaches to negotiation. The big difference between these two approaches centers on whether the parties involved in the negotiation opt to satisfy their respective interests in a mutual manner or individually. The former would be classified as applying a collaborative, integrative, or win-win negotiation approach. If, on the other hand, each party is interested in satisfying its own individual interests, this focus is known as a competitive, distributive, or win-lose negotiation approach. This distributive strategy tends to be more straightforward and intuitive (Thompson, 2001). While I will describe the two models in a pure fashion, they tend to mix in real life.

The central idea of the competitive negotiation approach is that of claiming value. Claiming value refers to all of the activities that an individual or organization carries out in order to derive value from them (Canal & Zapata, 2005). This idea does not imply that the counterpart



in the negotiation situation has their interests satisfied as well. However, neither does it imply that the counterpart will be negatively affected by this strategy. Negotiations in which each party is principally interested in satisfying their own interests follow what is known as a competitive, distributive, or win-lose negotiation approach. “The distributive aspect of negotiation refers to how negotiators divide or apportion scarce resources among themselves” (Thompson et al., 2010, p. 494).

This approach is especially followed when negotiators are not looking to build a long-term relationship with the other party. When these types of relationships are built, however, each party tends to obtain the most favourable result in relation to the issue that is being negotiated, with most distributive negotiations revolving around just one issue. The competitive negotiation approach is also known as “pie slicing,” whose imagery connotes a distributive manner of dividing resources. “A negotiator who is well-versed in the psychology of fairness is at a pie-slicing advantage in negotiation” (Thompson, 2011, p. 60).

This way of negotiating regularly leads to agreements in which one party ends up with more than the other, which explains why these kinds of negotiations are commonly termed win-lose negotiations. That expression does not mean that the process ends with one winner and one loser, though, since each person claims value according to their own expectations and needs. Rather, what the term implies is that each value unit that negotiators get for themselves is a value unit that their counterpart will not get. In other words, each slice of the pie that one party obtains means a slice of the pie that their counterpart will lose.

When negotiators follow a competitive model, the main tactics that they tend to use include the following (Thompson, 2011):

- a. Each party determines their reservation point (the point below which they will make no further concessions).
- b. Parties define the best alternative by which they can satisfy their objectives outside the negotiation. This is widely known as BATNA (best alternative to a negotiated agreement).

- c. Parties set high aspirations and their target point, which is the best result they can realistically obtain.
- d. One party makes the first offer and the other party will usually make a counteroffer. That signifies the beginning of a bargaining process throughout which each person will attempt to get the best benefit possible.
- e. Parties make concessions and use objective information to support their offers.
- f. Once parties are satisfied with the outcomes of the bargaining process, an agreement may be reached.

The competitive model has various limits with regard to creativity and its possibilities to maximize resources, as well as to build long-term relationships. However, many negotiation situations feature several of the principles of the competitive model and, as Thompson (2011) states, negotiators intuitively follow the competitive model on a very frequent basis. In many short-term and simple situations, the model is easy to apply and even recommendable for companies, especially in situations where they have no interest or need to build long-term relationships with the parties with whom they are negotiating.

When using this model, parties claim value based on positions, rights, and power instead of principles and objectives. “Positional bargaining becomes a contest of will. Each negotiator asserts what he will and won’t do. The task of jointly devising an acceptable solution tends to become a battle, each person trying through sheer will power to force the other to change their position” (Fisher, 1982, p. 17). As Fisher (1982) asserts in the previous quote, this kind of negotiation often results in each party competing in order to get the best possible outcome. While many situations could apparently be approached through a competitive model, “In reality, most negotiations are mixed-motive situations where one party benefits more than the other, although both have some of their interests satisfied” (Carrell & Heavrin, 2008, p. 7).

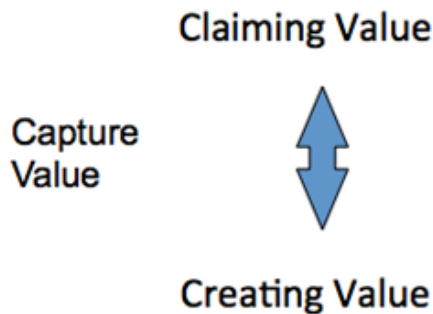
Thompson (2011) also affirms that most negotiations have an integrative potential. A concept tied to the mixed motive of negotiations, integrative potential is the use of creative strategies that

allow the parties to leverage their potential earnings prior to distributing them. According to Thompson (2011), “The concept of mixed-motive interaction was first introduced by Thomas Schelling (1960) to refer to situations where two or more parties face a conflict between two motives: cooperation, which refers to the integrative aspects of negotiation, and competition, which refers to the distributive aspects. In negotiations, individuals must cooperate to avoid impasse and reach mutual agreement, but compete to gain sufficient resources for themselves” (p. 499).

The activities developed in competitive negotiations are known as ways of claiming value, and those used by negotiators in collaborative processes are known as ways of creating value. Lax & Sebenius (2007) stress how important it is for negotiators to balance value-creating and value-claiming activities, which are known as “twin tasks.”

As the figure below shows, there is a constant tension between creating and claiming value when negotiators try to apportion that value.

*Figure 1.* The tension between claiming and creating value



(Restrepo, as cited in Canal, 2010, p. 383)

This teaches us that negotiators must be prepared to face the challenge of applying skills to claim value and at the same time to create value. In the last section of this chapter, I refer to aspects that negotiators can consider when analyzing the use of these approaches to

capture value in negotiations, taking into account the context and the problem of the negotiation.

### **3.3 THE COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION APPROACH**

Collaborative negotiation, also known as win-win negotiation, can be defined as a process in which all parties try to reach an agreement that mutually satisfies their interests. “In integrative negotiations, the parties set collaborative goals—that is, they attempt to identify and satisfy mutual goals” (Carrell & Heavrin, 2008, p. 15).

An essential feature of the collaborative negotiation approach is that it is grounded in the mutual interest of the parties, which opens the door to agreements of mutual benefit being achieved. It is important that the negotiator takes into account the necessities of all the parties that participate in the negotiation (Canal & Zapata, 2005).

Collaboration is the basis of this type of approach to negotiation. “Negotiators with a strong disposition to collaborating enjoy negotiations because they enjoy participating in the joint solution to a problem, recognizing the interdependence of the parties and the need to satisfy the interests of both” (Carrell & Heavrin, 2008, p. 10).

By collaborating, negotiators seek to create value by trying to maximize the available resources in the negotiation table and taking care to not harm their counterparts. At the same time, these kinds of behaviors allow negotiators to build long-term relationships. Maintaining relationships has the implicit value of allowing negotiators to take advantage of the trust that they have built, avoiding the effort of undertaking future negotiations from scratch. It also offers the parties new and more mature ways of interacting collaboratively.

Owing to how important it is that a negotiator develops this collaborative skill, and also because it implies learning challenges for students that are not always easy to navigate (as I mentioned in the first chapter), in the next section I will refer to various skills that collaborative negotiators need in their toolkit.

As noted earlier, the creation of value is paramount to this approach, whether this refers to tangible or intangible aspects that individuals or organizations appreciate. The role of the negotiator is to obtain “the greatest benefit possible” from the situation that is being negotiated or from the conflict in which they are involved. This is in accordance with Thompson et al.’s (2010) following idea.

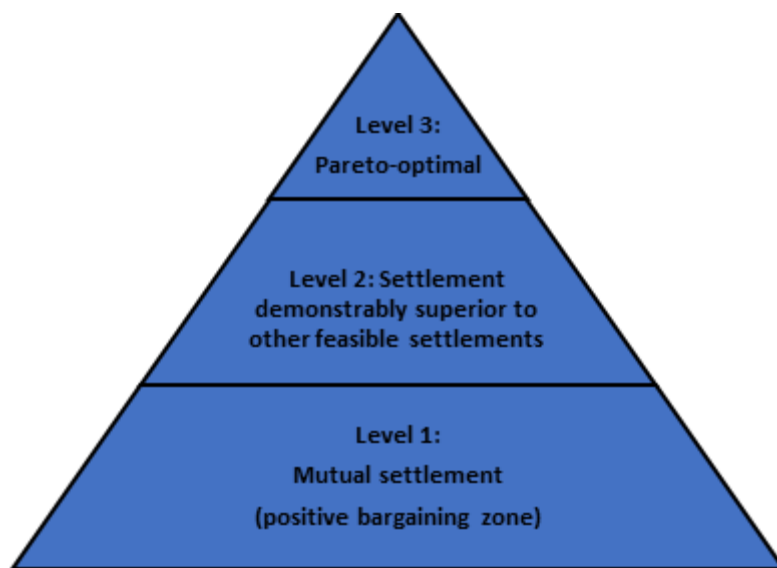
The initial focus on the economic outcomes of negotiation has widened to include investigations of subjective outcomes. Whereas rational behavior in negotiation is usually equated with the maximization of economic gain, joint or individual, some have argued that it is equally appropriate to consider social-psychological outcomes, such as the quality of the relationship, the degree of trust between parties, each negotiator’s satisfaction, and each person’s willingness to negotiate with the other in the future. (p. 494)

As mentioned by Canal & Jørgensen (2014), the concept of creating value also implies generating something new that was not contemplated initially, which is why collaborative tactics are known as ways of “expanding the pie.” “Central to this approach is that it is possible not only to reach the established goal, but also to improve it” (p. 163). The maximization of the available resources in negotiation is a central outcome of this approach. In the words of Thompson (2011), “Win-win negotiation really means that all creative opportunities are exploited and no resources are left on the table” (p. 62). Following this idea, Thompson (2011) also explains that three levels can be achieved in collaborative agreements:

- a. The first level is the one that exceeds the possibilities of no agreement of the parties. That is, the agreement is better than the resistance point (the minimum expected by the parties).
- b. The second level is the one that improves the parties’ respective alternatives. In other words, an agreement that is better than other possible outcomes reached by the parties through other negotiation approaches.
- c. The third and last level is an agreement of both parties that it is not possible to improve the outcome.

These levels are illustrated in the pyramid below, which shows that although level three represents “Pareto optimality,” it is the agreement reached least frequently by parties. In the words of Thompson (2011), “Reaching level 3 integrative agreements may sound easy enough, but observation of hundreds of executives’ performance in business negotiation simulations reveals that fewer than 25% reach level 3 agreements, and of those, approximately 50% do so by chance” (p. 65). This observation is in keeping with the challenges I have witnessed in my students (as I mentioned in the first chapter) when they try to maintain a collaborative attitude during an entire negotiation process. Since they often fail in their attempt to maintain a collaborative attitude, it is more difficult for them to achieve optimal agreements in their negotiations.

*Figure 2.* A Pyramid Model of Integrative Agreements



(Thompson, 2011, p. 64)

There is one slight difference between collaborative and integrative agreements: the latter implies “the extent to which the negotiated outcome satisfies the interests of both parties in a way that implies the outcome cannot be improved upon without hurting one or

more of the parties involved (i.e., Pareto optimality)” (Pareto, as cited in Thompson, et al., 2010, p. 493).

The idea of a negotiation agreement in which negotiators cannot improve their outcomes without negatively affecting the other party “derives from John Nash's bargaining theory, which states that the final outcome of a negotiation should be one in which no negotiator can improve his or her outcome without hurting that of the other party” (Thompson & Leonardelli, 2004, p. 2).

According to Thompson (2011), successful win-win negotiation is developed through “strategies that work.” Borrowing some of those strategies from authors like Bazerman & Neale (1992) and Lax & Sebenius (1986), the nine strategies are the following:

1. Build trust and share information (Bazerman & Neale, 1992).
2. Ask diagnostic questions (Bazerman & Neale, 1992).
3. Provide information (Bazerman & Neale, 1992).
4. Unbundle the issues (Lax & Sebenius, 1986).
5. Make package deals, not single-issue offers (Bazerman & Neale, 1992).
6. Make multiple offers simultaneously.
7. Structure contingency contracts by capitalizing on differences.
8. Pre-settlement settlements.
9. Search for post-settlement settlements.

(Thompson, 2011, pp. 68-73)

This approach is valuable in complex situations where multiple issues are at stake. Since collaborative negotiation is based on principles and objectives of mutuality, it facilitates the obtaining of both joint benefits and individual benefits for parties. For this reason, this approach to negotiation is the most suitable to create win-win outcomes.

Sometimes, when negotiators have expanded the pie, they walk off into the sunset and forget about the distributive (pie-slicing) element of negotiation. Nonetheless, it is not an effective negotiation strategy to

just focus on expanding the pie—that is bringing new possibilities. The negotiator must simultaneously focus on claiming value. (Thompson, 2001, p. 82)

Therefore, it should be noted that I am not advocating just one style. While this model or style may seem more aligned with the perspective of peacebuilding and conflict resolution that I wrote about in the first chapter, my goal is not to promote collaborative negotiation blindly. I am afraid it is not as simple as that. Rather, I am differentiating the models as a means of generating awareness of different ways of approaching negotiation, and also, as I mentioned, to share the challenges my students face when learning the collaborative approach.

That being said, it is not always easy for a negotiator to seamlessly switch from one approach to the other. That is, implementing a collaborative approach is not as easy as moving from one perspective to another. For this reason, it is important that teaching negotiation not be reduced to giving students simple guidelines. In reality, the ethics of peacebuilding and conflict resolution “describe an attitude to negotiation that cannot be transformed into a recipe for doing negotiation. It simply becomes too instrumental” (Canal & Jørgensen, 2014, p. 164).

Instead, the collaborative approach is an attitude toward negotiation that needs to be translated and put into action, taking into account the situational characteristics of the problem that is being addressed. This is one of the reasons why in the last section of this chapter I analyze some aspects that are important to consider when deciding which approach to use.

This leads to an approach that is slightly different from the one that I try to accomplish with my students and the different tools that I make available through the learning environment of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course and particularly through reflection in the learning portfolios. It does not mean that the negotiator gives up their goals, nor does it mean having to be “The Good Samaritan”. Instead, it means being able to understand that problems and situations—especially negotiation situations—are often very complex,



with multiple forces in play, including social, cultural, economic, psychological, and environmental forces.

In the next section, I will explain the kinds of skills that negotiators need to work collaboratively. This is supported by a table that describes some of the skills that are connected to the substance of the problem as well as those that are part of the intra- and interpersonal levels of negotiation on which I focus in this study.

### **3.3.1 COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION SKILLS AND RELATED LEARNING CHALLENGES**

Now I will refer to the kinds of skills that negotiators develop to foster a collaborative approach. While there is significant commonality regarding the skills needed to negotiate collaboratively, differences arise among the authors I have referred to, such as Thompson; Thompson & Leonardelli; Fisher, Ury, & Patton; Carrel & Heavrin; Lax & Sebenius; Canal & Zapata; and Canal & Jørgensen. There is also disagreement regarding what to call this set of capabilities. Some of the authors talk of strategies, others elements of negotiation, still others activities or tactics that negotiators engage in and utilize. I am in agreement with Kesting (personal communication, 2016) in understanding strategy as a set of activities planned to reach a negotiation goal. In order to define a strategy, the negotiator needs to analyze the context and the problem and foresee possible consequences of undertaking the chosen strategy. I also agree with Kesting's (personal communication, 2016) definition of tactics as those activities that negotiators develop in order to accomplish their strategy, and behavior as a move made by the negotiator while developing their strategy.

Skills, then, are the capabilities negotiators need to plan their strategies and accomplish them through the tactics and moves that they develop in their practice. Gumbau & Nieto (2001) differentiate attitudes from skills by taking three aspects into account. First they state that attitudes are more stable than skills, which are modifiable. Second, these authors suggest that attitudes are innate, while skills may be learned. Finally, they say that attitudes are inferred from behaviors, while skills can be evidenced through observation. This distinction harmonizes with how Colquitt, LePine, & Wesson (2015) differentiate

ability from skills, stating that the former refers to a capability that is largely fixed, while the latter can be improved through processes of training and experience. I agree with the above-mentioned ideas of skills as individual capabilities that are most likely to be evidenced through observation and to change as part of learning processes.

I will not be referring to competence, since I consider it to be a more complex notion involving a combination of different aspects such as knowledge, attitudes, and personality traits that some people master better than others (Levy-Leboyer, 1997, as cited in Gumbau & Nieto, 2001). However, if I had chosen to refer to competences, according to Lombardo & Eichinger (2004, p. 119), a person who has developed the negotiation competence would be able to perform the following (among other skills):

- Negotiates skillfully in tough situations with both internal and external groups.
- Wins concessions without damaging relationships.
- Gains trust quickly of other parties to the negotiations.

In the quote above, it is possible to observe that a competent negotiator needs skills associated with building relationships and trust, and also those necessary to interact with groups in different contexts. The authors also stress that a competent negotiator needs to be able to face complex problems. This example evidences that competence is a notion that involves different skills, traits, and knowledge. Although I use a process based on the development of competences in some of my courses, for the context of the current research I prefer the term skill, viewing it as a simplified way of understanding what negotiation students do to accomplish their learning goals and taking into account the definition offered earlier. Moreover, the negotiation course that I am referring to in the current research has been taught by privileging certain skills that students can learn, and the language used throughout the negotiation approaches that I am discussing also tends to use the term skills.

It should be noted that I sometimes refer to moves, activities, and behaviors interchangeably, nor do I make distinctions between models and approaches, nor between approaches and strategies. That

being clarified, I will continue with the main topics of this section, which are collaborative negotiation skills and their related learning challenges.

According to Thompson (2011), the successful creation of win-win negotiation requires that the “strategies that work” mentioned earlier be applied. In order to present the collaborative negotiation skills that I develop in this chapter, I take into account some of the strategies that work mentioned by Thompson, such as building trust and sharing information, as well as providing information. I additionally take into account some elements from Fisher & Ury’s model, such as interests, communication, and relationship.

Since I will take into account these elements from Fisher & Ury’s model, I consider it important to provide a brief context about their approach to negotiation. Roger Fisher and William Ury were two of the pioneers in developing a model for collaborative, or win-win, negotiations. They named their model principled negotiation, and its main characteristic is a negotiation process that is based on principles. “Principled negotiation or negotiation on the merits: a method of negotiation explicitly designed to produce wise outcomes efficiently and amicably” (Fisher, 1982, p. 20). Their model is widely known as the Harvard Model of Negotiation, since it was developed while the professors worked at that university. The seven elements that this model includes are the following: interests, communication, relationship, options, alternatives, legitimacy, and commitment. I stated earlier that I take into account the first three aspects of this model, which is because I consider them to be connected to some of the skills that collaborative negotiators need, described in **Table 4**. The authors presented their model to stand in opposition to the competitive approach, based on positions and power, which I personally consider to be one of the limitations of their model. This is because it is based on a collaborative perspective of negotiation, leaving aside the aspect of mixed-motive negotiations (mentioned previously) and its consequent necessity for negotiators to be aware of claiming value, not just creating it.

Some of the elements and strategies from the two mentioned models are related to the substance of the problem, meaning the main issues discussed at the negotiation table. In my view, these aspects

imply a cognitive process of learning since students need to understand, memorize, and analyze the strategies. Only after this process will they be able to apply them. Such is the case of “making multiple offers” at the negotiation table (Thompson, 2011). Once a person comprehends the utility of making multiple offers in a negotiation, they need to be aware of its importance and then apply it to negotiations where appropriate. I do not believe that students need adaptive changes in order to learn these kinds of skills that are connected to the substance of the problem.

Nonetheless, certain other skills are less related to the substance of the problem discussed at the negotiation table, and more to personal ways of interacting with others. I consider learning intrapersonal and interpersonal skills to be more challenging for students because the kind of learning that is needed requires much more than solely a cognitive process. As students learn the skillsets listed in columns two and three of **Table 4**, they need to be aware of aspects such as their way of interacting with others and the effects of those interactions for themselves, the negotiation, and their counterparts. This consists of how they think, feel, and react to this dynamic process. When students do this, they participate in a type of learning that goes beyond mere cognition and that forces them to make internal accommodations in their inner worlds. This learning entails questioning beliefs, challenging attitudes, and regulating feelings, and this accommodation process exemplifies the reasons I give to move from reflection to self-reflection in the next chapter, “Reflection for Learning.” Moreover, it is connected to the changes that tend to occur in students’ negotiation profiles during the learning process. I tend to refer to this by means of the first and second levels of analysis in particular.

I will focus on skills that are important for the process of developing collaboration among negotiators and that are intrinsic to what Thompson et al. (2010) calls the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels of negotiation. “Negotiation research at the intrapersonal level of analysis clearly recognizes the multiparty nature of negotiation, but it emphasizes how the inner experience of the negotiator impacts negotiation processes and outcomes, and vice-versa” (Thompson et al., 2010, p. 494).

The author states that the psychological mood and psychological power of the negotiator influences both the process and the outcomes of negotiations. “The intrapersonal system provides the most close-up view of negotiation, taking us into the mind and heart of the negotiator, who is either anticipating or engaging in a negotiation” (Thompson et al., p. 508). We can see that the cited author emphasizes the importance of the intrapersonal level for negotiations. The interpersonal level is also important in negotiation, since it takes into account attitudes and emotional reactions that go beyond the intrapersonal level and that also affect the process and the outcomes of negotiations, according to Thompson et al. (2010). “The interpersonal system is particularly meaningful in negotiation research because the dyadic process allows us to examine the presence or absence of interpersonal phenomena such as behavioral synchrony and mutual gaze, which cannot be reduced to the intrapersonal level” (p. 508).

In order to clarify the kinds of skills that are essential in collaborative negotiations, I designed the following table, which differentiates the skills that are connected to the substance of the problem from those at the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. The table below is not exhaustive with regard to all the skills a negotiator may reach for during a collaborative approach. I have included ideas of some of the authors that I have been referring to throughout this chapter, as well as certain notions from Rosenberg’s (2003) nonviolent communication approach, which I develop in the next section. Finally, I have also taken into account aspects of the conceptualization of the psychic capacities connected to reflection that I develop in the “Reflection As a Mental Capacity” chapter, borrowing certain ideas from Fonagy & Target (1997) in particular.

**Table 4** *Three types of skills for collaborative negotiations*

<b>Skills connected to the substance of the problem</b>	<b>Skills connected to the intrapersonal level</b>	<b>Skills connected to the interpersonal level</b>
Adding issues to the table	Identifying emotions and needs in oneself (Rosenberg and Fisher et al.)	Identifying emotions and needs in others (Rosenberg and Fisher et al.)
Making tradeoffs (Thompson)	Identifying own beliefs and paradigms	Interacting with others respectfully (Rosenberg)
Searching for post settlement-settlements (Thompson)	Valuing own and other people’s ideas, offers, and requests	Effective communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Active listening</li> <li>· Clear ways of expressing questions, information, emotions, and needs</li> <li>· Avoiding evaluations and demands (Rosenberg and Fisher et al.)</li> </ul>
Making multiple offers of equivalent value simultaneously (Thompson)	Being aware of own limits and principles and respecting them	Avoiding that one’s own beliefs and paradigms negatively affect interaction with others (Rosenberg)
Structuring contingency contracts by capitalizing on differences (Thompson)	Self-regulating of emotions (not engaging negatively with comments or feelings from the counterpart) (Rosenberg, Fonagy & Target, and Fisher et al.)	Building trust (Thompson and Axelrod)

Moreover, I found support to focus on the above skillsets in Fisher, Ury, & Patton (2011), who draw attention to what they call the human aspects of negotiation. “A basic fact about negotiations, easy to

forget in corporate and international transactions, is that you are dealing not with abstract representatives of the ‘other side,’ but with human beings” (p. 20). These authors also highlight how misunderstandings in communication, as well as confusions between perceptions and reality, can lead to a dynamic process of reactions and counterreactions that impede a joint search for solutions among negotiators, often leading to impasses. Failure to sensitively deal with others as human beings prone to human reactions can be disastrous for a negotiation. “Whatever else at any point during a negotiation, from preparation to follow-up, it is worth asking yourself, ‘Am I paying enough attention to the people problem?’” (Fisher et al., 2011, p. 21). The previous aspects can be classified at the interpersonal level of negotiations.

On the other hand, the aspects that I will be mentioning are part of the intrapersonal level. According to Fisher et al. (2011), “In negotiations it is easy to forget that you must deal not only with their people problems, but also with your own. Your anger and frustration may obstruct an agreement beneficial to you. Your perceptions are likely to be one-sided, and you may not be listening or communicating adequately” (p. 24). The authors assert that negotiators, like everyone, are unpredictable and prone to having cognitive biases, partisan perceptions, and blind spots. Furthermore, negotiators have their own values, backgrounds, and viewpoints and behave emotionally.

According to Fisher et al. (2011), one complexity of the aspects mentioned above is that people who are negotiating can become angry, depressed, frustrated, or offended. Moreover, negotiators may at times feel that their egos are being threatened or be unable to see the world from any perspective other than their own.

The aforementioned phenomena that form the intra- and interpersonal levels of negotiation constitute one of the reasons why it is important that negotiators reflect on their own stories, prejudices, and assumptions. This is so that they be aware of their ways of behaving and interacting when they negotiate, since each of them can affect their negotiation performance and the relationships they build.

The formation of a strategic negotiator thus requires both intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. It is not sufficient to have only

the professional skills that students obtain through more standard management courses, such as those that teach them that organizations will capture value in the short or long term. It also requires personal skills, such as awareness of one's own preferences and values and the ability to evaluate one's own performance. Furthermore, students must also learn skills to be good communicators, trustworthy, creative, and so forth. It is also necessary that negotiation students be capable of 'reading' the other party's intentions and interests, and that they establish sound compromises, if necessary, while seeking reciprocity.

That being said, students rarely implement collaborative skills. The main reasons why students experience difficulty doing so are as follows (Canal, 2012):

- Some of them believe that they apply the abilities of collaborative negotiation or demonstrate the intention to do so, but in reality they do not or do so only partially.
- Some students are unaware that they do not apply collaborative abilities to negotiations.
- Some other students have not consolidated what I call a "profile as a collaborative negotiator," which integrates their personal traits with the skills to create value. When they are unable to do this, they are prevented from using their traits and skills in the negotiations they participate in to greatest advantage.

One of the authors in whose writing I find consensus regarding the above challenges is Thompson (2001), who affirms that the absence of relevant and diagnostic feedback for negotiators results in three main problems. The first is "confirmation bias, or the tendency for people to see what they want to see, when appraising their own performance. A second problem is egocentrism, which is the tendency for people to view their experiences in a way that is flattering and fulfilling for them. A third problem is self-reinforcement, which is the reluctance to try something new or change certain behaviors" (p. 5).

In addition to the challenges included in chapter 1, I mentioned some obstacles that further impede the development of necessary skills in negotiation students. For instance, some students struggle to identify



positive aspects in their performance as negotiators. This prevents them from externalizing their skills, valuing them, and thus consolidating them. I consider such difficulties to point to a lack of awareness and a rupture between people's intentions and the actions taken in practice.

Furthermore, these difficulties have an effect at the personal and organizational level, with the ability to generate feelings of insecurity about one's negotiation capabilities among some or, alternatively, an excess of confidence among others. Knowing this, the reason I focus on the learning process of collaborative negotiation is not simply because it contributes to humans' wellbeing, but rather because students have more learning challenges with collaborative negotiation than they do with the competitive approach. As mentioned by Thompson, the competitive approach to negotiation is more straightforward and intuitive. Canal (2012) found that it is easier for negotiators to say that they will remain collaborative during a negotiation than it is for them to actually do so in practice. Students therefore face a challenge of moving from the discourse of being collaborative to the real action of applying that model to practice. The challenge for me as a teacher is to develop learning tools that address such problems.

Therefore, my goal with the negotiation students is not to give them mere guidelines for carrying out negotiations, as mentioned earlier. I aim instead to equip them with the tools to gain understanding of the complexity of the problems most frequently faced by negotiators, including tools to reflect on their beliefs, and to find more holistic solutions to their negotiation challenges.

In the next section of this chapter, I will refer to some of the skills that help negotiators develop a collaborative negotiation approach, which can also help them overcome any challenges that arise during the negotiation interactions, as previously stated by Fischer et al. Those skills that I will refer to are part of the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels listed in columns two and three of **Table 4**.

### **3.3.2 NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION: AN APPROACH TO DEVELOP SKILLS CONNECTED TO THE INTRAPERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL LEVELS**

In this section I present the perspective of nonviolent communication, established by Marshall Rosenberg. I use this approach as a way of developing essential skills that negotiators need to be aware of in order to manage the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels of negotiations focused on collaboration. Nonviolent communication (NVC) goes beyond the mere communication process because it also takes into account the importance of skills such as: building trust, identifying interests, and regulating emotions, which if done adequately, contribute to the building of long-term relationships. “The objective of NVC is to establish a relationship based on honesty and empathy. When others trust that our primary commitment is to the quality of the relationship, then they can trust that our requests are true requests and not camouflaged demands” (Rosenberg, 2003, p. 81).

There are a few reasons why I refer to the main skills for collaborative negotiation through the nonviolent communication approach. On the one hand, it is because this is a comprehensive approach based on vital aspects of collaborative skills such as trust, respect, and the understanding of personal feelings and needs, including those of others, listed in columns two and three of Table 4. On the other hand, it is because this approach is part of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course that I am focused on in this current study, and I hope that explaining this approach here will facilitate its comprehension when I refer to it.

As Fisher et al. (2011) assert, “Without communication, there is no negotiation. Negotiation is a process of communicating back and forth for the purpose of reaching a joint decision. Communication is never an easy thing, even when people have an enormous background of shared values and experience” (p. 35).

The nonviolent communication process can be defined as a positive, direct, and precise way of communicating what a person observes, feels, and needs in a given situation or conflict. It has four

components, which, according to Rosenberg (2003), allow mutual compassion to solve problems. The first one is to observe without judgments or evaluations, the second is to express feelings, the third is to express needs, and the final one is to request.

Observing without judgments or evaluations, the first component of nonviolent communication, helps the message be clear. “When we combine observation with evaluation, however, we decrease the likelihood that others will hear our intended message. Instead, they are apt to hear criticism and thus resist what we are saying” (Rosenberg, 2003, p. 26). This happens when a person feels attacked or threatened, which raises the likelihood of them reacting defensively. “As nonviolent communication replaces our old patterns of defending, withdrawing, or attacking in the face of judgment and criticism, we come to perceive ourselves and others, as well as our intentions and relationships, in a new light.

“Resistance, defensiveness, and violent reactions are minimized” (Rosenberg, 2003, p. 3).

Such an environment may facilitate information sharing during a negotiation. Information sharing is an important skill that a negotiator must know how to execute. However, as the saying goes, “It’s not what you say; it’s how you say it.” This is why it is important to pay attention to all aspects of the information-sharing process of a negotiation.

“In many negotiations, each side explains and condemns at great length the motivations and intentions of the other side” (Fisher et al., 2011, p. 39). Sometimes it is difficult for students to notice this condemnation taking place, as it is embedded in their everyday ways of communicating. For instance, according to Rosenberg (2003), opinions and evaluations can take the form of comparisons, generalizations, and moralist judgments. “When we focus on clarifying what is being observed, felt, and needed rather than on diagnosing and judging, we discover the depth of our own compassion” (p. 4).

Fisher et al. (2011) state that in order to influence counterparties in a negotiation, it is essential to understand them with empathy. According to the authors, this means that the negotiator must have the

ability to comprehend the power of the other person's point of view and the emotional forces that make them feel attached to it. "To accomplish this task you should be prepared to withhold judgment for a while as you 'try on' their views" (Fisher et al., 2011, p. 25).

It is important to clarify that the point is not to stop making any evaluations. Evaluation is intrinsic to the decision-making process, which is at the core of negotiation. The key is, on the one hand, to avoid mixing observation with judgments, and, on the other hand, to avoid judging co-participants of a negotiation. This idea resonates with Fisher's proposal to negotiators when he suggests splitting people from the problem. "Separating people from the problem allows you to deal directly and emphatically with the other negotiator as a human being, thus making possible an amicable agreement" (Fisher, 1982, p. 21).

The goal of communication without evaluating is to send a clear message and facilitate the flow of communication, all the while assisting the negotiator with the challenge of trust building. This includes caring for both the relationship and the information-sharing process during the negotiation. The second component of nonviolent communication consists of identifying and expressing feelings either generated in the negotiator in a given situation, or that the negotiator senses in their counterpart. This strategy allows participants to deliver messages more effectively "by developing a vocabulary of feelings that allows us to clearly and specifically name or identify our emotions [which allows us to] connect more easily with one another. Allowing ourselves to be vulnerable by expressing our feelings can help resolve conflicts" (Rosenberg, 2003, p. 46).

This vulnerability referred to by the author is one of the reasons why many people withhold their feelings when negotiating, especially in professional contexts. However, a refusal to explicitly refer to feelings does not mean that it is possible to avoid them altogether. A negotiator can still reveal their feelings through nonverbal communication, and decisions made can be affected by emotions that are not communicated. Suppressing emotions leaves more room for interpretation and misunderstandings, which can negatively affect the process and outcomes of negotiations.

In a negotiation, particularly in a bitter dispute, feelings may be more important than talk. The parties may be more ready to battle than for cooperatively working out a solution to a common problem. People often come to a negotiation realizing that the stakes are high and feeling threatened. Emotions on one side will generate emotions on the other. Fear may breed anger, and anger, fear. Emotions may quickly bring a negotiation to an impasse or an end. (Fisher et al., 2011, p. 31)

Impasses limit collaborative attitudes and can impede value creation as a consequence, as Canal & Jørgensen (2014) state.

When negotiators express their emotions in direct, appropriate, and calm ways, they leave less room for interpretation and strong reactions. Emotions can thus be understood as information that is useful for negotiation, as the interests and needs of negotiation participants underlie the emotions on the surface. Positive emotions usually indicate that the need has been fulfilled, while negative emotions tend to signify that there are still opportunities to satisfy participants' respective interests.

The third component of nonviolent communication, that of expressing needs, provides parties with a space to explain the interests underlying the feelings mentioned above. It also lets negotiators identify other people's interests, making this approach a coherent cycle of engaging with facts, feelings, and needs without the necessity of blaming others (Rosenberg, 2003).

Here, I am referring to needs and interests without distinction. I do so because both terms respond to a critical question that negotiators must answer both before and during the process: what is it for? That is, what do I need what I am requesting for? "Every negotiator wants to reach an agreement that satisfies his substantive interests. This is why one negotiates" (Fisher et al., 2011, p. 21).

Furthermore, a negotiator usually begins the negotiation with a position that responds to the question: what do I want? Ury & Fisher (2005) assert, "Whatever our demand or 'position' may be, we and others involved would like an outcome that meets our interests. The more we think about these in advance, the more likely we are to meet

them” (p. 4). “Nonviolent communication trains us to observe carefully and to be able to specify behaviors and conditions that are affecting us. We learn to identify and clearly articulate what we are concretely wanting in a given situation” (Rosenberg, 2003, p. 3).

This third component of nonviolent communication addresses the challenge of collaborative negotiation of finding agreements that satisfy the main interests of each person involved in the process to the greatest extent possible. In any exchange, we come to better understand our own deeper needs and those of others.

Fisher et al. (2011) identified a core set of interests that they state are frequently present in negotiations: autonomy, appreciation, affiliation, role, and status. “Trampling on these interests tends to generate strong negative emotions. Attending to them can build a positive rapport and positive climate to problem-solving negotiation” (p. 32).

Requesting is the fourth component of nonviolent communication, and it has the purpose of asking something of the counterpart in the search for solutions to the situation that is being discussed. A way of finding options that fulfill the needs of all parties involved in negotiation processes, requesting represents an opportunity for parties to claim value. Rosenberg (2003) proposes that negotiators be aware of the differences between demands and requests, suggesting that developing all four components of this approach may facilitate the latter. “Requests unaccompanied by the speaker’s feelings and needs may sound like a demand” (p. 73).

The author also states, “It’s a request if the speaker then shows empathy towards the other person’s needs” (p. 80). In order to ensure that the situation is resolved effectively, Rosenberg says that negotiators must be clear and precise: “The clearer we are about what we want back, the more likely it is that we’ll get it” (Rosenberg, 2003, p. 74).

Although nonviolent communication can be a valuable approach to use in disputes, it is also applicable in negotiation processes in which the parties are not necessarily experiencing conflict, but

nonetheless need to achieve goals. Nonviolent communication “is therefore an approach that can be effectively applied at all levels of communication and in diverse situations: intimate relationships, families, schools, organizations and institutions, therapy and counselling, diplomatic and business negotiations, disputes, and conflicts of any nature” (Rosenberg, 2003, p. 8).

When negotiators are guided by the principles of this approach, they can communicate in ways that are not just more effective, but that allow them to achieve their objectives more smoothly and build trust, which is the basis of all long-term relationships. “Trust, defined as the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the counterpart’s behavior and intentions (Rousseau et al., 1998), allows negotiators to exchange the information necessary for integrative agreements” (Thompson et al., 2010, p. 501).

The reason for crediting nonviolent communication with the facilitation of trust is because it is a transparent process based on respect. In fact, I usually refer to it as “transparent communication,” since people share situations, feelings, and needs as they experience them. I also call it “connected communication,” since the process allows people to connect with their own feelings and needs, as well as those of others (Canal, 2009). When this approach is applied in a systematic and honest manner, it contributes to the development of most of the collaborative negotiation skills connected to the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels, which are mentioned in columns two and three of Table 4. These include identifying personal beliefs and paradigms and respectfully interacting with others. It should not be understood to mean that this constitutes the sole way for negotiators to develop these skills: it is simply a holistic approach that follows a coherent process of handling emotions, identifying interests, building trust, and communicating effectively. Developing this process honestly and systematically has an influence on building trust and the flow of the relationship. In the next section, I will refer to certain aspects of the context and the negotiation problem that must be considered when analyzing whether to apply the collaborative negotiation skills through awareness of the situation, challenges, and possible consequences

### 3.4 THE CONTEXTS OF USE OF COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION

I will explain some aspects of the negotiation context that negotiators must consider when analyzing the suitability of implementing a collaborative approach. I will take into account two main authors: Leigh Thompson, who writes about capturing value according to the problem, and Robert Axelrod, who offers proposals about when to remain collaborative and when the limits of cooperation need to be set.

Leigh Thompson's approach to negotiation can be understood as capturing value according to the problem. This notion is illustrated in Figure 1. The tension between claiming and creating value mentioned above exists due to the need of the negotiator to take into account multiple aspects to analyze if the problem can be solved through value claiming or through value creating, or if it is possible to use both.

In **Table 5** below, I list some aspects that negotiators can consider in order to determine how to capture value according to the problem. I have taken ideas from Robbins & Judge (2013, p. 459), as well as from Thompson (2011). The information in the table below is not exhaustive. Indeed, according to Thompson (2011), negotiators can take into account additional aspects when determining the best way to capture value, namely: power balance among parties, availability of resources, and analysis of whether the negotiation is for exchange or to solve a dispute, as well as if the negotiation is one of necessity or opportunity, among others.



**Table 5** *Capturing value according to the problem*

Aspects	Value claiming	Value creating
<b>Possible outcomes</b>	Distributive: win-lose outcomes.	Integrative: win-win outcomes.
<b>Arguments based on</b>	Positions, rights, and power	Interests and principles.
<b>Parties' preferences</b>	Similar (or the same) preferences across issues.	Different preferences across issues (Thompson, 2011)
<b>Objectives</b>	Individual benefits.	Joint benefits and individual benefits.
<b>Interest in the relationship</b>	Short-term.	Long-term. (Carrel & Heavrin, 2008).
<b>Number of issues</b>	One.	More than one issue. (Thompson, 2011)

As seen in the table, the collaborative negotiation approach is more suitable in situations where multiple issues are at stake. However, it is always possible that more issues will be added to the table, or that some of them will be unbundled. More meaningful than the number of issues is the interest in the relationship and the importance of the substantive outcomes, as Carrel & Heavrin (2008) point out. When there is a relationship to preserve or when there is the potential for a long-term relationship, the collaborative approach will be of great value.

Furthermore, negotiators can analyze if it is wise for them to base the process on interests and principles. As I mentioned earlier, this basis allows integrative agreements to be pursued, which allows negotiators to obtain both joint benefits and individual benefits. These kinds of agreements simultaneously contribute to building trust and strengthening relationships.

Adding to Thompson's perspective of capturing value according to the problem, Axelrod (2006) suggests that the notion of reciprocity is more sensible than unconditional cooperation when deciding how to play the negotiation game. The author calls this the dynamic of reciprocity: "TIT FOR TAT, a game model based on reciprocity, won not by doing better than the other player, but by eliciting cooperation from the other player (...) [it] does well by promoting the mutual

interest rather than by exploiting the other's weakness" (Axelrod, 2006, p. 137).

This means that if the negotiator begins by being collaborative and the counterparty does so as well, both of them can continue using a collaborative negotiation approach. However, should the other party stop reciprocating, then the negotiator must modify their strategy. "Unconditional cooperation tends to spoil the other player; it leaves a burden on the rest of the community to reform the spoiled player, suggesting that reciprocity is a better foundation for morality than is unconditional cooperation" (Axelrod, 2006, pp. 136-137).

Axelrod's (2006) focus eventually moved beyond advising individuals for a given environment to consider "how one can promote cooperation by transforming the strategic setting itself" (p. 124). This idea echoes the suggestion of Carrell & Heavrin (2008) to modify the strategy when the counterparty does not respond in a similar way. "If the other party does not reciprocate, then the negotiator can use a modified collaborative strategy known as principled collaboration by which the parties agree to conduct negotiations based on a set of mutually agreed-upon principles" (Carrell & Heavrin, 2008, p. 11).

In addition to the previous viewpoints, Axelrod (2006), at the beginning of his book, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, poses the question: "When should a person cooperate, and when should a person be selfish in an ongoing interaction with another person?" (p. vii). The author then goes on to leave clues to the answer to that question throughout the book. The first idea that he shares is to never be the first to stop collaborating; the second, if the counterparty stops collaborating, do something immediately to earn their respect. The third suggestion is to enlarge the shadow of the future, and the final one is to teach players "values, facts, and skills" that stimulate cooperation.

Authors such as Axelrod, Fisher et al., and Thompson make it clear that negotiators face different challenges in order to achieve their goals, one being to define the problem to then decide whether it is more important to claim or create value. Applying a reciprocity-based strategy represents another challenge, in which one starts out collaboratively but then behaves reciprocally, instead of remaining

collaborative throughout. “So teaching the use of nice strategies based upon reciprocity helps the pupil, helps the community, and can indirectly help the teacher” (Axelrod, 2006, p. 139).

As mentioned above, in this context negotiators must be prepared to apply collaborative skills at any moment, as most negotiations have an integrative potential. If negotiators are only skilled at claiming value, they will not be able to maximize the resources at the negotiation table. If, on the other hand, they are only able to create value, they will settle for outcomes that are not very significant (Canal, 2012). A negotiator who is aware of the mixed motive of negotiations is an “enlightened negotiator, who realizes that negotiation has a pie-expanding aspect but at the same time does not forget to claim resources” (Thompson, 2011, p. 82).

There is another reason why negotiators need to possess sufficient skills to apply both the competitive and collaborative models: in spite of the fact that certain skills are used in both approaches, other skills can be very different and even opposed. For instance, when a person claims value, they focus on their own necessities; when they create value, however, they take both parties’ interests into account. A competitive negotiator is typically persuasive and firm in order to achieve their goals; a collaborative negotiator, on the other hand, seeking to understand their counterpart’s interests, is usually more flexible, which helps them creatively find options of mutual benefit. “A skilled negotiator remains flexible in order to respond to the changing dynamics of a negotiation” (Carrell & Heavrin, 2008, p. 7).

One reason why it is important for negotiators to develop these kinds of collaborative skills is because they contribute to the optimization of resources and the sustainability of organizations. Axelrod (2006) refers to long-term relationships as sustained cooperation and highlights that negotiators must possess the skills to recognize the counterparty from previous negotiations and remember the main features of how they interacted. “In fact, the scope of sustainable cooperation is dependent upon these abilities” (p. 139). Fisher et al. (2011) also point out that “Most negotiations take place in the context of an ongoing relationship, where it is important to carry on

each negotiation on a way that will help rather than hinder future relations and future negotiations” (p. 22).

To be a strategic negotiator thus means being able to understand and face the complexity of the situation in which the negotiator is immersed. Simply put, it implies making an effort to view the circumstances from different angles. While it does not necessarily mean that negotiators must give up their goals, it does mean questioning their positions, allowing for understanding of others’ points of view and perspectives, and considering these when reaching an agreement. The negotiator has to take into account several aspects, including their own expectations and the interests of the parties that they represent. Understanding the complexity of the problem involves an attempt to understand the counterparts’ objectives, which includes identifying why certain aspects should be stated while others might be best left unsaid. Moreover, negotiators need to deal with power differences, scarce resources, and blurred or false information, among other situations that push them to respond to those challenges both intellectually and emotionally. Finally, and as I mentioned earlier, I found that it is easier for negotiators to say that they will remain collaborative during an entire negotiation, than to actually do so in practice. A challenge therefore exists of moving from the discourse of being collaborative to the real actions of applying that model to negotiations (Canal, 2012). One of the reasons why I focus this chapter (and the current research) on collaborative negotiation is therefore because it is not easy for students to learn, nor is it easy for them to maintain a collaborative attitude throughout the negotiation process.

# CHAPTER 4. REFLECTION FOR LEARNING

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to problematize the value of reflection for learning. Several authors have incorporated reflection into their teaching practice and attributed it with a series of advantages. While I agree that reflection has the potential to contribute to the learning process, I consider the connection between reflection and learning to be neither as direct nor as strong as claimed. Following that idea, the chapter discusses the importance of studying what reflection can realistically accomplish, with consideration of its likelihood of making meaningful contributions to learning. I conclude by suggesting that two factors play an important role in that process: the context of learning in which the reflection process is developed and individual psychology.

The chapter is divided into five sections. In section 3.2, I offer some definitions of learning, explaining my own understanding of it as well as the meaning of the potential of reflection for learning. In section 3.3, I provide a context for the use of reflection in higher and management education and some of the ongoing challenges of reflection in order to better understand its potential contributions to the learning process. In section 3.4, I present a few perspectives about both reflection and critical reflection and differentiate them from self-reflection. I also clarify why—and in the context of my research—it is critical to move from reflection to self-reflection, where I put forward my way of understanding the latter. In section 3.5, I analyze certain authors' contributions regarding what reflection can add to the learning process, as well as a philosophical perspective that questions certain positive effects associated with reflection.

In section 3.6, I present some of the limitations of the research within this area of knowledge. I clarify my view that the main gap in the literature regarding reflection for learning in both the higher education and management education fields is an analysis of what reflection can realistically accomplish. Finally, I suggest that in order

to contribute to the closing of the aforementioned gap, it is important to study the potential of reflection and take into account the learning structure and individual psychology.

## 4.2 THE POTENTIAL OF REFLECTION FOR LEARNING

Two interesting meanings of potential can be found in the 2011 American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. One definition states that it is that “capable of being but not yet in existence; latent or undeveloped.” It is alternatively defined as “the possibility that something might happen or result from given conditions.”

When I refer to potential, I understand it as a possibility that is latent but in need of some additional element in order to develop. In the case of the potential of reflection for learning, it means that reflection holds the possibility to develop learning; however, certain conditions are necessary in order for its fruition. These conditions may result from a combination of factors that allows for the latent possibility of reflection to develop learning. I have found support for these ideas in Hedberg’s (2009) notion of reflection, in which she states: “When we reflect, we give the learning a space to be processed, understood, and more likely integrated into future thoughts and actions” (p. 11). The potential of reflection for learning is emphasized in Hedberg’s statement through the expression “more likely.”

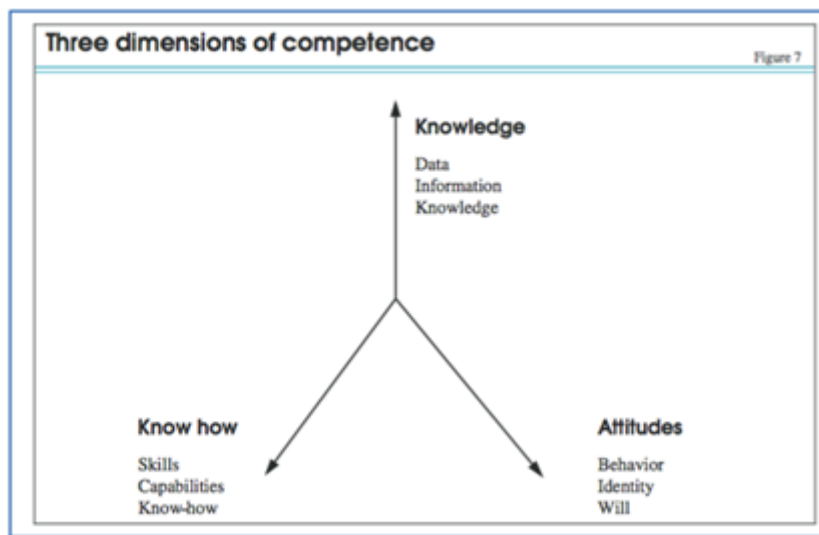
In the current research, I have focused on two factors that influence the possibilities of reflection to develop learning, namely:

- The learning context (the environment)
- Certain psychological characteristics connected to reflection (the individual)

Since I am going to refer to reflection as a latent characteristic that may produce a result on learning, it is essential to first explain my own notion of learning. This notion was principally inspired by three authors: Durand, Heron, and Mezirow. Following Pestalozzi’s (1972) ideas of head, hand, and heart, Durand (1998) suggests a model known

as the three dimensions of competence, which are knowledge, attitudes, and know-how, as shown in the figure below:

**Figure 3.** Three dimensions of competence



(Durand, 1998, p. 23)

I find the importance Durand (1998) gives to the person to be interesting, as well as how he concurrently takes into account the knowledge that the person has access to and the skills (know-how) that the individual is able to apply. Note however that Durand (1998) is referring to learning competences, while I use the term skills (see chapter three), which includes attitudes, knowledge and know-how.

Heron (2009) appreciates learning as a process that concerns the whole person. "Either all of us is explicitly involved in the learning process or only part of us is explicitly involved, and what is excluded can be negatively influential, undermining either the content or the process" (Heron, as cited in Illeris, K., 2009 p. 144).

Mezirow's (2009) definition of transformative learning captures some of the challenges I have observed my students face when trying to put collaborative negotiation concepts and skills into practice. As

mentioned in the collaborative negotiation chapter, this is partially because negotiation students face challenges such as power differences, scarce resources, and blurred or false information, among other situations that push them to respond to these challenges on both an intellectual and emotional level.

Transformative learning is defined as the process by which we transform problematic frames of reference (mindsets, habits of mind, meaning perspectives)—sets of assumption and expectation—to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change. Such frames are better because they are more likely to generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action. (Mezirow, as cited in Illeris, K., 2009, p. 92)

Taking these perspectives into account, learning as an ongoing process that occurs when an individual avails themselves of their capacities in their interactions with people or when receiving information, and is subsequently able to process it. As a result of that process, learning can be evidenced through different dimensions such as the internalization of knowledge, the strengthening of skills, or a change in practices. These dimensions are indicated when the individual applies the learning to new interactions with people or to new knowledge.

### **4.3 REFLECTION IN HIGHER AND MANAGEMENT EDUCATION**

In this section I provide a brief framework of the use of reflection in higher and management education and, as mentioned earlier, some of the challenges that reflection in the learning context still faces.

Reflection has been the subject of study of different thinkers, especially philosopher, for a long time. In the educational field, John Dewey (1933) has been considered one of the first and most important proponents.

The use of reflection in management education has a certain degree of overlap with its use in higher education, in responding to



various objectives such as finding tools that contribute to a student-centered learning approach, finding ways to promote learning that is enduring and deep, educating professionals who are able to analyze the context in which they work, and finding ways in which education takes students into account by considering them from a broad perspective of their being.

The aforementioned purpose of reflection as a way of contributing to a student-centered learning approach allows students to determine their own learning goals and learning interests and to actively participate in their fulfillment. The student-centered learning approach represents a challenge and change to traditional teaching practices that formerly centered on the transmission of knowledge (Berggren & Söderlund, 2011).

The second purpose of reflection practice states that it has been embraced in higher education as a way of finding a tool to promote learning that is at once deep and enduring. Rogers (2001) asserts: “Perhaps no other concept offers higher education as much potential for engendering lasting and effective change in the lives of students as that of reflection” (p. 55).

In the third place, reflection has been included in the fields mentioned above with the intention of transmitting to students the importance of acquiring skills to comprehensively observe and understand real-world problems and act accordingly, as well as the importance of becoming reflective practitioners, as suggested by authors such as Schön (1987) and Closs & Antonello (2011). “Educating professionals to manage organizations toward a sustainable world, developing new skills and attitudes to help them face the responsibilities and challenges their job demand, therefore, requires a search for new educational models and processes” (Closs & Antonello, 2011, p. 65).

Finally, reflection has been used in the above fields with the intention of considering students from a broad perspective of their being, which integrates their beliefs and feelings, and which cares about their professional and personal development as part of their learning

experience (Kember, Sinclair, McKay, & Wong, 2008; and Boud & Walker, 1985).

Reflection can be delineated from the understanding category because the process of reflection takes a concept and considers it in relation to personal experiences. Theory is applied to practical applications. As a concept becomes related to other knowledge and experience, personal meaning becomes attached to the concept [...] There will be personal insights that go beyond book theory. (Kember et al., 2008, p. 374)

While the different reasons why reflection has been included as part of higher and management education are valuable, this learning concepts is not without its challenges, as Lyons and Rogers state below.

Lyons (2010) believes that reflection and reflective inquiry could be an interesting way to enhance learning within professionals' educational process. However, the author alerts those educators interested in using reflection in their practice or as an object of study to the difficulties of defining reflection and, therefore, the challenge of choosing a method to investigate it. Lyons' reservations are grounded in different criticisms that reflective inquiry has received, such as the one found in the 2005 American Education Research Association (AERA) report. This report states that reflective inquiry, like many other themes in educational research, lacks rigorous and systematic investigation, with few existing studies to validate its claims or that merit inclusion.

Along these same lines, Rogers (2001) asserts that the use and study of reflection in the educational field present limitations and challenges for both teachers and students. On the one hand, according to Rogers (2001), one of the limitations of reflection is the lack of clarity in its definition, as well as with regard to its antecedent conditions, processes, and identified outcomes (p. 38). In the same vein, Moon (1999) adds that the problem of trying to find accurate definitions of reflection stems not just from the great variety of ways in which the term can be interpreted, but from the fact that there is not a great deal of commonality in that sea of meanings.

On the other hand, according to Rogers (2001), an additional challenge that reflection faces in the learning context is the necessity of further research to understand certain environmental factors that influence it as well as how these factors influence and are influenced by students' psychological states. Echoing Rogers' claim, Kornblith (2012) states: "Psychological research on the nature of reflection allows us to piece together a view of what it is that reflection can and cannot do" (p. 7). I will refer to these notions in more detail ahead.

In spite of the fact that reflection in higher and management education has been a constant topic of research among different professionals, it still faces similar challenges enumerated by the authors mentioned above.

#### **4.4 REFLECTION AND SELF-REFLECTION PERSPECTIVES**

In the following sections, I present Dewey's perspective of reflection for learning along with its relation to terms such as critical reflection and critical thinking. Then, I differentiate reflection from self-reflection and go on to define the latter. Finally, I present the figure 4 to explain self-reflection, its objectives, and some of its potential outcomes.

Dewey (1910, p. 6) describes reflection as "the maximum expression of thought, characterized by active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends." From his perspective, reflection is triggered by doubt or conflict, and it is only through reflection that confusion transforms into coherent thought. Dewey's conception of thinking does not encompass the thinking we do every day, which he refers to as habitual thinking. Thinking is characterized by the observation that certain actions and consequences are connected. As it is often difficult to understand these connections, reflection helps to justify or to understand them. "Reflective thinking is thus more exhausting and strenuous and implies suspension of judgment" (Dewey, 1910, p. 13; Jørgensen, Strand and Thomassen, 2012, p. 443). Dewey's references to reflection are, however, still broad, even if it does not cover everyday thinking.

Dewey's perspective features some similarities with the critical thinking approach, understood as a process through which a person reflects on problems from a theoretical perspective. The term "critical reflection" takes into account one's context in order to question it and seek transformations. According to Closs & Antonello (2011), critical reflection has its origins in the critical pedagogy of authors such as Giroux (1983) and Freire (1970). "For Freire, problem-oriented learning, praxis, and dialogue were the key features that needed to be installed in education in order for students to gain a different awareness of self and become active participants in societal transformation" (Jørgensen, Klee, & Canal, 2014, p. 7).

Cunliffe (2004) and Reynolds (1998) differentiate critical thinking from reflection, emphasizing that the latter is more focused on the present and has a practical and a technical nature.

While reflection focuses on the immediate, presenting details of a task or problem and establishing an analysis of a more technical and practical nature, critical reflection involves an analysis of power and control and an examination of the construction within which the task or problem is situated. (Cunliffe, 2004, and Reynolds, 1998, as cited in Closs & Antonello, 2011, p. 77)

The current interest in relational leadership within the management learning literature (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011) is located within the mentioned tradition, proposing to reflect on the language that we use in everyday settings.

Reflection and critical thinking as understood by these authors, with the exception of Freire (who presents a more holistic view of them), imply a process by which one may intellectually analyze different factors of life. While Dewey focuses on thinking as a particular cognitive inquiry that resembles the intentions of traditional scientific approaches, Closs & Antonello, Cunliffe, and Reynolds consider thinking to be connected to social processes that are particularly embedded in language. This implies a more social view of learning, where social processes are seen as the important components of learning. These approaches, however, disregard the importance of intrapersonal processes within learning.

Moreover, the perspectives mentioned above can be characterized as intellectualizing reflection and there are essential aspects that they do not capture. As Boud & Walker (1998) highlight, “Because emotions and feelings are often downplayed in educational settings, it is common for reflection to be treated as if it were an intellectual exercise—a simple matter of thinking rigorously” (Paragraph 12). The way in which the previous approaches understand reflection is different from the framework of self-reflection that I examine in this research by focusing on the psychic characteristics that individuals draw on when they reflect (Canal & Jørgensen, 2014). “Reflection is not solely a cognitive process: emotions are central to all learning” (Boud & Walker, 1998, paragraph 12).

In line with Canal & Jørgensen (2014) and with Boud & Walker (1998), Kornblith (2012) notes that the reflection process involves thinking about one’s own first-order mental states in a “first-person” way. Consequently, a person reflecting on a body of data is not self-reflecting; nor is someone theorizing in a “third-person” manner about their own mental states (p. 28). Hedberg (2009) offers a proposition that specifies the objective of reflection for learning through three dimensions: subject, critical, and personal. The idea of subject reflection focuses on the concepts of the process of learning. Critical reflection takes into account the implications of students (as subjects of learning) within the societal context. Finally, personal reflection emphasizes the experience that students have of themselves as subjects of reflection.

The perspectives presented above from Dewey, Closs & Antonello, Cunliffe, and Reynolds could be categorized as subject and critical reflection according to Hedberg’s (2009) proposal. Despite the value I see in those perspectives, they do not serve my interests here. What is missing, in my view, is an approach to reflection that is capable of capturing human beings’ psychic characteristics including emotions, as well as the ways in which they use them in different processes such as learning and in social interactions such as negotiation. Hedberg’s (2009) reference to personal reflection instead is very similar to the way in which I describe reflection and self-reflection in the next section.

#### 4.4.1 FROM REFLECTION TO SELF-REFLECTION

In this section, I present approaches to reflection that analyze students' learning process with a broad perspective of their being as mentioned before. This means that some of the authors I present below understand reflection from an intellectual as well as from an affective dimension. Moreover, some of these perspectives relate students' learning experiences to the self and take into account learners' interactions with others. Then, I will explain why I move from reflection to self-reflection, and I offer a definition and a figure that is build on this definition. "Different authors have argued for an important distinction between reflection and self-reflection. Inspired by Cunliffe (2004), Pavlovich, Collins, & Jones (2009, p. 38) argue that self-reflection is not thinking about things (...) but thinking about self from a subjective process" (Canal & Jørgensen, 2014, p. 168).

Boud (1999) highlights how, as part of the reflection process, individuals explore their experiences and the ways in which those experiences affect themselves and others. "Reflection involves learners processing their experience in a wide range of ways, exploring their understanding of what they are doing, why they are doing it, and the impact it has on themselves and others" (p. 123). Boud & Walker (1985) additionally state that in the context of learning, "Reflection is a generic term for those intellectual and affective activities that individuals use to explore their experiences in order to produce new understandings and appreciations" (p. 19). Following the same line of thought, Kember, Sinclair, McKay, & Wong (2008) suggest that "Reflection can be delineated from simple understanding because the process of reflection takes a concept and considers it in relation to personal experiences" (p. 374).

Kegan & Laskow (2010) go further in their scope of reflection. They affirm that "Reflection involves something more than thinking hard about things; it involves stepping away from our current way of thinking and feeling in such a way that we have a chance to alter not just our behavior, but the reality-shaping beliefs and assumptions that give rise to our behavior" (p. 435). These authors clarified that, even though most people could derive insights from reflecting, insight is not transformative in and of itself; instead, something else is necessary,

something that could alter what they called the “immunity to change.” The reasons why these authors advance the way of understanding reflection to include the dimension of change is because they are interested in offering ways for individuals to overcome the “immunity to change.” I will come back to Kegan & Laskow’s way of looking at the reflection process in the next section of this chapter.

Hedberg’s perspective (2009) of personal reflection also conforms to my idea of self-reflection, because the process of reflection she describes addresses how individuals observe their own learning experiences.

Personal reflection is done to understand what the learning means to the learner. The focus is less on the subject learned and more on the learner’s perspective or personal insights gained. Learners reflect on how they can apply what they have learned, noting its impact and relevance to their own lives. (p. 15)

Although differences among the aforementioned authors are present, one key point is their consideration of reflection as both a cognitive and affective process through which individuals analyze different aspects such as beliefs and paradigms. Moreover, the perspectives I referred to recognize how reflection facilitates the process of thinking about the self, or connecting knowledge or experiences to the self. This is the key difference between reflection, in which the self may be excluded from the process, and self-reflection, in which the self is intricately connected to the process.

Reflection is directed toward how a person analyzes different factors of the greater world beyond oneself, and self-reflection is guided toward the internal world—the ways of framing the world (Canal & Jørgensen, 2014, p. 168). In order to be clear on how I understand reflection, I offer the following definition, which has slight changes (*italicized below*) from the original presented by Canal & Jørgensen (2014).

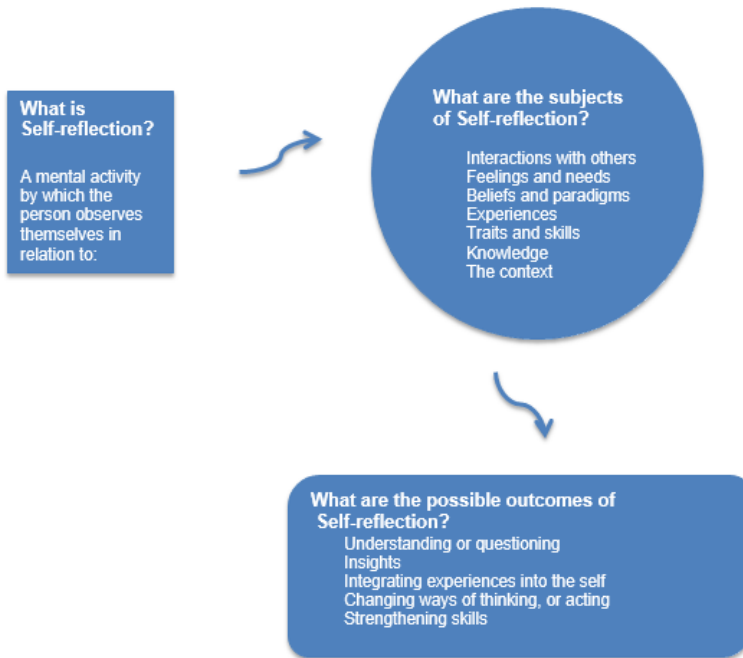
Self-reflection is a mental activity by which a person observes *themselves and the ways in which they interact with others*. The consequences of that introspective process will vary from person to

person depending on their psychic characteristics, and it may take into account one's own and other peoples' feelings and needs, as well as integrating experiences and *knowledge* into the self or questioning *beliefs* (p. 168).

This definition draws its inspiration from these perspectives of reflection and from Hedberg's notion of personal reflection, as well as that of Moon (1999), who asserts that reflection is a mental capacity. To be more to the point, the definition has taken ideas from the concept of reflective function of Fonagy & Target (1997) that is fully developed in the chapter "Reflection As a Mental Capacity." Fonagy & Target (1997) stated that reflective function is the developmental acquisition that "permits the child to respond not only to other people's behavior, but to his conception of their beliefs, feelings, hopes, pretense, plans, and so on" (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 679).

The figure below seeks to compliment the definition I provide of self-reflection. It illustrates what self-reflection is, the objects of self-reflection, and some of the outcomes that the self-reflection process can facilitate.



**Figure 4.** Self-reflection, its subjects, and outcomes

From this point forward, I refer to reflection when the author I am citing uses that term, and to self-reflection if the notion is related to the current research. In the next section, I will refer to the possible outcomes of self-reflection and its relation to learning.

## 4.5 REFLECTION FOR LEARNING

In the following section, I will refer to the contributions of self-reflection for the learning process, taking into account the perspectives of authors from the management and higher education fields. These authors largely consider that reflection contributes significantly to the learning process. In contrast, I also present Kornblith's (2012) proposal, which employs a philosophical approach to question the positive effects associated with reflection. I summarize the reasons the author uses to support her contention that research from the psychological field is necessary to better understand the possibilities of reflection.

#### 4.5.1 PERSPECTIVES THAT VALUE REFLECTION FOR LEARNING

Different researchers and university professors, having used reflection as part of their teaching practices, have credited reflection with a series of advantages to develop learning. However, as I stated earlier, I believe that the connection between reflection and learning is not necessarily as strong as some authors suggest. I thus agree with Boud & Walker (1991) with regard to the idea that reflection is no guarantee of learning. “There are no reflective activities which are guaranteed to lead to learning, and conversely there are no learning activities guaranteed to lead to reflection” (paragraph 9).

Conversely, Rogers (2001), in his analysis of reflection in higher education, found that learning is the main outcome of reflection. Rogers (2001) supports his argument by citing authors like Boud & Walker (1985), who assert that reflection brings new perspectives on experience; commitment to action; and changes in behavior, values, and feelings. I add that Boud (1991) emphasizes reflection as a way of learning from experience, as can be observed in the following quote. “Reflection on the actions, thoughts and feelings, which have arisen in a learning event, can often provide an insight into a learner’s personal foundation of experience and into his or her ability to learn from a particular situation” (p. 13). In spite of the benefits of the reflection process mentioned by Boud (1991), it is important to remember Boud & Walker’s (1985) argument that there is no guarantee that reflection activities lead to learning.

I find Hedberg’s (2009) argument, mentioned in the first section of this chapter, to be important, as she explains that reflection provides the space to process information, which thus makes it more likely to be integrated into future thoughts and actions. That is, thanks to the process that reflection allows, it is “more likely” that a student will be able to apply the acquired knowledge to practice. It seems to me that we are still referring to the potential of reflection for learning, though, and not to the real contributions of reflection to the learning process.

Hedberg (2009) is an author who has researched the use of reflection in the management education field and who also believed in

some of the benefits of reflection for the learning process. Having designed what she calls “a reflective classroom,” she formulated a series of exercises and methodologies to facilitate reflection. Following that process and based on students’ testimonies, Hedberg (2009) suggests that reflection can lead to deeper learning “not only about the subject studied, but also about the learner” (p. 11). Since the author believes that it is paramount that managers learn how to do things well, “reflection helps a manager understand what he or she means by such terms as ‘best’ and ‘well’” (p. 28). In her view, it is important to combine reflection with analysis and action, thereby giving management students powerful skills.

Pavlovich, Collins, & Jones (2009) are another example of researchers who investigate the use of reflection in the management education field. They have analyzed three different experiences of how keeping a journal helps students reflect and enables them to establish contact with themselves and significantly expand their learning processes. “Learning journals, then, are a way of organizing students to become better connected with their academic subject and, more important, with their own self-awareness” (p. 38).

Throughout my review of the authors mentioned above (Rogers, 2001; Boud & Walker, 1985; Pavlovich et al., 2009; and Hedberg, 2009), it has been made clear that they see reflection as a tool that positively influences the learning process. From their perspectives, reflection not only allows students to contact themselves, but also to improve their learning processes. In addition, reflection may facilitate the changing of behavior, values, and feelings; challenge beliefs and assumptions; and give meaning to experience. Reflection can additionally enable students to increase their commitment and learn in deep ways.

I agree with the authors cited above that reflection has the potential to contribute to the learning process; nonetheless, as I have previously stated, I have found that the connection between reflection and learning is not as clear as the mentioned approaches tend to claim. It is important to clarify that these authors fail to convince me when referring to the outcomes of reflection in the context of learning, for reasons such as the following:

- Their ways of presenting their research outcomes lack robust arguments to support their claims.
- Their research methods are based on cases that highlight student testimonies, which do not include indirect ways of evidencing students' reflection outcomes.
- They either fail to clarify precisely what they mean when they talk about reflection, or they fail to research the subject systematically.
- They do not analyze the fact that the differences in students' reflection outcomes could be associated with differences in students' psychological characteristics.

In other words, I agree with the conclusion regarding a lack of rigorous and systematic investigation in the education field found in AERA's (2005) report mentioned in the second section. That is not the case of Scott (2009), though, which I analyze in the learning portfolios chapter. This difference is because her research method allows her to compare the outcomes of students' learning portfolios, taking into account those students who developed them and others who did not. This author is also very clear with regard to the limitations of her study as well as to the specific information she obtained regarding what reflection allows students to get out of the process of the MBA program she writes about.

That is why in my view it is important to include two more approaches that analyze the potential of reflection in a more structured way. On the one hand, from the perspective of adult development, Kegan & Laskow (2010) explain that even though most people achieved insights through reflecting, the insights are not transformative without the presence of something that could alter what they call the "immunity to change." On the other hand, and from a philosophical perspective, Kornblith thoroughly questions the positive characteristics linked to reflection. I will present her argumentation in the next section.

Even though Kegan & Laskow, and Hedberg are alike in that they recognize the role that reflection plays in helping students gain awareness of and change their assumptions, Kegan & Laskow (2010) assert that this does not then imply that every form of reflecting leads to transformation. A decade spent working with their methodology

allows these authors to conclude that reflection permits people to arrive at certain insights, particularly under certain conditions; specifically, when they have worked for a considerable period of time (several months) and when they have used a structured reflection process (that follows the authors' design), which includes a series of activities such as self-observation, continuous progress, biography, and testing of big assumptions. Kegan & Laskow (2010) clarify that following these steps seems to help people overcome the "immunity to change."

The authors are addressing the fact that change is a complex process. Since I consider one of the dimensions of learning to be the changing of one's practices, I agree with Kegan & Laskow's (2010) idea that in order to learn it is important to apply a specific method with a committed attitude and for a considerable period of time.

The method designed by these authors is interesting and holds the potential to bring benefits for learning. However, this methodology calls not just for commitment, but also for continuous work, which is not as easily developed through short-term courses. It would be more suitable to include this method in a long-term educational program that offers the possibility to apply it as it is meant to be applied, in accordance with the design proposed by Kegan & Laskow (2010).

#### **4.5.2 A PERSPECTIVE THAT QUESTIONS THE VALUE OF REFLECTION FOR LEARNING**

Seeking other perspectives not directly related to education but relevant to this research, I found that Kornblith (2012) offers an interesting approach. As mentioned previously, this author questions the positive and even magical potential associated with reflection, offering a perspective to demystify it that takes into account the importance of the psychology of reflection. "I will argue that the problems that arise from reflection are not merely logical, but empirical as well. The psychology of human reflection is interesting, and interestingly different than we ordinarily take it to be" (Kornblith, 2012, p. 7).

While Kornblith's ideas do not originate in an educational setting, I nonetheless consider them relevant to understand the potential

of reflection in more detail. Moreover, and as I wrote at the beginning of the chapter, Kornblith (2012) agrees with Rogers (2001) that in order to better understand what it is that reflection can and cannot do, it is necessary to conduct psychology-based research.

Kornblith (2012) asserts that philosophers have overestimated the value of reflection, emphasizing that some of the powers attributed to reflection are not realistic. Indeed, she suggests that it is not possible to attribute those powers to any one psychological process. One of the reasons why the author thinks that reflection is “over-sold” is based on the idea that individuals use reflection in an attempt to question their beliefs and then arrive at more reliable ideas. The author explains, however, that transforming beliefs from a first-order level process (which is grounded in desires) to a second-order process (which is expected to be more reasoned) threatens to become an infinite process.

Our first-order beliefs cannot simply be assumed to be reliable, so we must reflect on them, their origins, and their logical relations, in order to assure that we have arrived at them as we should. But now the second-order beliefs produced by this activity—the beliefs about our first-order beliefs, their origins, and their logical relations—cannot simply be assumed to be accurate or reliably produced either. (Kornblith, 2012, p. 7)

This practice will end in the generation of further beliefs that have not been scrutinized and produce a never-ending reflection process. “And if in order to deal with this responsibly, we must engage in further reflection one level higher, then this will not provide a solution to our initial problem, but merely raise the same problem all over again at the third-order level” (Kornblith, 2012, p. 7).

In addition to the problem of reflection being an “infinite process,” Kornblith (2012) has also identified the challenge of what reflection allows people to achieve. This is because from her point of view, reflecting on first-order beliefs does not necessarily allow individuals to realize their mistakes or correct them. On the contrary, it could give people the impression that, since they have reflected on their beliefs, their ideas are more accurate. Kornblith (2012) argues that this process could increase confidence in, though not necessarily the

accuracy of, one's thoughts. "Engaging in reflection of our beliefs is thus proposed as a way of weeding out our errors and increasing our reliability, but in actual practice, it often succeeds in producing a far more confident, but no more reliable, agent" (p. 3).

The above idea, which implies that the reflection process does not necessarily allow students to recognize their errors, could complicate the challenge of learning from experience, as described by Seibert and Daudelin (1999). It also stands in opposition to the claim of Kember, Wong, Chung, & Yan (following Mezirow) that "Reflection generally involves higher-order mental processes at the conscious level. It enables one to correct distortions and errors in one's beliefs (Mezirow, 1990). This learning process of making new or revised interpretations of the meaning of an experience fosters subsequent understanding, appreciation, and action" (Kember et al., 1991, p. 49).

It is also interesting to observe in the previous quote the value that Kember et al. (1991) and Mezirow (1990) ascribe to higher-order mental processes, which shows a very different point of view from that of Kornblith (2012). It is important to note that one of the objectives of reflection in the negotiation course that I am researching is for students to realize their mistakes during negotiation simulations and make adjustments in future negotiations.

Kornblith (2012) refers to Frankfurt (1988) to explain the difference between first- and second-order beliefs. The main distinction is that children (and non-human animals) have first-order beliefs and desires, whereas adults have both. The desire of an adult person to do something is based on their first-order belief; however, the decision to do it (or not) takes into account a complex process, which leads to second-order beliefs. Accordingly, people who do not reflect on their first-order beliefs do not act; on the contrary, they "get pushed around by their psychological states" (Kornblith, 2012, p. 5).

Kornblith (2012) asserts that reflection does not solve the problem of first-order beliefs, presenting various reasons to support her claim. One relies on the idea that if someone is worried about acting according to their internal states, they cannot avoid using second-order processes, as these are also formed by internal states.

An additional reason that the author presents to question the role of reflection on first-order beliefs is based on the difficulty that human beings have to accurately represent their internal realities. This difficulty exists because we tend to view ourselves in a flattering light.

Second, there is the psychological fact that when we do reflect on our own mental states, we are presented with a view of our mental life which we tend to find utterly compelling. Neither of these facts, however, should convince us that the access to our mental life which reflection provides and which is represented in our first-person perspective on our mental lives genuinely is unproblematic. (Kornblith, 2012, p. 39)

The previous idea aligns with Thompson's (2011) affirmation that the absence of relevant, diagnostic feedback results in three main problems for negotiators, as I mentioned in chapter 2. The problem that is relevant here is egocentrism, which Thompson defines as "the tendency for people to view their experiences in a way that is flattering and fulfilling for themselves" (p. 5). This perception prevents negotiators from observing themselves in realistic ways, thereby limiting their learning. I develop this, albeit with a different name, in the chapter "Reflection As a Mental Capacity."

Another criticism presented by Kornblith (2012) of the capabilities of reflection has to do with the difficulty for human beings to cultivate awareness of the different factors involved in the process of forming their beliefs.

Thus, in an extremely wide variety of cases, subjects form beliefs in ways which are quite unreliable. They are moved by factors of which they are unaware, and reflection on the source of their beliefs cannot make them aware of these factors. When they do stop to reflect, however, they come to form confident beliefs about how it is that they arrived at their first-order beliefs. (p. 24)

Kornblith (2012) mentions conversing with someone as a possible way of making reflection outcomes more accurate. She describes it as a consultative process, taking into account Sosa's (2004) ideas of how reflection plays a role in self-assessment. However,



Kornblith (2012) points out that such a consultative process is by definition not an isolated one, as, by way of evaluation, a person is making other psychological processes available. The author thus concludes that the ultimate reliability of the reflection outcomes for this case cannot be ascribed to reflection alone, but rather to other cognitive processes that are involved in the mentioned practices of self-assessment through dialogue.

Although Kornblith (2012) analyzes reflection in a very detailed and critical way, she clarifies that reflection is not an altogether useless process. However, in order to understand reflection more realistically, the author suggests supporting it with research from experimental studies from the cognitive sciences and with empirical information.

Reflection may not be the cure for all that ails us, but that does not mean that it can never be of any use at all. What we need is a realistic view of the powers of reflection, a view of reflection which allows us to assess its strengths and weaknesses. As the preceding discussion has surely made clear, such a view can only be had by way of experimental work in cognitive science. (p. 136)

I share with Kornblith (2012) the sense of a need to view reflection more realistically. This is because the practice of reflection does not necessarily allow students the following activities taken from Kornblith's developments.

- To change, or to learn
- To arrive to ideas that are more reliable
- To take actions that are more coherent or reliable
- To observe their mistakes
- To represent their internal realities accurately

And because reflection could turn into a never-ending process with no reliable or plausible outcomes.

When I refer to grounding reflection in more realism, I am referring to the possibilities of reflection to contribute to learning. That is why I also appreciate how Hedberg (2009), as well as Boud & Walker (1985), relativizes the role of reflection for learning. I particularly agree

with Hedberg's aforementioned contention that learning is processed through reflection, and therefore will be "more likely integrated into thoughts and actions" (2009, p. 11).

## **4.6 GAPS IN THE LITERATURE ABOUT REFLECTION**

The results of the first level of analysis of the current research (see chapter 5) indicate that students achieve different outcomes through the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, such as connecting course content with their own experiences, gaining awareness of feelings and needs, and questioning paradigms and beliefs. I do not believe that students would have been able to achieve these results without the process of reflecting and receiving feedback through the learning portfolios. I cannot go so far as to affirm, however, that they did so thanks to self-reflection. This is the reason why saying that self-reflection has a potential for learning is different from saying that self-reflection leads to learning.

As mentioned previously, the main gap in the literature of reflection for learning in the higher education and management education fields is an analysis of what reflection can realistically accomplish and how it can do so.

I would like to place especial emphasis on Rogers' (2001) appreciation of the necessity of more research, mentioned at the beginning of the current chapter. More to the point, studies from a psychological perspective that will help clarify how individual psychology influences reflection are needed. Rogers' proposal is in accordance with Kornblith's (2012) previously mentioned idea, which draws attention to the fact that more research from the cognitive sciences—including empirical information—is needed.

I certainly echo Rogers' and Kornblith's call for further research to understand the potential of reflection. However, I do not coincide with Kornblith (2012) with regard to her suggestion of doing so through experimental cognitive science work. I chose to research self-reflection from a psychoanalytical perspective as part of my PhD, as I had studied

and practiced this approach for many years, and I believe in the value of psychoanalysis for understanding the mental states of human beings.

Kegan & Laskow's (2009) mentioned work demonstrates how reflection is a promising practice in order to learn new skills, which help people change. At the same time, they are realistic about what reflection can and cannot offer in the learning process, depending on the method used to reflect, as well as the timeframe in which it is carried out. While the authors focus on reflection as a method to enhance learning, I am interested in going further. This is because in addition to explaining the methodology that students use as part of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course analyzed in this study, I will also explore the psychic characteristics connected to reflection and which of them best supports students' learning process of collaborative negotiation skills.

Therefore, in order to contribute to the closing of the aforementioned gap, and as I stated in the first section of this chapter, I consider it important to take into account two factors when pondering reflection's possibilities to develop learning, namely:

- The learning context (the environment).
- Certain psychological characteristics connected to reflection (the individual).

As I mentioned before, I have found support for the previous propositions in Rogers' (2001) idea regarding the necessity of two types of factors—the individual and the environmental—in order for reflection to succeed.

Thus, the reflective process appears most likely to be successful when both individual and environmental factors are managed so that the context provides an appropriate balance of challenge and support. Further research is needed to identify additional environmental factors that influence reflection and also how such factors influence and are influenced by the psychological and affective states of the individual learner (p. 43).

In order to analyze the learning context factor, I provide a theoretical approach of the ways in which I understand an “adequate

learning structure” and explain that learning portfolios constitute one of the tools of that structure. I will develop it theoretically in the learning portfolios chapter. I also develop it empirically through the description of the reflection prompts of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course.

Furthermore, considering that students have distinct psychological characteristics of which they may or may not avail themselves when they reflect, I argue that they do not engage in the learning process in the same way, which leads to the development of different reflection outcomes. This is the second factor that I consider important to analyze when assessing the potential of self-reflection for the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. It represents the second level of analysis of my fieldwork: the in-depth cases in which I identified other psychological characteristics connected to reflection. These characteristics are theoretically conceptualized in the chapter “Reflection As a Mental Capacity.”

# CHAPTER 5. THE LEARNING PORTFOLIOS

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

There are several aims that I will strive to achieve in this chapter. The first is to provide a theoretical framework for learning portfolios and the ways of organizing material through them. The second is to describe the design of the e-learning portfolios and reflection prompts developed in the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course. Included are explanations of how they help students to structure their experiences when learning to negotiate. The final part of this chapter offers an elaboration of e-portfolios, taking into account certain parameters of an adequate learning structure and aspects of Zubizarreta's (2008) portfolio model in order to examine to what extent the present e-portfolios facilitate the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills.

This chapter is organized as follows. In section 5.2 I offer a theoretical approach to learning portfolios, focusing on certain parameters of an adequate learning structure and on the aspects of Zubizarreta's (2008) portfolio model. Second, I discuss possible ways of organizing learning portfolios in order to support student learning. In section 5.3 I present the e-portfolios that I developed in the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, explaining how I used them to guide students through their learning processes. In that section, I also describe the reflection prompts used in the current research, as these prompts are the main tool used to organize students' reflection processes. Finally, in section 4.5 I examine aspects of the e-portfolios of the course that may facilitate the reflection process of learning collaborative negotiation skills. This will be accomplished through a focus on some of the parameters that characterize an adequate learning structure, as well as on the main aspects of Zubizarreta's portfolio model.

## 5.2 A THEORETICAL APPROACH TO LEARNING PORTFOLIOS

In Chapter 4: Reflection for Learning, I state that it is important to study what reflection can realistically accomplish, with consideration of its likelihood of making meaningful contributions to learning. As a conclusion of the previous idea, I suggest that two factors that play a central role in that process be taken into account: the context of learning in which the reflection process is developed and individual psychology.

The latter implies analyzing different psychic characteristics (documented in the second level of analysis) that students are expected to use while reflecting. In this chapter, however, I will refer to the learning context. Following this idea, it is essential that the learning context provide students with an adequate “learning structure,” which I also noted in Chapter 4. This learning structure includes:

- Clear learning goals as well as coherence between course activities and those goals (CIFE parameters for course design).
- Clear structure and guidelines (Brookfield, 1995; Moon, 1999; Varner & Peck, 2003; Williams & Wessel, 2004; as cited in Pavlovich et al., 2008).
- Continuity and work during a specific timeframe (Zubizarreta, 2008).
- Assessment of the written outcomes, including feedback (Zubizarreta, 2008).

Furthermore, I agree with Pavlovich, Collins, & Jones (2008), who at the same time are in accordance with Varner and Peck (2003) about the importance of a student-centered approach when students write in their learning journals in an open way that is focused on themselves. “The challenge, then, is to develop a format that creates clear guidelines for students regarding what is expected of them through this form of writing, while still placing the students’ awareness at the center of the process” (Pavlovich et al., 2008, p. 40).

In this section I complement the notions of an adequate learning structure with the aspects of Zubizarreta’s (2008) portfolio model:

collaboration, reflection, and documentation. Zubizarreta (2009) understands portfolios as flexible tools that invite students to develop a continuous process of reflection and collaboration by focusing on evidence of learning. No matter what form they take, portfolios, according to Zubizarreta (2008), allow teachers to capture the richness of students' academic skills, in addition to being a tool that facilitates learning.

“As written text, electronic display, or other creative project, the portfolio captures the scope, richness, and relevance of students' intellectual development and academic skills” (Zubizarreta, 2008, p. 3).

In addition to the advantages portfolios may offer for the organization of learning materials, Zubizarreta emphasizes that learning portfolios enable students to accomplish valuable outcomes. However, in order for that to happen, certain elements must be present. One essential element is the active role of the teacher, guiding students and stimulating their work through the posing of questions. “The learning portfolio, therefore, consists of written narrative sections in which the student reflects critically about essential questions of what, when, how, and why learning has occurred” (Zubizarreta, 2009, p. 35).

Within this activity of guiding students' processes, another important aspect of portfolios is the possibility to assess their development through mentoring, according to Zubizarreta (2008). The portfolio provides a critical opportunity for purposeful, guided reflections and analysis of evidence for both improvement and assessment of students' learning (p. 3).

Teacher feedback is part of the aforementioned assessment. Zubizarreta (2008) indicates that the key is providing feedback to students about the insights gained through their process of learning, rather than meticulously commenting on every task they develop. I agree with Zubizarreta on the importance of giving students feedback based on their insights. However, I consider feedback to be a complex activity in the learning process that deserves to be carefully analyzed. While not focusing on the feedback process in this research, I would like to share my belief that feedback completes the learning cycle of learning portfolios. As such, it needs to have an evident purpose that is

consistent with the method used to accomplish it. In my view, feedback also features a student-centered approach through which teachers address students' challenges and come to understand their learning processes.

Moving the dialogue to the student requires a space free of judgment and prejudice. When characterized by this compassion and empathy for the experiences of others, feedback may contribute to students' development (Pavlovich, Collins, & Jones, 2008, p. 4). Although feedback can be considered to be part of the learning context, I will not be analyzing it in detail in this research due to the need to focus the study. Further research on this topic in the future, however, will help to clarify the potential of self-reflection to enhance the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills.

An additional element of portfolios—mentioned in the quote below—is continuity. This means that students are more prone to learn in meaningful ways when learning takes place over a substantial length of time, such as the duration of an entire program. Zubizarreta (2009) highlights that asking students about their learning is also an essential activity of portfolios.

This is not to assert, of course, that learning does not happen at all when portfolios are used only as collection and organizing devices, that a student does not benefit simply from the thoughtful act of choosing representative samples of accomplished work and making sense of the materials as a display. But more significant learning is likely to occur if the student is encouraged to come to terms self-consciously over the duration of an academic endeavor—for example, a semester course, the culmination of an honors program, the achievement of general education goals, or the completion of a degree—with essential questions about learning itself. (Zubizarreta, 2009, p. 5).

While reflection is not always a feature of portfolios, it may contribute to their effectiveness and result in learning for students, according to Zubizarreta (2009). This is why, for the author, the defining feature of portfolios is the learning that students accomplish



through them. Furthermore, Zubizarreta concurs that learning may be enhanced by reflection, among other methods.

Kankaanranta, Barrett, & Hartnell-Young, (2000) concur with Zubizarreta (2009) that the learning process is facilitated by reflection and that it allows students to observe and understand both why and how learning is accomplished.

What differentiates an electronic portfolio from other digital compilations such as a digital scrapbook or an online resume is the organization of the portfolio around a set of standards or learning goals, plus the learner's reflections, both on their achievement of the standards, and the rationale for selecting specific artifacts, as well as an overall reflection on the portfolio as a whole. (Kankaanranta et al., 2000 as cited in Barrett, 2001, p. 5).

Zubizarreta (2008) also emphasizes that reflection contributes to the evolution of learning portfolios. The author proposes a portfolio model that includes reflection, documentation (evidence), and collaboration (mentoring), stating that the combination of these elements is ideal for the purpose of enhancing learning. Any combination of two components ensures a deeper learning experience, but when students activate all three components in a portfolio project, the potential for enhanced learning is increased (p. 1).

The essence of Zubizarreta's ideas on the possibilities of learning portfolios is that learning is heightened when students reflect in a continuous way about their learning goals and the ways that they achieve them. Taking into account Zubizarreta's writings, I conclude that for this author the central aspects of how portfolios enhance learning are those listed below.

As an integrated part of learning portfolios:

- Evidence of students' learning is taken into account.
- Activities and outcomes are framed in a context of learning.
- Reflection is paramount and if continually developed, expected to enhance learning.

- Collaboration through mentoring (or through an assessment process) is desirable.

Essentially, I understand learning portfolios as a tool that provides a structure for students' learning. In this process, students establish learning goals at the beginning of a course, develop different activities and store their outcomes in the portfolio, and then analyze the learning they have achieved at the end of the course. This process is supported throughout by regular reflections.

As I stated in the "Reflection for Learning" chapter, I understand self-reflection as a mental activity by which a person observes themselves and the ways in which they interact with others. The results of that introspective process will vary from person to person depending on their psychic characteristics, and may take into account one's own and other people's feelings and needs. Integrating experiences into the self or questioning beliefs may also be included (Canal & Jørgensen, 2014).

Considering Zubizarreta's ideas about the benefits that learning portfolios represent for students' learning, I believe that students may benefit from the learning setting that portfolios provide, since they are given the opportunity to systematically document what they have learned and how they have done so. However, as I said in the "Reflection for Learning" chapter, I recommend carefully analyzing the potential of reflection for learning, taking into account different factors. Continuing this idea, I will add that is important to study to what extent learning portfolios enhance learning and reflection. Zubizarreta has largely tried to answer this question through case studies.

Also interesting is the quantitative research that Scott (2010) conducted. Her caveats about the limitations of her study notwithstanding, the author states that learning portfolios are useful tools for developing reflection skills in MBA students. This author asserts that reflection allowed some of the students from the study to understand the meaning of their learning, which led them to being able to see changes in themselves. This is an example of what some students have been able to achieve in their learning portfolios through reflection.

In addition to the above-mentioned conclusions, the author recommends that teachers be encouraged to give feedback on students' portfolio outcomes in order to enhance the reflection process. Scott also recommends that clear connections be established between the reflections that students develop, the course learning goals, and the course grades. This integration requires close alignment between course assignments and program learning goals. The more closely course grades can be tied to portfolio use, the more likely it is that students will comply and provide evidence of their learning (Scott, 2010, p. 448).

In this same vein, it is important to understand how the potential of tools like reflection and portfolios varies depending on factors such as the learning context. "The learning context is the mechanism through which teachers can affect students' motives, perceptions and approaches they use in learning" (Birkett and Mladenovic, 2002, p. 14; as cited in Hall, Ramsay & Raven, 2004, p. 492). As stated in the above definition of self-reflection, the reflection process is also affected by students' psychic characteristics. How this happens is one of the aspects that I am trying to understand in the current research, specifically in the chapter "Reflection As a Mental Capacity."

As portfolios rely on information supplied by students about their learning processes, it is also important to consider students' transparency. Some students have the tendency to report what they believe the teacher wants to hear about their learning, believing that this will positively affect how they are perceived or graded (Pavlovich et al., 2008, p. 4).

As I said before and as I wrote in Chapter 4: Reflection for Learning, it is also essential to analyze the learning context in order to understand the potential of reflection for learning. This context refers to the ways that the teacher structures and guides the learning process of students. Ramsden (1992, as cited in Hall et al., 2004) presents a model of student learning in context that identifies students' orientation to study and the context of learning as key variables affecting students' chosen approaches to learning (p. 492).

In order to consider the context in which students from the present research developed reflections through their learning portfolios,

I described how the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course was organized in Chapter 1. In addition to this initial description, I will later share how I work with portfolios, as well as the reflection prompts included in them. In the next section, I explain different ways of organizing learning portfolios.

### **5.2.1 POSSIBLE WAYS OF ORGANIZING PORTFOLIOS**

There are multiple ways to design and organize learning portfolios, depending on different aspects such as how the information is stored and displayed. When the information is displayed electronically, it is called an e-portfolio. Both learning portfolios and e-portfolios allow for the organizing of a text, or a series of texts, that responds to specific learning purposes. “[A learning portfolio] is a compact, strategically organized print or electronic document that evolves qualitatively to reflect the dynamic nature of engaged learning” (Wetzel and Strudler, 2006, as cited in Zubizarreta, 2009, p. 24). An e-portfolio, then, is the same learning portfolio, but in a digital format.

The websites used to upload information may play an important role in how learning portfolios are organized. According to Kankaanranta, Barrett, & Hartnell-Young (2000; as cited in Barrett, 2001), e-portfolios are not the same as a digital scrapbook or online resume. They differ in that the outcomes of e-portfolios document what students have learned and how they have analyzed their process of learning, which are not objectives of these other digital tools.

When portfolios are organized by purpose, Hartnell-Young & Morris (1999) and Wolf (1999, quoted by Barrett, 2001, p. 5) suggest that they consider factors such as formative and summative assessment. The first factor allows for the monitoring of students’ learning processes, while the latter allows for the evaluation of students’ learning relative to content standards.

Another way of organizing portfolios is based on the type of program in which it is used. Zubizarreta (2008) states that given the flexible nature of portfolios, they can document students’ processes during just one course, or during an entire academic program. These

variations lead to differences in portfolios in some aspects, such as those mentioned by Zubizarreta (2008) in the following quote.

Portfolios vary in purpose, and different purposes determine the diverse contents. Consider, for example, how a portfolio developed for a single course or for a field-based, experiential learning venture might differ in goals, themes, documentation, and reflective content from a portfolio constructed initially in a first-year, orientation course and later completed in a capstone senior seminar as part of a programmatic assessment plan. (p. 3)

The style of writing constitutes an additional way of organizing portfolios. Some may be structured through a narrative to which evidence of learning may be continually added, while other portfolios may be organized through short reflections that illustrate specific learning experiences. Finally, some portfolios mix both styles of writing, as Zubizarreta highlights in the quote below.

Some portfolios mix the approaches, offering individual, brief reflections for units of organized materials that demonstrate growth in particular areas of learning (perhaps correlated with stated learning goals and objectives of a course or a program), while also including a longer, thoughtful, critical analysis of learning over time. The latter usually consists of a more developed reflective narrative that is not only retrospective but also forward-looking, with goals for future improvement and application of learning. (Zubizarreta, 2008 p. 3).

Scott (2009, quoted by Canal & Jørgensen, 2014, p. 171) emphasizes different ways of organizing learning portfolios, taking into account aspects such as when in the process it is used, how students' learning goals are defined, and the type and number of tasks that students must develop in them, as listed below:

1. Some portfolios require that students reflect on each product as they evolve in the program.
2. Other types of portfolios require students to do a single reflection at the end of the program.
3. Another possibility is the portfolio in which the specific artifacts from certain courses are commented on by

teachers and must be maintained throughout the duration of the course.

4. Some types of portfolios specify the learning goals for particular assignments. By contrast, other types allow students to choose the products that they think best with regard to their learning goals.
5. The final type of portfolio mentioned here is the one that does not specify the learning goals, instead allowing students to discover them.

In the last section of this chapter, I offer an elaboration of how the learning portfolios of the course were designed and applied to develop reflection.

### **5.3 THE E-PORTFOLIOS OF THE THEORY AND STRATEGIES OF NEGOTIATION COURSE**

“Through e-portfolios, students structure their experiences of negotiating, and they should get an idea of their learning process” (Canal and Jørgensen, 2014, p. 172).

In this section I present the e-portfolios of the course under consideration, explaining some of the ways that the students were guided through their learning processes. I also describe the four reflection prompts included in the e-portfolio. The first part of this section is descriptive, detailing the methods and instruments that I designed to support students’ learning of collaborative negotiation skills. The second part offers a thorough elaboration of the design of the e-portfolio used in the course, taking into account some of the aspects described in the theoretical approach to learning portfolios.

As mentioned previously, the graduate Specialization in Negotiation and, consequently, the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course that is a part of it, use a blended learning approach that combines face-to-face (also called an in-person class) and virtual sessions. The online activities include an e-portfolio in which students are given a guide on how to develop reflections, and six reflection prompts. Students are able to upload their written reflections to this portfolio and read the feedback received. As shown in the table below,

the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course is organized through four virtual sessions in between the face-to-face sessions within an eleven-week period.

**Table 6** *Ways of organizing the blended learning activities in the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course*

<b>Week 1</b>	Virtual session 0
<b>Week 2</b>	Face-to-face session 1 (8 hours)
<b>Week 3</b>	Virtual session 1
<b>Week 4</b>	Virtual session 1
<b>Week 5</b>	Virtual session 1
<b>Week 6</b>	Face-to-face session 2 (8 hours)
<b>Week 7</b>	Virtual session 2
<b>Week 8</b>	Virtual session 2
<b>Week 9</b>	Virtual session 2
<b>Week 10</b>	Face-to-face session 3 (8 hours)
<b>Week 11</b>	Virtual session 3

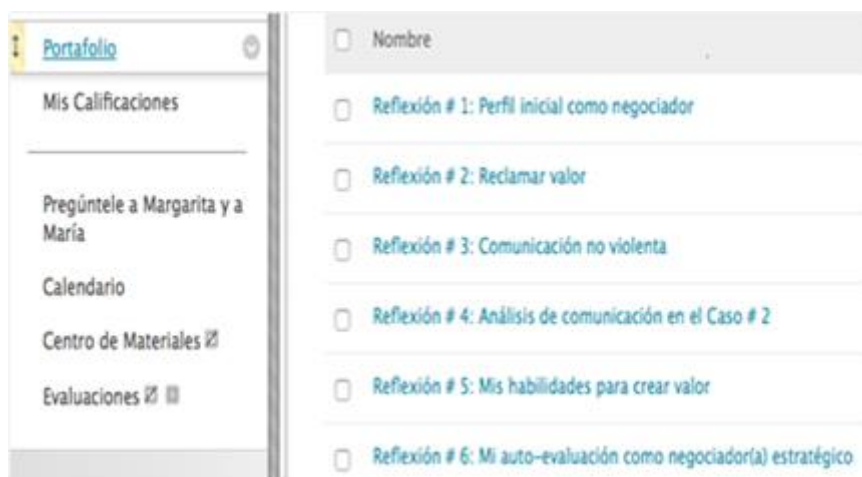
In this section I refer to e-portfolios, taking into account the ideas mentioned in the theoretical section, where I state that both learning portfolios and e-portfolios allow for the organizing of a text, or a series of texts, that responds to specific learning purposes.

The e-portfolios of the current negotiation course feature elements such as a reflection guide, prompts, students' reflection outcomes, and assessment. Students' written reflections are the main outcomes of this learning portfolio. These reflections are narratives or anecdotes that students develop through the guidance of the questions in the self-reflection prompts, and they are stored on a website called SICUA PLUS that is managed by the university. Students reflect by taking into account the negotiation cases, concepts covered in the readings, and debriefing processes of the cases. They additionally consider their individual experiences in the negotiation simulations, including feelings generated when interacting with their counterparts and the skills they applied or failed to apply during the process.

“The learning portfolios are designed in a way in which students debrief experiences, negotiation cases, and other exercises in which they participate” (Canal & Jørgensen, 2014, p. 171).

For the purposes of student reflection, I uploaded to the e-portfolio six self-reflection prompts with different types of questions. The following image shows the interface of the University’s website (SICUA PLUS) where students develop the portfolios and reflection activities.

*Figure 5.* The virtual interface of e-portfolios



In the next section I will describe the four prompts that I take into account in the present research. The process that students develop through their e-portfolios is completed when they receive feedback from the teacher (me). I read the responses or narratives that they upload to their e-portfolios and provide feedback on each of them. The dialogue between students and professors is nourished by comments and questions from the latter. The assessment process may make students feel affected by another person’s perspective, disrupting and altering the students’ stories (Canal and Jørgensen, 2014).

### **5.3.1 THE REFLECTION PROMPTS IN THE E-PORTFOLIOS**

In this section I present the reflection prompts of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, their purposes, and whether students



develop them based on cases or real-life situations. I then go on to describe which parameters from the first level of analysis may be analyzed by means of each prompt.

As mentioned before, I have been designing self-reflection instruments to help students develop their ability to reflect on their performance in negotiations. Indeed, the objective of the reflection prompts is for students to become aware of their behavior during negotiations (Canal & Jørgensen, 2014). I also expect students to analyze those tactics or behaviors that limit their negotiation performance and that it will, therefore, be important for them to change. While I strive to ensure that the reflection prompts are structured in such a way that students can connect the content of the course to their own experience, I try to leave space for students to include additional aspects and to be creative in the way that they report their learning outcomes.

One fundamental feature of the six reflection prompts that I use in the course is the open-ended questions that seek to stimulate students' reflection process. "The reflection prompts organize the learning process [by] facilitating students' [need] to narrate themselves in linear, clear, and coherent ways" (Canal and Jørgensen, 2014, p. 172).

In the current research I use the following prompts:

1. Reflection prompt #1: Initial profile as a negotiator.
2. Reflection prompt #3: Nonviolent communication.
3. Reflection prompt #5: Self-reflection on collaborative negotiation skills.
4. Reflection prompt #6: My self-assessment as a strategic negotiator.

The reason I use these particular prompts is because they are those most closely connected to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills, on which I am focused in the present study. As for the prompts that I did not consider here, one (prompt #2) concerns strategies to claim value (in distributive negotiations). As I explained in the "Collaborative Negotiation" chapter, value-claiming strategies are

not related to the collaborative skills that I am analyzing in this project. With regard to the other prompt (#3) that I did not include here, it concerns communication skills developed in teams. I chose not to include it in the research because I am analyzing the process that students were able to develop individually, not in teams.

In addition to the prompts, I present a guide on how to reflect. This guide proposes to give students a general idea of how to foster the reflection process that they are expected to develop during the course.

The design of the reflection prompts and the guide on how to reflect was principally influenced by the authors whose work I referred to in the “Collaborative Negotiation” chapter, such as Thompson, Fisher & Ury, and Rosenberg. During the process of designing the prompts, I also received valuable suggestions from colleagues such as Carolina Naranjo, Pablo Restrepo, and María Isabel Orduz from the field of negotiation; as well as from María Fernanda Aldana and Tatiana Rodríguez, who formerly worked at Education Research and Training Centre (CIFE), now the School of Education in Universidad de los Andes.

In the following section, I describe the main purposes of each reflection prompt and the guide on how to reflect in the context of the negotiation course. After the presentation of each prompt, I explain which of the parameters of the first research question (the first level of analysis) may be documented through it. As a reminder, this question seeks to answer:

How does reflection contribute to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills with regard to the:

- Consolidation of skills useful for collaborative negotiation.
- Generation of self-awareness of personal qualities.
- Re-evaluation of beliefs and paradigms.

#### **5.3.1.1 Reflection prompt #1: initial profile as a negotiator**

The first prompt is titled “Initial profile as a negotiator,” and its main objective is to initiate students’ assessment processes at the

beginning of the negotiation course. While this prompt is mandatory, it is not graded. Instead, I give feedback to students, focusing on supporting them to take advantage of the ongoing reflection process that they will develop, beginning with the outcomes of this very prompt. In this prompt I have designed a scenario where students are part of a hiring process for which negotiation skills and motivation to negotiate are critical. Students are told that if they are selected, the company will provide them with negotiation training. With this context in mind, I ask them to define their learning goals and how they plan to accomplish them. I also ask them if there are any negotiation traits that they would like to change during the course.

Students define their learning goals, comparing those goals to the learning objectives outlined in the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course syllabus. This prompt also seeks to help students identify and take a critical stance on personal characteristics that facilitate or limit their negotiation abilities, which is one of the goals students are expected to achieve by the end of the course. Students also identify their preliminary negotiation profile, including the negotiating traits that they are proud of (Canal and Jørgensen, 2014).

This task is developed by students in Virtual session 0, which takes place before the first in-person class meeting.

**Table 7 Reflection Prompt #1 Initial profile as a negotiator**

<b>Reflection Prompt #1 Initial profile as a negotiator</b>
Imagine that you are applying for a job in which your identity as a negotiator is of utmost importance.
<b>1. Think of an anecdote (around 500 words) that epitomizes you as negotiator. Write down all the aspects that allow you to show your identity as a negotiator the best you can to the company you're applying to work for. Below are some ideas to guide you</b>
a. The characteristics that define you as a negotiator
b. A negotiation experience, the challenge you faced, and what you achieved
c. Your personality traits that you consider helpful in negotiation processes
d. Some of your traits that may make your role as a negotiator difficult, explaining why you think they may represent a challenge. If there isn't anything you consider a limitation, explain why.
<b>Feel free to be creative and go beyond the guidelines listed above.</b>
The most important thing is that your narrative provide a picture of you and reflect who you are as a negotiator. Be sure to be close to the 500-word limit. You are welcome to talk to colleagues or friends with whom you have negotiated before in order to include the perspectives of people you trust. Although the company is interested in hiring a person who shows an interest in negotiation and/or likes negotiating, the organization is willing to offer negotiation training to further develop the employee's skills. The candidate they select can participate in the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, whose syllabus is attached.
<b>2. As part of the hiring process, the company will evaluate the motivation of the candidate to participate in the above course based on the following questions:</b>
a. What are your three learning goals for this course? Take into account the attached course syllabus.
b. What do you plan to do in order to achieve these learning goals?
c. Is there anything in your current performance as a negotiator that you would like to change? If so, how would you like to do so?

I consider that question number one (a, b, c, & d) and question number two (c) of this prompt allows the first and second parameters of the first research question to be documented. These parameters are the following:

- Consolidation of skills useful for collaborative negotiation.

- Generation of self-awareness of personal qualities  
Reflection Prompt #3: Nonviolent Communication

As mentioned in Chapter 3: Collaborative Negotiation, the nonviolent communication approach is part of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course considered in the present research. Prompt #3 is an adaptation of Rosenberg's original guide, and its purpose is that students apply their communication knowledge to a situation or conflict from their professional or personal experience. The prompt enables learners to review the main components of Rosenberg's (2003) communication approach.

Through this prompt, students reflect on a conflict they have experienced in order to learn how to describe the situation without using evaluations and judgments. Students also identify their own needs and feelings and those of others. At the end of the exercise, they write questions that they could have asked the counterpart in the conflict in order to manage the situation (Canal & Jørgensen, 2014).

This prompt is not based on a simulation case, but on real problems experienced by students. I usually ask students to develop this reflection in one of the face-to-face meetings. This way, I am able to answer their questions and use their examples to clarify the approach and its concepts. Once the development of the reflection prompt has been completed, I conduct a debriefing, where we discuss the difficulties the students experienced while trying to apply this approach to solve a problem.

During the face-to-face meeting in which we work on this prompt, we also discuss what they can do to take advantage of this communication approach at the negotiation table and some ways to facilitate its use in the future. Students review this exercise and, taking into account the feedback received in the in-person class session, they upload the written outcomes to their e-portfolios. This task is developed in Virtual session #1, which takes place after the first face-to-face meeting.

**Table 8** *Reflection Prompt # 3 - Nonviolent Communication*

<b>Reflection Prompt #3 - Nonviolent Communication<sup>1</sup></b>
1. Describe a situation in which someone did something that made you feel uncomfortable. Avoiding evaluations or judgments, record the narrative as if you were a <b>neutral observer</b> describing what happened. In other words, limit yourself to describing those things that you can observe/document through your senses.
You can start your sentence with the words: I heard..., or I saw...
2. Describe the feelings that you experienced in the above situation. Avoid using arguments to justify your feelings.
You can start your sentence with the words: I felt ...
3. Identify which needs of yours were not satisfied in this situation. Take into account the feelings you mentioned above to understand what you needed.
You can start your sentence with the words: I needed ...
4. Ask for a request using positive language. What is it that you hope the person involved in the situation will do? Or, what is it that you would like them to stop doing? Avoid manipulation and demands.
You can start your sentence with the words: I would like you to... or I hope we can...

I consider that the previous prompt allows parameter one of the first research question to be documented. This parameter is: consolidation of skills useful for collaborative negotiation. Reflection prompt #5: Self-reflection on collaborative negotiation skills

The self-reflection on collaborative skills for negotiation prompt seeks to aid students in the creation of links between the strategies for collaborative negotiation and their experience trying to apply them to a specific negotiation case. It also aims to have participants determine whether or not they create value and how they can show evidence of

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<sup>1</sup> This version has been adapted from an original version that I received in a workshop conducted by Marshall Rosenberg in 1996.

this. This prompt allows students to analyze if they develop the collaborative negotiation process in a detailed way. For this reason, I recommend to students that they use this prompt in future negotiations, both as a planning and assessment tool. This prompt also allows students to consider questions regarding the emotions and dilemmas they face when negotiating. This is because the negotiation case on which this reflection is based is complex, and not all students are able to reach an integrative solution. It is common for students to be fixed on a distributive approach, which prevents them from creating value and optimizing the available resources.

Additionally, this prompt probes students' abilities to improve their collaborative negotiation skills and encourages them to be aware of which negotiation skills and traits they are applying adequately and which can be improved.

This reflection prompt has several connections to the course content and the learning goals, with students expected to analyze aspects of the collaborative negotiation approach that they should be able to apply by the end of the course. For instance, the ability to put forward solid arguments to support their requests, make concessions while asking for reciprocity, and understand and value both their own interests and needs and those of others. Finally, this prompt aims to help students identify and take a critical stance regarding personal characteristics that facilitate or limit their collaborative negotiation skills. This task is developed by students in Virtual session #2, which follows the second face-to-face meeting.

**Table 9** *Reflection Prompt #5 Self-reflection on collaborative negotiation skills*

<b>Reflection Prompt #5</b> <b>Self-reflection on collaborative negotiation skills</b>	
<b>Choose a number from 1 to 5 for your answers.</b>	<b>Your thoughts:</b>
5 = Always	# Write down some reflections that come to your mind regarding your development of negotiation skills.
4 = Frequently	

3 = Sometimes		
2 = Scarcely		
1 = Never		
<b>Stage one: Preparation</b>	#	<b>Your thoughts:</b>
I identify my interests or needs.		
I define an alternative (a way of satisfying my needs outside the current plan, the so-called plan B).		
I prepare a good set of questions for my counterpart.		
I define my goal.		
I prepare the place where the negotiation will take place.		
I show up on time for the negotiation.		
<b>Stage two: Negotiation development</b>	#	<b>Your thoughts:</b>
<b>a. Creating a favorable climate</b>		
I greet and/or welcome everyone in the room.		
I develop some activities to generate an environment of trust and safety.		
I put forward some agreements or guidelines for the development of the		



negotiation (time, use of mobile devices, taking notes).		
I state my expectations for the negotiation.		
<b>b. Information exchange</b>		
I mention the most relevant facts without making judgments.		
I share as much information as possible.		
I am curious about the other person's interests and ask questions to gain deeper understanding.		
I bring new issues to the table and connect them to the rest of the issues being discussed.		
I am proactive in the search for information, asking questions and actively listening to the other party.		
I take notes of relevant data.		
<b>c. Problem definition</b>		
I identify interests, needs, and points of agreement.		
I help my counterpart identify their interests.		
I redefine the problem as a possibility to satisfy joint interests.		
I pay close attention and show interest in what the other party has to say.		

I summarize and share my summaries with the other party.		
<b>d. Option creation</b>		
I suggest a brainstorming exercise in order to explore new options.		
I distinguish creating from judging the options.		
I make a list of the options.		
With the new options, I search for mutual benefits.		
I use creativity to search for good options.		
I make one or more proposals (including new issues to be discussed).		
<b>Stage three: The negotiation agreement</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Your thoughts:</b>
I exchange ideas on the best options in order to reach an agreement.		
I make sure the agreement will satisfy my main interests.		
I make sure the agreement is specific, balanced, and realistic.		
I make sure the agreement is indeed better than my alternative (plan B).		
I make sure the agreement is optimal (I don't leave anything on the table).		

I specify strategies to do a follow-up of the agreement.		
Write your answers to the following questions, using as much space as you need.		
1. Do you believe you created value during this negotiation? Why or why not? How is it possible to determine this?		
2. What questions, dilemmas, and emotions did you experience in this negotiation?		
3. What from this negotiation makes you proud?		
4. What could you do from now on to improve your collaborative negotiation skills?		
5. You may write a narrative about this negotiation that you have not yet shared.		

In my view, this prompt allows the first two parameters of the first research question to be documented, namely:

1. Consolidation of skills useful for collaborative negotiation.
2. Generation of self-awareness of personal qualities.

#### **5.3.1.2 Reflection prompt #6: My self-assessment as a strategic negotiator**

Reflection prompt #6 supports students as they develop the last reflection of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course. It seeks to help students look critically at the negotiation knowledge and skills that they have obtained through the course and to document the factors that have allowed them to do so. For this last task, students review all of the reflections in their learning portfolios, including the feedback received from their teacher (me). The purpose of this composition is for students to analyze the evolution of their learning process of

collaborative negotiation skills and the achievement of their learning objectives.

The main purpose of this prompt is for students to consolidate their profile as negotiators. They are invited to do this by taking into account the knowledge and skills for value creation and for value claiming, as well as the nonviolent communication approach, that they are considered to have assimilated. This prompt and its feedback are intended to finalize students' assessment process. Students set their learning goals for the course through the first prompt, subsequently developing a reflection process through their learning portfolios until the last prompt. Additional aspects covered by this prompt are the paradigms that learners have re-evaluated, their motivation to negotiate, and fears they faced when negotiating.

Similar to reflection prompt #1, in reflection prompt #6 students were told that they were part of a hiring process. The prompt begins, however, with students being told that they have been selected for the position. Finally, this prompt includes a reminder for students to develop the activity for themselves, instead of seeing it as a task for someone else. It also invites students to review the guide on how to reflect in order to better support the inner dialogue that they are expected to engage in until the last reflection of the course. Students develop this task in the third virtual session, which comes after the third (and final) face-to-face meeting.

**Table 10** Reflection Prompt #6 My self-assessment as strategic negotiator

<b>Reflection Prompt #6</b> <b>My self-assessment as strategic negotiator</b>
<p>The company seeking a person interested in negotiation has decided to hire you, since they consider you to have the profile of a strategic negotiator. In order to complete the hiring process, they need you to write a self-assessment as a strategic negotiator by answering the questions below. In order to do this, take into account the different reflections you have developed in the learning portfolio of this Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course as well as the feedback received. If there is anything useful from the organizational wellbeing workshop, feel free to include it as well. I encourage you to reread the guide on how to reflect (uploaded to the learning portfolio). Don't forget that this is a reflection exercise: more than writing about theory or your opinions about topics, it requires your ability to be in contact with yourself. You can imagine that you are having a dialogue with your conscience (Jiminy Cricket), and through the dialogue you will be able to step back and try to understand how you have been developing your strategic profile as a negotiator. Even more than an assignment for the organization you will work with or for those who will read it, what you are being invited to do through this reflection is a gift to yourself.</p>
<b>1. You and your learning goals</b>
a. Which learning goals have you achieved in the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course out of the ones you listed in reflection #1?
b. Which factors determined that?
c. Which learning goals have you not achieved in the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course out of the ones you listed in reflection #1?
d. Which factors determined that?
<b>2. You and strategies to create value</b>
<p>In order to answer the questions above, it is important to review your outcomes in simulation case #2 (Les Florets), the team outcomes of case #3 (New Recruiters), and the outcomes of case #4 (Power Screen). In addition, take into account Prompt #5 (Self-reflection on collaborative skills for negotiation), the feedback received, and the team reflection (Prompt #4).</p>
a. What changes have you noticed in your performance in those negotiations where it was possible to create value?

b. How do you see yourself applying the theory and strategies for creating value?
<b>3. You and strategies to claim value</b>
In order to answer the questions below, it is important to review your outcomes in simulation case #1 (Asokomun/Peacebuilders), the individual outcomes of case #3 (New Recruiters), and Prompt #2 (My skills to claim value).
a. How do you view your performance in claiming value?
b. How do you see yourself applying the theory of strategies for claiming value?
<b>4. Individual motivation for negotiation</b>
a. What do you like about negotiating?
b. What worries or fears do you often feel when negotiating?
<b>5. Self-awareness process</b>
a. Were you able to identify traits or capacities that you did not identify in your first reflection? What were they? Take into account the reflection outcomes and feedback from Prompt #1.
b. What allowed you to identify the previous traits or capacities?
c. Where in your process of identifying and managing your needs and emotions before and during negotiation do you consider yourself to be? Take into account Prompt #3 (Nonviolent communication) and the feedback received.
d. Which paradigms or beliefs have you re-evaluated (or are still in the process of questioning)?
e. Where in your process of identifying and managing the needs and emotions of others before and during negotiation do you consider yourself to be? Take into account Prompt #3 (Nonviolent communication) and the feedback received.
f. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding the previous questions?

During the process of the current research, I decided to re-design the previous prompt in order to be able to explore and document all of the parameters of the first research question:

- Consolidation of skills useful for collaborative negotiation.
- Generation of self-awareness of personal qualities.
- Re-evaluation of beliefs and paradigms.

#### **5.3.1.3 Guide on how to reflect**

The guide on how to reflect seeks to give students a general idea of how to approach the reflection process that they are expected to develop during the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course. There is a description of learning portfolios and their benefits for learning. The guide also offers a definition of reflection, its possible outcomes, and what to take into account and what to avoid when writing a reflection. I started to use this guide with the Specialization in Negotiation cohort of 2013, which is the one I am analyzing in the current research. The reason for its inclusion (the guide was added to the portfolio before reflection #5) was that reflecting in an academic setting was new for some students and they were unsure of how to do it. Before distributing the guide to students, I explained the purpose of the reflection process to them during the course as well as key aspects to take into account when writing reflections.

This guide seeks to provide students with guidelines for writing a reflection. It has taken some ideas from a document from Universidad de los Andes–CIFE (2002).

**Table 11** *Guide on how to reflect*

<b>Guide on how to reflect</b>
<p>E-portfolios are a virtual space that helps students structure their learning processes through reflection. Thanks to e-portfolios, students can be aware of their processes, considering the past and planning what they are interested in doing in the future. Through e-portfolios, it is possible to compile the different reflections in order to see progress in the learning process.</p> <p>“Portfolios, contrary to course grades, provide a detailed portrait of a student’s intellectual, emotional, and maturational development over time not only through objective evidence, but more important from a learning perspective, through student’s reflective writing” (Scott, 2010, p. 436).</p>
<b>1. What is self-reflection?</b>
<p>A <b>self-reflection</b> is a document written in the first person that refers (among other things) to one’s experiences, emotions, feelings, and needs. A reflection can also take into account the effects that others have on one and the consequences for others of one’s own actions.</p>
<b>2. What are some examples of reflection outcomes?</b>
<p>A successful reflection allows the person to know themselves better by clarifying their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, etc. In addition, a reflection allows the author (you) to go deeper in their experience by building knowledge and interiorizing skills about particular topics. Reflection also allows the reader (the teacher) to get to know their students and to understand the way that they look at situations, with the opportunity to give them feedback and contribute to their learning processes.</p> <p>Taking some time to ask yourself questions about an experience allows you to document aspects that you wouldn’t normally notice. Making visible what happened and describing it in a detailed and committed way leads to learning from experience.</p> <p>From Hedberg’s (2009) perspective, reflection is an important, yet often neglected, tool for management performance. The author takes Kolb’s (1984) proposal that learning is a continuous cycle of experience, observation, conceptualization, and experimentation, and that reflection is focused on observing, being, and listening. Reflection may result in deeper learning, not only about the subject studied but also about students. Moreover, critical reflection can challenge embedded assumptions, beliefs, and values. “When we reflect we give the learning space to be processed, understood, and more likely integrated into future thoughts and actions” (Hedberg, 2009, p. 11).</p>



<b>3. What is <i>not</i> a reflection?</b>
A summary of a text
A theoretical essay
A description of situations without a personal analysis, e.g., “At the end of the negotiation we agreed on responsibilities for all parties.”
Opinions (about topics or concepts), e.g., “I believe that negotiation must always be collaborative.”
Descriptions of what other people do or do not do, e.g., “We did not settle an agreement because the counterpart did not want to.”
<b>4. Some practical aspects</b>
Please save your work in the following way: <b>Last name_name</b> and <b>reflection #</b> ; e.g., Carvajal_Juana_Reflection_#1

## 5.4 ELABORATION ABOUT THE E-PORTFOLIO OF THE THEORY AND STRATEGIES OF NEGOTIATION COURSE

In the previous section, I described the e-learning portfolios that are one of the main learning tools of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course. In what follows, I offer a concrete elaboration of the learning context in which e-portfolios play a key role to support and enhance students’ learning of collaborative negotiation skills. Given that portfolios are not the only tools that influence learning, I attempt to show how this pedagogical strategy is aligned with my previous definition of an adequate learning structure.

This description will provide ideas concerning the learning context. As I highlighted, this constitutes one of the two factors needed to evaluate the potential of reflection for the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. This is important because it is through the learning context that teachers can influence how students approach learning (Birkett and Mladenovic, 2002, as cited in Hall et al., 2004). In this section I will examine the e-portfolios of the Theory and

Strategies of Negotiation course based on certain aspects of an adequate learning structure, which takes into account a guided process and a student-centered approach. More specifically, I will focus the elaboration on the following aspects:

- a. The coherence between the course learning objectives and the learning portfolios.
- b. The learning portfolio model proposed by Zubizarreta (2008), which includes collaboration, reflection, and documentation.
- c. The ideas of Hartnell-Young & Morris (1999) and Wolf (1999) on formative and summative purposes of e-portfolios in order to look for evidence of how this tool is aligned with the assessment of learning.
- d. The writing styles that the current portfolio uses.

Regarding the coherence between the course learning objectives and the learning portfolios, I will start with the first learning objective of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, which is: “Be able to understand the elements that underlie negotiation as a strategic process and apply them practically.” I believe that the reflection prompts allow students to analyze how they are applying essential elements of negotiations as strategic processes. However, the prompts do not include specific questions about being strategic in negotiations.

The second learning goal of the course is: “Be able to apply knowledge and tools to the negotiation planning and to the negotiation process.” I consider that reflection prompt #5 allows students to evaluate the extent to which they were able to implement their knowledge of negotiation by applying elements of the collaborative perspective to a specific case. In my view, the learning goal of the course that is most closely connected to the current e-learning portfolios is the third one: “Be able to understand one's personal aspects and interactions with others that may bolster or limit one's capacity to negotiate.”

This is because this goal seeks to make students aware of their behavior during negotiation. The hope is that they will be able to

analyze those skills that they performed adequately and continue to develop them, as well as behaviors that need to be modified.

With regard to the last learning goal of the course—“Be able to analyze the negotiation problem and its context in order to make a decision regarding the relevant negotiation strategies that may be applied”—my view is the same as with regard to the second goal. Reflection prompts seek to give students a space to evaluate to what extent they explored the negotiation problem and context in order to select the relevant strategies to apply to the negotiation. The course provides students with a planning tool, which enhances their possibilities of achieving this goal.

The learning portfolio model proposed by Zubizarreta (2008) includes collaboration, reflection, and documentation, and I will first consider the documentation aspect. The e-portfolio of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course is developed through the written narratives that learners upload to the website and particularly through those responses in which they attempt to document their learning process. This documentation occurs at different moments throughout the course, allowing observation of the many components of a continuous process in which students engage while trying to learn collaborative negotiation skills.

Referring to the collaboration aspect of Zubizarreta’s model, the e-portfolio of the negotiation course is developed through guidance supplied by the teacher (me). There is also an assessment element in the portfolios, as I mentioned when describing prompts #1 and #6. At the beginning of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, students define their learning goals. Then, from that activity until the last task, they develop a reflection process through their learning portfolios in which they complete four more reflections and receive feedback from the teacher. At the end of the course, students are asked in reflection prompt #6 to review the entire portfolio, including feedback, and write a narrative. The purpose is to analyze their progress in their learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. In my view, this process also constitutes a formative assessment, which I explain further below.

As for the reflection aspect of Zubizarreta's (2008) model, self-reflection is the main activity that students develop through their learning portfolios in the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, as has been thoroughly described here and in other chapters. Students reflect by answering the questions of the prompts and reviewing the feedback on their reflection outcomes. In summary, I consider the e-portfolios of the present negotiation course to take into account the main aspects of Zubizarreta's model: documentation, collaboration, and reflection.

Taking into account the summative and formative purposes of assessment described by Hartnell-Young & Morris (1999) and Wolf (1999, in Barrett, 2001), the described e-portfolio has a formative purpose, in my view. This is owing to the intention for students to reflect gradually in order to generate self-awareness. The formative nature of the assessment in the portfolios can be observed in the continuum and collaborative process in which students engage while trying to learn negotiation concepts and skills through a virtual dialogue about the process with their teacher.

Regarding Zubizarreta's (2008) ideas on how portfolios may be organized by style of writing, I consider the current e-portfolio to be organized through short reflections instead of a narrative to which content is continually added. These reflections are intended to illustrate specific learning experiences of students. I conclude that the reflection prompts and the guide on how to reflect—which constitute the main tools of the e-learning portfolios for students—rely on a guided process meant to enhance their learning. Moreover, the current e-portfolio and its reflection prompts have been tailored for the purposes of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, since the prompts are based on its contents and on the simulation cases used in the course.

I thus believe that the learning context has a structure that is adequate to facilitate learning. The course additionally features a student-centered approach because students are able to set their own learning goals and because the feedback they are given focuses on their learning challenges as well as on showing students how they evolve as they seek to overcome them.

In summary, I believe that the e-portfolio of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course facilitates students' learning processes of collaborative negotiation skills through a structure with clear guidelines. At the same time, however, they are provided with space where they can include whatever they consider significant from their negotiation experiences. This achieves balance in the organization of students' experiences in learning portfolios (Canal and Jørgensen, 2014).

Nonetheless, there is still room for improvement in the present portfolios and the learning context. For instance, I could implement some modifications to the e-learning portfolios such as a common thread connecting the different reflection prompts and making the purpose of each of them clear. Furthermore, I could give students more free rein in their reflections so they will not feel constrained by the questions of the reflection prompts. Finally, I could include some questions addressed to analyze how strategically students believe that they are negotiating in order to analyze the achievement of one of the course's learning goals mentioned earlier.



# **CHAPTER 6. STUDENT'S LEARNING OF COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION SKILLS**

At the beginning of the Theory and Strategy of Negotiation course, I set the goal of obtaining the theoretical elements and practices that are indispensable for carrying out a good negotiation, which leads to results in the development of any negotiation that I may find myself in. These elements have allowed me to achieve different personal and professional aspects that I already had, but that weren't logical or conceptual. In other words, I had the knowledge to develop activities (prepare, establish goals, etc.) but I never saw those activities as relevant until the course allowed me to apply them (C, D3, P9).

## **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this first level of analysis is to describe students' learning outcomes from the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, particularly those skills useful for collaborative negotiation that they consolidated. The beliefs and paradigms that they re-evaluated, and the personal traits that they became aware of will also be examined. The above quote from student C reflects the essential aspects of students' reported achievements. In this chapter, I will also explain my present conclusion that the potential of self-reflection for the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills is that it allows the outcomes of student learning to be evidenced.

In what follows I present the findings of the first level of analysis, which is focused on students' reports of what they learned from collaborative negotiation. First, I briefly present some methodological aspects of this level of analysis that were thoroughly described in Chapter 2, such as the categories in which the findings were grouped, the ways I use to refer to the students, and the unit of analysis of this level. Second, I discuss the findings, explaining that the purpose of answering the first research question allowed me to set the following proposition: reflection makes awareness of personal traits, acquired skills, and re-evaluated paradigms evident. Third, I present the

main findings of this first level of analysis, taking into account each of the categories and subcategories mentioned below. Finally, in the last section of the chapter I summarize the findings of this level of analysis.

## 6.2 CATEGORIES OF THE FIRST LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

This level of analysis intends to answer the first research question, namely:

How does reflection contribute to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills with regard to the:

- Consolidation of skills useful for collaborative negotiation.
- Generation of self-awareness of personal qualities.
- Re-evaluation of beliefs and paradigms.

The previous categories are described in section 2.2 of the methodological chapter.

I chose these categories because each plays an important role when observing how students take advantage of personal traits and skills that are useful in collaborative negotiations. These categories are additionally supported by two of the learning objectives of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course. The course learning objectives that are most closely connected to the above categories are the following:

- a. Be able to apply knowledge and tools to negotiation planning and to the negotiation process.
- b. Be able to understand one's personal aspects and interactions with others that may bolster or limit one's capacity to negotiate.

In order to develop this part of the analysis, I have taken the almost the whole course as a sample, which consisted of 28 students. The unit of analysis is reflection prompt number six: “Self-reflection of my profile as a strategic negotiator.” For the analysis, I considered 9 of



the 16 questions from the prompt. The questions chosen were those most closely connected to the collaborative negotiation approach on which I am focused in this study.

As I wrote in the learning portfolios chapter, reflection #6 had students review all of the reflections they had developed in their e-learning portfolios, as well as the feedback they had received from their teacher (me). In this particular task, students faced the challenge of analyzing their process of learning negotiation skills and the extent to which they had achieved the learning goals that they had set in reflection #1. This is the final task of the course, and I provided a reflection prompt in order to guide students.

The 28 students are identified with the letters of the alphabet, with the letter A combined with the first two letters of the alphabet for the last students, as shown below in table 12. Each of the written reflections was converted to a file with an “rtf” extension, which is necessary when using the Atlas T2 software that I mentioned in the second chapter. Students’ testimonies are quoted using the letter used to identify them, followed by the number of the “rtf” document that the quote is taken from and the number of the paragraph in which the quote is found. For instance, (A, D1, P3) indicates a testimony from student A that was taken from document 1 and is found in paragraph 3.

**Table 12** *General information of students of the first level of analysis*

Number of students	Student's pseudonym	RTF document #	Student's gender	Number of students	Student's pseudonym	RTF document #	Student's gender
1	A	D1	M	15	O	D 16	M
2	B	D 2	F	16	P	D 17	M
3	C	D 3	M	17	Q	D 18	M
4	D	D 4	F	18	R	D 19	M
5	E	D 5	M	19	S	D 20	F
6	F	D 6	M	20	T	D 22	M
7	G	D 7	F	21	U	D 23	M
8	H	D 8	M	22	V	D 25	F
9	I	D 10	F	23	W	D 26	F
10	J	D 11	F	24	X	D 27	M
11	K	D 12	F	25	Y	D 28	F
12	L	D 13	M	26	Z	D 29	F
13	M	D 14	F	27	AA	D 30	F
14	N	D 15	F	28	AB	D 31	M

### 6.3 ANSWERING THE FIRST RESEARCH QUESTION

Although the outcomes of reflection #6 allowed me to observe how students improved their collaborative negotiation skills, it seems to me that they achieved their learning goals through the support of various activities and tools from the learning context of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, in addition to their own capabilities. This conclusion is based, on the one hand, on the fact that students give credit to the whole course—to the reflections and to the feedback they received from peers and teachers—as well as to their own qualities and previous knowledge. It is based, on the other hand, on my realization that I did not study reflection in an individual manner in this research, a limitation that I will discuss in the last chapter. Taking these ideas into account, I do not find it possible to credit reflection for the learning that students attained in this course.

While it may be true that students shared that reflection was one of the tools that supported their learning process, it cannot then be deduced that they achieved the learning outcomes detailed in this chapter because of it. What I can state about the potential of self-reflection for the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills is that reflection allows the outcomes of student learning to be evidenced. I will therefore limit myself to stating that reflection is a way of perceiving learning, for both the teacher and the student. However, it is not currently possible to ascertain anything else with regard to the question: How does reflection contribute to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills?

For this reason, I offer the propositions found below, taking into account the above-mentioned arguments and basing them on the categories of the current level of analysis.

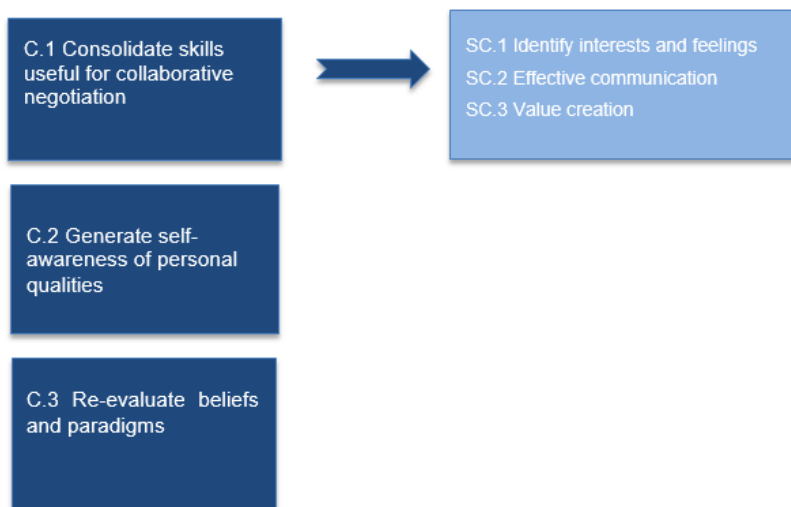
- Reflection makes acquired skills evident.
- Reflection makes awareness of personal traits evident.
- Reflection makes re-evaluated paradigms evident.

The information developed in the next section is a detailed description of the findings of this level of analysis, taking into account the updated categories and supported by testimonies from students' written reflections.

## **6.4 FINDINGS OF THE FIRST LEVEL OF ANALYSIS**

The findings of the first level of analysis will now be presented, taking into account the categories of the figure below. In the case of the first category, three subcategories were also determined.

**Figure 6.** Categories and subcategories of the first level of analysis



The evidence of learning collaborative negotiation skills is mixed and intertwined with the outcomes of students' reflections, making it difficult to draw a line between the three categories. Some evidence was found and classified as belonging to one category, but could just as easily be grouped in a different one. However, in other cases the evidence clearly fits in just one category.

Other challenges I encountered in this analysis included the difficulty of classifying students' outcomes in skills, personal qualities, and paradigms. Nor was it easy to differentiate the findings of what students reported being able to do through verbs such as consolidate, generate self-awareness, and re-evaluate. These challenges notwithstanding, the findings seek to capture in the best possible way students' accounts of learning collaborative negotiation skills. Consolidate skills useful for collaborative negotiation.

### **6.4.1 CONSOLIDATE SKILLS USEFUL FOR COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION**

I refer below to the first category of this level of analysis, which seeks to consider the collaborative negotiation skills that students reported being able to apply at the end of the course. The importance of this category derives from my assumption that if students can consolidate concepts and skills of the collaborative negotiation model, they can then take better advantage of them, since their ability to externalize and value these concepts and skills becomes beneficial to them.

Within the current category, I consider three main skills for negotiating collaboratively that were found to be subcategories. They are as follows:

#### **SC.1 Identification of interests (or needs) and feelings**

As I explained in the collaborative negotiation chapter, this is one of the skills important for negotiators to develop as part of the intra- and interpersonal levels of negotiation.

#### **SC.2 Effective communication**

This skill is part of the interpersonal level of negotiation, according to the skills presented in Chapter 3. Sometimes students refer to various aspects of communication, but on other occasions they explicitly refer to the nonviolent communication approach that it is also described in the collaborative negotiation chapter.

#### **SC.3 Value creation**

Although value creation can be understood as a strategy of the collaborative negotiation approach, as explained in the third chapter, here I will treat it as a skill, since this is the way in which students referred to it.

In addition to these subcategories, I found that students reported having consolidated not just one, but various skills for collaborative negotiations, such as expanding the pie, dialoging about options,

applying elements of a good agreement and follow-up, persevering, and implementing logical and structured ways of organizing and developing the negotiation process.

#### **6.4.1.1 Consolidate skills to identify interests (or needs) and feelings**

One aspect that became evident in students' reflections is that they began to apply the fundamental skill of exploring their interests and feelings, as well as those of their counterparts. As I stated in Chapter 3, collaborative negotiation is an interest-based approach, and understanding one's own and other people's interests and needs is paramount in it.

First, we will look at examples of consolidating skills to identify one's own needs and feelings, and then, testimonies of consolidating skills to identify the needs and feeling of others.

##### **6.4.1.1.1 Consolidating skills to identify one's own interests and feelings**

Some of the students reported that recognizing their own interests was fundamental to define the framework and the most appropriate strategy for a negotiation. Other students considered it easier, however, to identify those values that they were not willing to negotiate, which helped them realize the importance of being aware first and foremost of themselves.

For instance, for student A, recognizing one's own interests is key to establishing the context and the strategy with the greatest likelihood of success at the negotiation table. "Now I take the precaution of evaluating my interests and aspirations in order to set a clear framework. I also try to identify the situation and the context in order to select the most suitable strategy, especially when considering whether or not the long-term relationship is important" (A, D1, P11).

The following quote evidences how the same student became aware of different aspects, particularly his capacity to understand situations in which his needs and the counterpart's needs are alike, as well as to connect with his own feelings.

Now that I am in a situation where there are clearly shared interests yet opposite ways of approaching a negotiation, I don't feel limited. In fact, I feel empowered by the tools that I have used lately. This generates a feeling of self-confidence, of being aware that I have the knowledge and skills to positively resolve a situation (A, D1, P35).

Some participants of the course came to recognize that understanding the interests of the counterpart and their own interests in parallel generates an environment of confidence and the ability to take their individual needs into account, as student T points out.

Right now, thanks to what I have learned, in every negotiation and discussion in my personal life I take into account the importance of confidence in relationships, curiosity to know about the interests of the other, and thinking deeply and concertedly about how I can satisfy the interests of the other party with the least amount of effort so that I can satisfy my own even more (T, D23, P8).

Student E reported a double opportunity gained: avoiding judgment both allowed him to focus on his interests and to simultaneously create an environment of trust with the negotiation participants. "Not falling into the temptation of judging allows me to concentrate on my true interests, which were identified and valued earlier and that help me to create a climate of confidence with any interlocutor" (E, D5, P9).

#### **6.4.1.1.2 Consolidating skills to identify the interests (or needs) and feelings of others**

It is interesting to observe how the nonviolent communication approach was considered by some of the students to be a useful tool for identifying the interests of others, which are not necessarily apparent. As a result, in some cases students found it important to be able to read between the lines to arrive at the other's true feelings, as D and E state in the following quotes. "I think I need to improve my active listening skills, but I discovered that one can interpret the words and comments of people in such a way as to identify other needs and interests that aren't expressed explicitly" (D, D4, P41).

Regarding personal skills, I acquired competence through skills like nonviolent communication that helped me understand the emotions of my interlocutors and adopt respectful positions about the feelings of others, without judging them but rather looking for their true feelings, which usually aren't clearly expressed (E, D5, P9).

Furthermore, this ability to identify the needs and feelings of others has helped some students make changes to their ways of understanding their counterparts and interacting with them at the negotiation table.

I have learned to think and see from the perspective of other people, who I used to think of as unreliable and looking to take advantage of situations. However, now I see them as people who are concerned about their own interests and who have a different way of approaching business and personal relationships (A, D1, P78).

Along different lines, some students reported that the activity of identifying needs beyond economic ones was new to them. Student U recognized that it was important to explore his own needs and those of the counterpart as a way of creating value and maximizing the resources available in the negotiation.

The biggest change to create value is having realized that even when there is a strong economic component in a negotiation, there are usually personal needs behind it. In this sense, I have come to understand that if I manage to discover my own needs and those of the counterpart, I will create value within a negotiation. [I appreciate] having the opportunity to expand the margin of the negotiation and to take advantage of all of the opportunities that are on the table (U, D23, P23).

As demonstrated in the previous testimonies, the skill of identifying needs and feelings was consolidated in a variety of ways for several students in the course.

#### **6.4.1.2 Consolidate skills of effective communication**

Effective communication is the second subcategory that I will present within the larger category of consolidating collaborative



negotiation skills. The reflection outcomes make clear that one outcome for some students was that they became more aware of the importance of listening. For example, student F became more conscious of improving his listening as a way to understand the interests of others, valuing listening as a form of showing empathy. “Also, [I learned] to improve active listening, putting myself in the shoes of my counterpart by understanding their interests” (F, D6, P23).

In the case of other students, listening proved fundamental for questioning assumptions. Such was the case of S, who used to think that whoever speaks the most in a negotiation is the one who communicates best and who knows the most. Nonetheless, S concluded that listening instead of reacting allowed him to obtain relevant information that helped him make better decisions.

Managing to listen before reacting has been one of the most important lessons during this course. Before, I believed that whoever speaks the most is the one who knows the most or who communicates their ideas most effectively. However, during one of the exercises in which the counterpart was the one who asked the most questions and I made the conscious effort to listen, I was able to determine that through listening you get a lot of information and that many times one can make better decisions that way (S, D20, P11).

It can be seen in the past testimony that B comes to question the belief that talking is more effective than listening. This experience is aligned with the second category, re-evaluating beliefs and paradigms.

Two additional skills in the area of effective communication that were consolidated in certain students were the ability to observe without judgment (which is part of the nonviolent communication approach) and the ability to formulate questions. For students like C, the possibility of observing without judgment allowed him to avoid disputes that lead to negative results in negotiations. The formulation of questions was likewise fundamental for this participant in his attempt to evidence changes in his counterpart, as well as to avoid hostile behaviors. This student is referring in the quote below to the metaphor of the jackal that was used by Rosenberg (2003) to represent violent

communication, which is set in contrast to the giraffe, the symbol of nonviolent communication.

Some changes that I have developed in the course include improved observation without judgment. This is because when I begin to judge my counterpart in one way or another in this space, I do not get any further than a simple argument and do not reach a positive result for myself. In the end, it leads me to a confrontation with the other person and the negotiation ultimately fails. On the other hand, [I had more success with] the generation of questions that led to changes in the counterpart and strategies that involve them in the process, without behaving like the jackal (C, D3, P26).

Student C is another example of notable evolution in his communication style, which allowed him to improve his ability to analyze situations with perspective, to recognize the need to manage his emotions, and to feel more in control of negotiations.

From the time of the first exercise until now, I have noticed an improvement in my process, knowing that initially I filled the required [reflection prompts] with judgments and feelings. However, I have been able to take the position of the “giraffe,” which allowed me to avoid becoming a “jackal” when I felt threatened or under attack, or when anything else affected me. Furthermore, “going to the balcony” to take myself out of the context and to be able to examine what happened in the process, allowed me to be more analytical and cautious when taking the reins of a negotiation. I did this without neglecting to claim value in a negotiation (C, D3, P60).

Student C evidently valued the process of reflection and the positive changes he noticed in his ways of analyzing situations and applying his learning to different kinds of negotiations.

Other students such as J were sincere in admitting that while they sometimes managed to act more objectively when communicating, avoiding judgments and reactive responses, on other occasions they failed to maintain this attitude.

Ever since the lesson on nonviolent communication, I have begun to be more aware of each word I utter, and I try to be more objective and less reactionary, avoiding getting drawn into conflictive situations. I am also beginning to realize that there are moments in which I begin to explain myself and blurt out judgments, so I quickly try to change and describe facts objectively and express my interests and feelings (sometimes I can, but other times I can't!) (J, D11, P32).

In addition to the outcomes described, in some of the testimonies in this subcategory as well as in the subcategory of identifying interests and feelings, students repeatedly reported that they were able to avoid judging, which is one of the elements of the nonviolent communication approach described in the third chapter.

#### **6.4.1.3 Consolidate skills for value creation**

Value creation is the third subcategory of the consolidation of skills for collaborative negotiations. As mentioned previously, value creation is not described as a skill in the collaborative negotiation chapter, but rather as a strategy to approach negotiations. Students, however, referred to it as one of the skills that they had consolidated.

Several students believed that they had interiorized the importance of value creation. Moreover, in some cases this heightened understanding allowed them to realize that they were creating value without knowing it. In addition to being a tool to identify skills that one is unaware of, value creation provided some students with the opportunity to maximize the available resources at the negotiation table, as pointed out by student O.

Value creation is something that makes theoretical sense to me. To begin with, it is something that I think I did unconsciously, and I would try to reach an agreement by adding issues that weren't on the table. Once I studied theory, I interiorized the benefits that value creation has, both in terms of reaching an agreement when there is just one issue on the table as well as maximizing resources, when there are various issues being discussed. [...] I think I have made improvements in value creation by becoming aware of it (O, D16, P35).

Another outcome of this subcategory of consolidating skills for value creation that was found in some cases was the possibility for students to confirm and consolidate skills that they suspected they had. In her testimony, Student V states that she did not know before how beneficial the skills she possessed could be for integrative (collaborative) negotiations.

The personal and internal process that I experienced, the theory, the classes and the cases, as well as my personal experience [were all valuable]. In reality, I was largely already very aware that I possess these characteristics. However, I didn't think that these skills and qualities would give me much of an advantage in integrative negotiation. It was really interesting to learn about them and to begin to apply them (V, D25, P91).

In the case of G, as in others, she identified her evolution as a negotiator by focusing on the improvement in her ability to create value. "From my first reflections up until now, I think that the evolution of my ability can be seen in the fact that in the last negotiations I have already begun to create value and encounter new elements that can be brought into the negotiation" (G, D7, P64).

Furthermore, applying value creation concepts was beneficial in both personal and professional contexts in the case of C, especially in his intent to achieve his objectives and goals.

For me, the achievements of the value creation theory have been very positive, as I have been able to apply it at both the professional and personal level with good results. These can be seen in immediate changes in my counterpart and, to some degree, have allowed me to direct a negotiation the way I want, without deviating from the goal of pursuing the pre-stated objectives (C, D3, P29).

Other students reported that they achieved growth in the possibilities within a negotiation (expanding the pie) by understanding the needs of clients in order to find ways to help them, and, if necessary, to recommend services in different areas so that their needs are met. "In my work, I have to know the needs of my clients very well in order to know what service I can offer. Many times it is beyond the scope of the

proposal, but I must try to “expand the pie” beyond the company by offering services that are offered by my colleagues in other holdings” (D, D4, P24).

This testimony illustrates the connection between the two subcategories of creating value and identifying people’s interests.

#### **6.4.1.4 Consolidate various skills for collaborative negotiations**

As mentioned earlier, students also reported that they strengthened various key skills in the category of consolidating collaborative negotiation skills.

Student D stated that she was able to consolidate several skills, including: expanding the pie, dialoging about options, and applying elements of a good agreement and follow-up.

I also succeeded at expanding the pie; exchanging ideas about better options to reach an agreement; taking into consideration that the agreement be specific, reasonable, and realistic; making sure that the agreement be better than my best alternative; and generating formulas for follow-up, among other good negotiation practices (D, D30, P46).

Perseverance, understood as not giving up after the first ‘no,’ was another skill consolidated in certain students. There was also the skill of perspective, which was understood as the ability to consider situations from a distance.

Student A reported that this proved important to him, and he used these skills to analyze his behaviors in order to create value and provide himself with feedback.

I have noticed that I try hard and insist on achieving an agreement in my negotiations, since I know that I have the skills to help me find solutions. This is contrary to my position in the past, in which, as soon as negatives or obstacles confronted me, I would not look at the heart of the problem (interests) and would give up on the negotiation. I notice that each time I go into an integrative negotiation, I try to “go to the balcony,” to paraphrase Ury, in order to see what my behavior is in

terms of strategies to create value, and this has allowed me to get constant feedback in each situation (A, D1, P29).

It is interesting that student A connects the capacity to see things with perspective with value creation, one of the subcategories of consolidating collaborative negotiation skills.

Along these same lines, another achievement related to consolidating various skills to collaborate that was reported by some students was their development of a logical methodology of the negotiation process. According to student C, before the course he would concentrate on achieving a goal without taking into account fundamental elements of negotiation such as objectives, options, and alternatives.

The course has allowed me to develop a logical methodology that helps me to be better informed about the negotiation process as well as to have clarity about the objectives that are being negotiated. Before, my process of negotiation was only based on reaching a goal, but it was never formulated in terms of adequate objectives, with options and alternative possibilities that my counterpart or I could turn to (C, D3, P53).

Likewise, in the case of student B, the lessons learned allowed her to depend on more structured tools that allow a variety of possible negotiation scenarios to be foreseen and that gave her a deeper understanding of the core of negotiation.

At an academic level, I feel that I have learned theoretical tools that will allow me to better structure my preparation for a negotiation, including important information from the counterpart, a deeper understanding of the environment and context of the negotiation, and evaluation of possible scenarios that may develop and my stance in each scenario (B, D2, P9).

Student B highlights another important element of strategic negotiators, which is to take into account the context of negotiations in order to analyze different scenarios.

Finally, and in the same vein, some students such as A and AB acquired more organized and systematic ways of approaching negotiations, learning to apply planning tools to them.

I learned to apply different planning tools in a negotiation. I experience this, in particular, in the way that one can approach a negotiation: more systematically and in a more organized way (A, D1, P11).

“The [planning] map proposed in class for preparing negotiations has allowed me to identify a clear and orderly method that has helped me identify objectives, strategies, and priorities that I should take into account in order to satisfy my needs and interests” (AB, D31, P83).

For student AB, the planning map provided in the course additionally helped him to identify his interests and the way to satisfy them. This outcome is connected to the subcategory of identifying needs and feelings.

#### **6.4.2 GENERATE SELF-AWARENESS OF PERSONAL QUALITIES**

The second category of this first level of analysis, Generate self-awareness of personal qualities, gives an idea of the process students undergo when they take a step back from their negotiation experiences and focus on personal traits such as their profile as negotiators and their strengths and weaknesses when negotiating. Overall, students became conscious of improved self-knowledge and self-confidence, adapting the techniques they learned in order to personalize them. This category leads to the observation that students realized what is taking place within themselves and were able to make changes to their negotiation style.

For instance, student A mentions having gained awareness of the characteristics of a strategic negotiator by identifying his strengths and weaknesses to claim and create value. “[I have learned] to identify the characteristics of a strategic negotiator and my inclination in those

terms. In this sense, I feel that I have learned to identify my strengths and weaknesses, both to claim value and to create value” (A, D1, P12).

In addition to the strengths and weaknesses that some students identified, some of them additionally established a sort of improvement plan to continue the learning process, as in the case of student A.

I think this is really important because I can work on my weaknesses and work on improving my strengths. I should particularly work on being precise when searching for information and adequately communicating my interests and priorities, setting ambitious (but realistic) goals and specifically focusing on them (A, D1, P12).

Students also recognized that they know themselves in other scenarios and that theory and practice accompanied by correction or feedback had aided their growth in those scenarios. Student A offered an analogy: learning to negotiate is like learning a new language. In that process, he supplemented his knowledge with practice and personalized the techniques he learned. “I feel like I have learned a new language in a foreign land, where the best way to learn is by practice and through correction. The great advantage that I have is the high degree of motivation that I have regarding this topic. This motivation never lessens, and it pushes me to supplement my knowledge with practice” (A, D1, P86).

[I have improved] by focusing on theory and seeking to put it into practice in each of the cases and especially in real life (where I sought to use it constantly). From this I can take away that in different opportunities (both in cases as well as in my daily life) I am obligated to return to theory and give myself feedback to improve the practice of everything I have learned, and in some way make all the techniques seem personal (A, D1, P14).

The following testimonies of students J and D illustrate how they reached a clearer understanding of their skills and traits as negotiators, which helped them to characterize their own profile as negotiators and to better identify their personal qualities. These students credit different aspects of the course with their achievements.



In particular, the course allowed me to be more conscious of my own skills and abilities, or in other words, of my negotiator profile. Compared with theory, this process allowed me to identify certain aspects that I should work on or deepen in the future (J, D11, P10).

[Some valuable aspects of the course were] the feedback that I got from the teachers of Theory and Strategy and from the workshop and the class monitors. Furthermore, the critical comments that were given in a constructive manner from my classmates (...) I think learning the theory allowed me to characterize my ideal negotiator profile and to be able to better identify certain qualities in myself and for myself (D, D4, P43).

Some students believed that they had increased their self-knowledge or self-confidence. Examples such as that of student N are common, since participants in the course had the chance to identify certain traits that they can take advantage of in negotiations, as well as to discover aspects in themselves that they did not consider to be very strong. Student N sees herself in a process in which there is still room to gain more confidence.

As I mentioned earlier, I discovered that I have some good qualities for creating and claiming value, and that surprised me a little because I thought that this was one of my weaknesses. I feel that I am good at posing questions, I am incisive, I verify what the counterpart says, and I don't allow any half-truths. I learned to ask for concessions, and I still need to be precise in generating questions and in feeling confident about my strengths in a negotiation (N, D15, P57).

Student B is another example of a course participant who strengthened their skills to increase their self-confidence for carrying out negotiations, and at the same time became aware that there is still room for improvement. "I feel that I have bolstered my skills for value creation during the course. For me it was clear that as a negotiator I was better at creating value than claiming it, so it was interesting to see how this became evident in practice. I was able to see where I have opportunities for improvement and development" (B, D2, P27).

It is interesting to see how various students were able to observe themselves in what is an ongoing process, at once able to refer to what they considered themselves to have achieved and to those skills that they can continue to improve.

### **6.4.3 RE-EVALUATE BELIEFS AND PARADIGMS**

Re-evaluate beliefs and paradigms is the third and last category of this level of analysis. This category shows that some students questioned or re-evaluated different paradigms and beliefs about their ways of developing negotiations.

A diversity of beliefs was revealed and re-evaluated through the Theory and Strategy of Negotiation course. This happened to be the category in which the greatest variety of themes was found; however, the abilities for collaborative negotiation that students considered either unsuitable or not valid before the course were noteworthy.

One of the paradigms that students re-evaluated was the belief that negotiation is a distributive process that leads to win-lose results. Some testimonies, such as that of student B, describe the previous view of the negotiation process as a space of confrontation. “[I believed] that someone always loses in a negotiation, [but] a negotiation does not necessarily represent a clash or difference in the opinions of the parties” (B, D2, P58).

During the course, some students clearly identified that their previous conceptions regarding the validity of the collaborative model were inaccurate and that it is in fact feasible for the negotiation table to be a field in which both parties win.

The main paradigm that I have re-evaluated is the idea that only one side wins a negotiation. Presumably because of my work and temperament, I have always believed that the win-win scenario isn't possible; that in negotiations, like in a soccer game, winning is only one-sided. This is a completely erroneous position given that in many negotiations win-win or making the pie bigger is the best option (G, D7, P125).

Another paradigm that was re-evaluated by some students was that of equating collaboration with becoming weak vis-à-vis the counterpart, “that to demonstrate a collaborative position could be seen as weakness by my counterpart” (U, D23, P45).

Furthermore, as evidenced in the following testimony, the concept of collaboration as a fundamental element in negotiations helped student V change her perceptions about the relevance of sharing information with the counterpart.

For me personally, I was very impressed when I saw how important it was to share information during a negotiation. In cases 2, 3, and 4, it was practically an indispensable requirement to successfully conclude the negotiation and, frankly, I hadn't realized this. On the contrary, I felt before that one should share the least amount of information possible, and thanks to this course I realized I was very wrong (V, D25, P51).

In line with the previous testimony, some students had second thoughts about the belief that it is not possible to confide in one's counterpart. Thanks to a change in his attitude, student O understood that counterparts were not necessarily trying to take advantage of him. This also helped him understand how to share information and the benefits of doing so. “I felt that if one revealed too much information, the counterpart could take advantage of the information. I have reconsidered this idea, since it is beneficial to reveal information if one is aware of how to do so and if one makes a specific request to gain something in return” (O, D16, P69).

The previous findings show how reevaluating beliefs and paradigms represented an important activity for certain participants, which opened their minds so as to be able to incorporate various collaborative negotiation skills in their practice.

## **6.5 SUMMARIZING THE FINDINGS**

In sum, we could confirm how little by little students got into a process of self-reflection. In that process, they explored individual experiences, questioned some paradigms and assumptions, and

observed the advantages of including other peoples' interests in negotiating (Canal & Jorgensen, 2014, p. 174).

In what follows, I will refer to the main findings reported by students in their written reflections, taking into account the categories and subcategories mentioned in this analysis.

Students' written reflections in the first category (consolidate skills useful for collaborative negotiation) revealed that identifying both their own interests and those of their counterparts (first subcategory) was an important skill that allowed many of them to achieve better results in negotiations, generate environments of trust, and create value. Other students reported that identifying one's own needs is fundamental to define the framework and the most appropriate strategy of a negotiation. The evidence that some students were additionally able to identify the interests of others is found in the fact that they turned out to be interested in discovering and understanding the expectations and needs of their clients. Finally, part of the class reported having learned to construct a climate where confidence and cordiality take priority in a negotiation.

The results in this first category also showed that some students consolidated a series of communication skills (second subcategory). The testimonies of certain students suggest that they became more aware of the importance of listening to achieve empathy and therefore understanding of the interests of others. Other participants realized that listening facilitated the obtaining of relevant information and better decision-making. Learning to observe without judgment and to formulate questions allowed many of the course participants to communicate more effectively, avoiding arguments that lead to negative environments and results in negotiations.

Some students realized how beneficial value creation skills (third subcategory) could be for collaborative negotiations. According to students' testimonies, in addition to being a tool to identify skills that one is unaware of, value creation provided some of them with an opportunity to maximize the available resources at the negotiation table. Other students reported that one way of expanding the pie was achieved by understanding the needs of clients. In other cases, students stated that

value creation concepts were beneficial in both personal and professional contexts to achieve their objectives and goals. The improvement of their capacity to create value what some students focused on when identifying their evolution as a negotiator.

Finally, in this first category some students reported having consolidated a variety of skills for collaborative negotiations. These included expanding the pie, discussing options, and applying elements of a good agreement and follow-up. In other cases, students were able to develop a logical methodology, reporting that it allowed them to become more aware of the negotiation process and to take into account its fundamental elements. Two further skills that were consolidated in certain students were perseverance and the ability to look at the situation with perspective.

Through the second category (generate self-awareness of personal qualities), we see that some of the students generated awareness of their strengths and weaknesses when negotiating. They also considered their knowledge of themselves in other scenarios and supplemented their knowledge with practice. Some students experienced increased self-knowledge or self-confidence and seem to have appropriated and personalized various negotiation techniques. Other students discovered aspects of their personalities and negotiation styles that according to them they would not otherwise have been able to discern. Some of the participants of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course consolidated skills that they suspected they had but were not conscious of. Certain students also recognized opportunities for improvement. Overall, the outcomes of students' reflections suggest that they became self-aware of their negotiator profiles and of their personal qualities for negotiating.

Through the third category (re-evaluate beliefs and paradigms), it is possible to observe that some students questioned their belief that negotiation is a distributive process that leads to win-lose results, or the related belief that only one side can win in a negotiation process. Certain participants of the course also reconsidered the belief that their counterpart would interpret their collaborative approach as weakness. Other students re-evaluated their belief that their counterpart would take advantage of them if they revealed too much information. Questioning

these paradigms led to a greater ability to trust others in some of the participants, as well as greater confidence about applying a collaborative approach in their negotiations.

# CHAPTER 7. REFLECTION AS A MENTAL CAPACITY

## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

There are various aims that I will strive to achieve in this chapter. The first is to provide a theoretical framework of psychoanalysis as a basis to understand the findings of the second level of analysis. The second is to present the findings of the second level of analysis, which is focused on the psychic characteristics, and connect these findings to students' forms of reflection that were observed in five cases. Having previously identified the psychic characteristics, the third aim seeks to explain them. The fourth and final aim is to provide some reflections about possible applications in management education of the conceptualization of these psychic characteristics. In order to accomplish these goals, I take into account an intersubjective approach of psychoanalysis as a framework that fosters the understanding of reflection as a mental capacity.

The length of the chapter is considerable in comparison to the rest of the chapters, so it will be divided into three main sections. The first main section, 7.2, is a psychoanalytical framework. I explain how psychoanalysis may help to understand the differences among the ways that different students reflect in section 7.2.1. And in section 7.2.2, I present two paradigms within psychoanalysis and explain in more detail essential aspects of the intersubjective approach that I have chosen to use.

The second section, 7.3, is composed of the findings of the second level of analysis. I will describe in section 7.3.1 some methodological aspects of this level of analysis that are explained in detail in Chapter 2. In doing so, I clarify how I intend to answer the second research question, as well as describe the psychic characteristics that were found, which are connected to the ways in which students reflect. I additionally provide the table 13 with general information about each of the five students who constitute the sample of this level of analysis. In section 7.3.2, I explain how I will present the findings of

the five cases that I decided to study in depth in this dissertation. In section 7.3.3, I present the cases one by one, with the information organized into three sections: an initial description of the student, a psychoanalytical analysis focused on the psychic characteristics connected to the student's ways of reflecting, and a recapitulation of the main psychic characteristics discovered in the case. Finally, I present an analysis that establishes relationships and differences among the psychic characteristics observed in the five cases in section 7.3.4.

In the third main section of this chapter, 7.4, I conceptualize each of the six psychic characteristics integral to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills in the sections that are listed below:

- Making contact with oneself
- Connecting to others
- Reality perspective
- Understanding and expressing emotions
- Balanced narcissism
- Change process

The present chapter will conclude with some reflections about the possible applications in management education of the conceptualization of these psychic characteristics in section 7.4.7.

## **7.2 A PSYCHOANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK TO UNDERSTAND STUDENTS' WAYS OF REFLECTING**

In Chapter 2, I briefly refer to psychoanalysis as one of my methodological pillars, as applied psychoanalysis is part of the second level of analysis. Over the next two sections, I will provide a psychoanalytical framework that will serve as a basis to understand students' ways of reflecting. These will be described presently in the second level of analysis.

Psychoanalysis is a discipline that has developed a holistic structure to understand the psychic functioning of human beings. This approach looks at people by taking into account the conscious dimension and by studying the deeper mental processes rooted in the



dynamic unconscious. Implying a greater possibility of understanding the psyche as a whole, the discipline is also called “depth psychology.” Sigmund Freud—known as the father of psychoanalysis—highlights this aspect of the unconscious in the below quote.

If the psychological discoveries gained from the study of dreams were firmly kept in view, only one further step was needed before psychoanalysis could be proclaimed as the theory of the deeper mental processes not directly accessible to consciousness—as a 'depth psychology'—and before it could be applied to almost all the mental sciences. This step lay in the transition from the mental activity of individual men to the psychical functions of human communities and peoples (Freud, 1923, 205d. Account psa).

It should be noted that although the psychoanalytical approach was originally developed to understand and heal people suffering from mental pathologies, its scope also covers the normal functioning of human beings. This is important to clarify since I treat students' written reflections as outcomes developed by people who I do not consider to be psychologically ill, as I mentioned in the methodological chapter.

Originally, analytic research had indeed no other aim than to establish the determinants of the onset (the genesis) of a few morbid mental states. In the course of its efforts, however, it succeeded in bringing to light facts of fundamental importance, in actually creating a new psychology, so that it became obvious that the validity of such findings could not possibly be restricted to the sphere of pathology (Freud, 1923, 205d. Account psa.).

### **7.2.1 HOW MIGHT PSYCHOANALYSIS CONTRIBUTE TO UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCES IN STUDENTS' FORMS OF REFLECTION?**

As I mentioned in the first chapter, I have observed a variety of aspects in student reflections written during the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. These in-depth cases, in which I identified differences in students' forms of reflection, are what give significance to the second level of analysis in my fieldwork. Through

these cases I identified six psychic characteristics linked to the practice of reflection.

I also mentioned in the first chapter that I understand psychic characteristic as dimensions of the human psyche that remain relatively stable after the first years of child development and that consciously or unconsciously tend to influence individual ways of being, thinking, feeling, and acting. I prefer to use the word psychic instead of psychological, since the latter tends to encompass just the conscious dimension of the mind. I do not use the word capacity, since this implies the quality of being able to do something. Furthermore, once I became aware of the difficulties that some students experienced with some of the psychic characteristics, calling them capacities struck me as misleading.

Jennifer Moon (2000) draws attention to the varying connotations that the concept of reflection has in the educational literature. She wonders whether these connotations imply different mental activities, or the same mental activity with different interpretations. Going on to answer her own question, the author suggests that reflection is a unique mental activity.

The reason why Moon (2000) clarifies her position is because different authors have described reflection in numerous ways. As I discussed in Chapter 4: Reflection for Learning, some approaches to reflection have understood it as a process that facilitates introspection, while others understand reflection as critical thinking.

From my perspective, even if authors were to agree on a comprehensive way of defining reflection, that would not mean that human beings all reflect alike. Reflection is instead a psychological process that is intrinsically linked to other psychic characteristics, which, in turn, invite a multiplicity of interpretations. I am therefore led to conclude that reflection cannot be accurately described as a uniform mental activity.

One person reflecting uses certain psychic characteristics, while another person uses others entirely. As students have different psychic characteristics that they draw on when reflecting, I argue that they

engage in the learning process in distinct ways and achieve varied learning outcomes.

I consider applied psychoanalysis (described in Chapter 2) to be a promising perspective for my purpose of broadening how self-reflection is understood to include its consideration as a mental capacity linked to other psychic characteristics, which I explain in this chapter. My way of identifying the psychic characteristics (as mentioned in Chapter 2) took into account certain initial parameters. These parameters together with an open-minded attitude allowed my psychoanalyst colleagues and me to discover additional characteristics that were not considered initially.

### **7.2.2 TWO PSYCHOANALYTICAL PARADIGMS: ONE-PERSON PSYCHOLOGY AND THE INTERSUBJECTIVE APPROACH**

In what follows, I will refer to two paradigms within psychoanalysis: the so-called one-person psychology and the intersubjective approach. I will also explain in more detail essential aspects of the intersubjective approach that I have chosen to use here.

From a psychoanalytical perspective, individual psyches vary from one person to another, depending on different factors. These factors are intertwined and include the cultural background in which the person grew up, their genetic information, and their experiences during the first years of development. Bowlby (1988) affirms this idea of genetics being combined with the cultural environment. “Earlier I remarked that, in order to understand individual development, it is as necessary to consider the environment in which each individual develops as the genetic potentials with which he is endowed” (Bowlby, 1988, quoted by Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 64).

Although psychoanalysis in general tends to take into account one’s environment and genetic potential to comprehend their mind, some psychoanalytical perspectives give more importance to the genetic and biological dispositions of human beings than others. This is the case of authors like Freud, Klein, and Rivière, among others.

We have no reason to dispute the existence and importance of original, innate distinguishing characteristics of the ego. This is made certain by the single fact that each person makes a selection from the possible mechanisms of defence, that he always uses a few only of them and always the same ones. This would seem to indicate that each ego is endowed from the first with individual dispositions and trends, though it is true that we cannot specify their nature or what determines them. (Freud, 1937, p. 240).

This paradigm supports its ideas through the notion of instinct (drive), giving an important function to aggressive and destructive impulses. “The innate tendencies of the infant posited by Klein involve a complex subjective structure, including a turning back against the self—the destructiveness that takes one’s own being as the object” (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 4).

Closely related to the idea of instincts are the two main ways by which Freud understood affects. Fonagy, Gergely, Jurist, and Target (2007) state that these ways have influenced how psychoanalysis has developed. “According to the first tendency, affects discharge energy and must be comprehended as the psychic manifestation (along with ideas) of drives” (p. 82). Although biology plays a key role in the understanding of affects, affects have physical as well as mental dimensions for Freud. This is why, according to Fonagy et al. (2007), the second way of understanding affects in Freud’s theory includes the idea of signals that are regulated to a certain extent by the ego. “It is fair to say that through the influence of object-relations theory and particularly developmental theory, the second theory has flourished in recent years” (p. 83). This way of understanding affects is in keeping with the psychoanalytical paradigm based on attachment theories and intersubjectivity that I will explain shortly.

Despite Freud’s interest in the gaze and perspective of the Other, seen, for instance, in his proposal regarding the transference of love that patients develop for their analysts, his theories are more focused on individual factors. Following this line, Freud develops the importance of the concept of the unconscious phantasy, which is further developed by Klein, who also emphasizes the idea of internal reality. That is why conceptualizations that take into account such concepts have been

called one-person psychology. “The proponents of these approaches are wrong to begin with a state of singular subjectivity and, from this, attempt to deduce the minds of others” (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 133).

Other perspectives such as Bowlby’s attachment theory accept the importance of biology, asserting that early relationships play a key role in the biological contributions to the development of human psyches. However, Bowlby (1980) goes further and includes the combination of the relationships between an infant and its caregivers. He argues that if environmental conditions are good enough, the individual will follow an optimal pathway with regard to neurobiological potential. “In the attachment theory tradition, there is a commitment to explore precisely how affective experience contributes to the acquisition of self-regulation by virtue of coregulation between caregiver and infant” (Fonagy et al., 2007, p. 66).

Due to the importance that Bowlby and other authors such as Winnicott (1960), Balint (1937), and Fairbairn (1952) give to the dynamics of the early relationship between an infant and its caregivers, this paradigm has been called “two-person” or “multi-person psychology,” as well as “relational psychology,” according to Diamond & Marrone (2003). “Fairbairn’s (1952) notion of libido as primarily object seeking, Balint’s (1937) concept of primary love, and Winnicott’s (1960) concept of ‘ego relatedness’—all of which were formulated in Britain—implied that the child’s need of relatedness is a primary one. As we shall see below, within this tradition Bowlby’s position is the most radical, even if Bowlby made an implicit acknowledgement of these authors as having contributed to the development of his theory” (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 99).

Since this paradigm emphasizes the importance of the bilateral nature of interactions and the essentialness of stable relationships for the creation of bonds between human beings, it has also been called an intersubjective perspective. Diamond & Marrone (2003) state: “Recent developments derived from philosophical thinking and applied to infant research in attachment studies stress the interpersonal nature of human development and the way the infant derives a sense of self through its

relations with others [...] We can say that attachment essentially takes place in the context of intersubjectivity” (p. 2).

Nonetheless, according to this psychoanalytical perspective it is not experiences themselves that influence an infant’s mental states, nor is it the established relationships between infant and caregivers. It is the way in which the child processes those events and makes them part of their internal world. In other words, in this paradigm the process through which the infant unconsciously builds internal representations of the relationships established with its caregivers is vital.

These internal ways of representing what the baby experiences have been called object relations by authors like Winnicott (1965) and Kernberg (1982), whereas Bowlby (1980) refers to them as working models.

Psychoanalytic object relations (Kernberg 1982; Winnicott 1965) and attachment (Bowlby 1980) theorists are in agreement that repeated, invariant aspects of self-other relations are abstracted into internal representational mental models (Johnson-Laird 1983) and structured, to use Kernberg’s term, into self-other-affect triads or internal working models (Fonagy et al., 2007, p. 40).

According to Bowlby, internal working models are analogous to a cognitive map that the infant has about itself and those people it considers important. “The word working refers to the dynamic aspects of psychic representation, in the sense that by operating on models, an individual can generate interpretations of the present, make attributions of meaning to other people’s behavior, predict outcomes, and evaluate modes of response” (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 46).

Despite their connections to Klein’s theories, Fonagy et al. (2007) can also be categorized as falling under the intersubjective paradigm. This group, however, has gone further in the understanding of affects as a fundamental aspect of attachment, having developed the concept of affect regulation as a process in which a person is conscious of their affects while maintaining their affective states. “Such affectivity denotes the capacity to fathom the meaning of one’s own affect states” (p. 96).

With regard to working models, Fonagy et al. (2007) highlight that those representations endure unconsciously and without significant changes, providing reliable notions of the relationships between infants and caregivers.

The stability of attachment is demonstrated by longitudinal studies of infants assessed with the strange situation and followed up in adolescence or young adulthood with the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) (George, Kaplan, and Main, 1985). This structured clinical instrument elicits narrative stories of childhood attachment relationships. (p. 39)

In order to theorize about the empirical findings of the second level of analysis, I will use the intersubjective paradigm, also called two-person psychology. However, where relevant, I will refer to authors such as Freud to explain concepts that are essential to the psychoanalytical perspective.

I have chosen the intersubjective approach for several reasons. First, I consider authors like Bowlby and Fonagy et al. to have either conducted or analyzed serious studies that confirm the importance of early relationships in the structuring of the human psyche. “There is no other psychoanalytic paradigm that has so clearly and unambiguously attempted to affirm its basic ideas on evidence-based work” (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 1).

Secondly, I have chosen this paradigm because it offers a comprehensive way of understanding the capacities of the human psyche. The different capacities I present are intertwined to a certain extent, with some of them clearly attesting to reflection being a mental capacity, which is important for the objectives of my research. Third, I am interested in shining a light on the dual dimension of interactions that the intersubjective perspective points to. This dimension refers to the individual’s capacity to influence others and, at the same time, be influenced by other people. Taking into account the intra- and interpersonal skills mentioned in Chapter 2 and the psychic characteristics of understanding and expressing emotions (found in the second level of analysis), I am also interested in highlighting the importance that the intersubjective approach gives to emotions. In the

opinion of Fonagy et al. (2007), this importance also extends to regulating emotions. These specific notions provide me with ideas to better understand reflection as a mental capacity and its role in learning collaborative negotiation skills.

More specifically, Fonagy and Target (1997) focus on the role of a child's emotional relationship with its parents in fostering the capacity to understand interactions in psychological terms (p. 30). "Fonagy and Target (1997) stated that reflective function is the developmental acquisition that permits the child to respond not only to other people's behavior, but to his conception of their beliefs, feelings, hopes, pretense, plans, and so on" (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 679).

I will refer in detail to this concept of reflective function when I develop two of the psychic characteristics (C1 & C2) found in the in-depth analysis of the current research. Diamond & Marrone (2003) capture the essence of this concept in the below quote.

From this perspective, the capacity to reflect on oneself and others is the outcome of a developmental and interactive process, which is highly contingent upon the quality of the relationship with the caregiver or attachment figure. An awareness of the self and other involves the ability to take on a perspective of oneself from a position of another and of understanding the other as having a different experience from oneself. We see this as an outcome of developmental process. (p. 136)

In the remainder of the chapter I describe and discuss the six psychic characteristics observed in the analysis, using elements taken from the intersubjective perspective. I explain relevant concepts from this perspective and sometimes refer to the origins of the notions of early infancy relationships found in these theories. This explanation is necessary because some of the authors do not refer to the concepts in isolation. On the contrary, they often link the terms to the developmental process and to the vicissitudes of early relationships between an infant and its caregivers. "The development of children's understanding of mental states is embedded within the social world of the family, with its network of complex and often intensely emotionally



charged relationships, which are, after all, much of what early reflection needs to comprehend” (Fonagy et al., 2007, p. 30).

### **7.3 THE SECOND LEVEL OF ANALYSIS**

This level of analysis intends to answer the second research question, namely:

Which psychic characteristics are connected to the ways in which students reflect, and which of them best support students’ learning process of collaborative negotiation skills?

As I wrote in chapters 1 and 4, not all students possess the same psychic characteristics to engage in self-reflection in the same way. These differences in reflecting will, of a necessity, lead to differences in students’ respective learning processes. That is why, from my perspective, it is important to identify those psychic characteristics that are connected to the reflection process, and moreover to analyze which of them can best support students’ learning of collaborative negotiation skills. This second part of the question will be further developed in the last chapter, as I consider it important to connect the findings of this level of analysis to certain concepts from the theoretical chapters.

As I have previously stated in Chapters 1 and 4, it is important to develop an analysis of what reflection can realistically accomplish and how it can do so. I have also said that it is important to take into account two factors when carrying out this analysis: the learning context and individual psychology. In this chapter I intend to discuss the previous considerations from a psychoanalytical perspective.

One achievement of this level of analysis, as I mentioned in the first chapter, is that we were able to propose six psychic characteristics related to the ways in which students reflect. Three of those characteristics (4, 5, and 6) were new findings; these characteristics were consequently not considered in the initial parameters that I proposed to perform this part of the analysis.

The characteristics identified through this level of analysis are as follows:

- Making contact with oneself
- Connecting to others
- Reality perspective
- Understanding and expressing emotions
- Balanced narcissism
- Change process

These six characteristics will be conceptualized in section 7.4.

### 7.3.1 GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CASES

I will be referring to each of the five students of the sample using pseudonyms in order to protect their identities. The table below shows general information about the cases such as professional background, job position, type of company, length of work experience, age, gender, and the pseudonym used to refer to each student. This information is current for 2013, the year when the fieldwork was carried out.

**Table 13** *General information about the cases*

Case #	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Work experience	Profession	Job Position (2013)	Company Type
1	Lene	F	26	4 years	Marketing and International Business	Corporate Segment Coordinator	Airline Company
2	Juan	M	47	21 years	Agricultural Engineering	Landman Advisor and Resettlement Coordinator	Mining and Hydrocarbon Company
3	Fredy	M	34	10 years	Industrial Engineering	Social Management Operations Coordinator	Hydrocarbon Company
4	Lars	M	27	3 years	Management	International Cooperation Projects Coordinator	Coffee Growers Association
5	Mario	M	27	3 years	Engineering Management	Purchaser	Glass (and related products) Company

Student testimonies are quoted in two ways: when taken from a reflection, the letter R is combined with the reflection number, which is followed by the letter p and the number of the page where the quote was taken from. For instance, (R1, p2) corresponds to reflection one, page two. When I quote information from the interviews, I use the letter I, and the interview number, followed by the letter p and the page number. Thus, (I2, p2) means that the quote is from the second interview and is located on page 2.

### **7.3.2 THE WAY OF PRESENTING THE CASES**

The information from each case is divided into three sections: an initial description of the student, a psychoanalytical analysis of their psychic characteristics connected to their ways of reflecting in the context of learning collaborative negotiation skills, and a recapitulation of the main psychic characteristics observed in each case.

#### **7.3.2.1 Initial description of the student**

The negotiation profile of each student includes their learning goals as well as their experiences through their learning portfolios and particularly through their reflection processes. It also comprises student's ways of understanding reflection. The table below lists the aspects that I took into account when writing these descriptions, as well as the documents where the information was taken from.

**Table 14** *Aspects considered for the initial descriptions of the cases*

#	Aspects	Document where the information was taken from
1	Negotiator profile	Reflection 1 and 6
2	Learning objectives	Reflection 1
3	The learning objectives that students accomplished	Reflection 6
4	Additional learning	Reflection 6 and Interview 1
5	Paradigms and beliefs that students re-evaluated	Reflection 6 and Interview 1
6	What did students enjoy while negotiating?	Reflection 6
7	Students' definition of reflection	Interview 1
8	How easy or difficult did students find reflecting?	Interview 1
9	What did reflection allow students to do?	Interview 1
10	What did the e-learning portfolios allow students to do?	Interview 1
11	General information: age, gender, the type of organization they work with, length of work experience, position, and job description	Interview 1

### 7.3.2.2 An analysis of each case from the psychoanalytical perspective

This analysis seeks to illustrate students' psychic characteristics with examples taken from the reflection prompts that the students developed in their learning portfolios and from the interviews. Through this analysis, I formulate propositions of students' psychic characteristics that were corroborated through the second interview that I conducted with them.

The most important part of this case study is the psychoanalytical analysis, since it intends to give answers to the second research question mentioned above.

### 7.3.2.3 Recapitulation of each case from the psychoanalytical perspective

In the recapitulation, I summarize the findings of each case, highlighting the psychic characteristics that were predominant in each student.

## 7.3.3 FINDINGS OF THE SECOND LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

The findings of this level of analysis are presented in the order listed below:

- Case 1: Lene
- Case 2: Juan
- Case 3: Fredy
- Case 4: Lars
- Case 5: Mario

### **7.3.3.1 LENE**

#### **7.3.3.1.1 Initial description of Lene (Case 1)**

Lene is a 26-year-old woman with a bachelor's degree in marketing and international business. She has four years of professional work experience and currently works as the corporate segment coordinator of an airline. Her primary responsibility is to design services for the sector of the Spanish-speaking Americas.

Among the aspects that define Lene as a negotiator are her abilities to express herself, to defend a position persuasively, and to establish a clear starting point from which to achieve results.

As a student, Lene says that she generally takes her time to prepare for a negotiation and tends to get involved in negotiations where she has extensive knowledge of the topic. She believes that she takes a firm position when she has clear arguments to defend. However, although she listens to opposing arguments and considers her position to be one of mediation, her position is unshakeable when she feels she is right. She thinks that at times this may be an impediment to construction around differences.

While Lene admits that she was somewhat skeptical with regard to the idea that negotiation theory “could help her change, while maintaining her personality traits [and] without pretending” (R6, p2), in the first interview she shares that the learning portfolio was important because she believes in slow, step-by-step processes. This student comments that at each moment of the learning process there was something new that helped her to sharpen what she was learning in the course. It was because of this that she could see that she was evolving. This can be seen, in part, in the new qualities she identified as part of her profile as a negotiator that are included in her final reflection: “I am creative, analytical. I have good argumentative skills; I am good at

planning. I am coherent, logical. I have a good tone of voice that captures attention. I express my ideas and ask questions clearly, and I believe in excellence” (R6, p5).

This process of change that Lene experienced can also be seen in the various paradigms that she re-evaluated during the course, such as being bad at gaining courage, not being able to confront people whom she sees as stronger than herself, believing that she had the luxury of not listening to others, not being able to boost her sense of self-awareness, thinking that using fancy language is highly thought of, and, finally, for thinking that being direct is always dangerous.

One of the characteristics that has allowed this student to achieve change is her belief that there is always something new to learn and that there is always room for personal improvement. She defines herself as a lifelong learner. For Lene, the possibility to learn has to do with where one finds oneself at a given moment. Therefore, if she is studying, it is because she finds herself in a moment of seeking.

Lene feels that it is important to be self-analytical and is therefore accustomed to reflecting, although she feels that at times she overdoes it with her analysis. When she was given her current position, she took a test and was told that she analyzed a lot and that this trait could inhibit action. Lene says that the way she reflects is in her mind because there is not enough time to write things down, or there is only time during the Specialization in Negotiation that she is studying. However, when she was a child she would write stories.

This student considers herself to be analytical to the point of getting stuck overthinking things and turning them over in her head. However, she feels she has improved in terms of not letting herself get too stuck and has set herself the goal of finding a solution to a situation in a determined timeframe or simply moving on.

The way she conceives the act of reflection is as a reflection of oneself—to be able to look at oneself and analyze what is happening and why. It was easy for Lene to do the written reflections, and she thinks that the more one does this, the easier it gets. Lene thinks that

reflection allows one to go deeply into an issue and to detect patterns and currents of thought.

Reflection has helped her to refine her knowledge to be able to see to what extent she may or may not be able to apply it. Reflection as an instrument was surprising for her since she was not familiar with this tool in an educational setting. “I liked it because it touched on something that is important, which is to explore oneself” (I1, p1).

Lene had previously undergone a long process of self-discovery, not knowing that it was so important to negotiation. She liked the feedback even more because if she only wrote in a diary, no one would give her feedback. Lene perceived that feedback completed the reflection cycle, since it allows her to see more than she would have otherwise.

Lene thinks that if she analyzes herself and can see her strengths and weaknesses she can improve. “I realize that it’s about seeing what inputs one has in order to make the most of them” (I1, p1).

#### **7.3.3.1.2 Analysis of Lene from the perspective of psychoanalysis**

This learning portfolio initially allows one to recognize Lene’s capacity to identify the expectations of others and to respond by taking those expectations into account. This is manifest, in part, in her understanding of the questions and in her way of responding to them. Likewise, her reflections allow her to identify and communicate her expectations: “In different settings I have the ability to express myself, defend my point of view, and establish a departure point with a persuasive tone to achieve good results” (R1, p1).

This allows her, in turn, to develop clear and concrete objectives as she participates in a negotiation class: “With this proposition, and with the knowledge I have gained, my goal is to transcend my limitations and increase my competencies and in this way reach a higher level of professionalism” (R1, p2).

These capacities that help her to reflect could provide her with direction to search for solutions to difficulties and for the personal evolution that she seeks. However, Lene also demonstrates apparent

insecurities, manifest in feelings that could become obstacles to the accomplishment of her objectives. “I feel.... embarrassed, guilty, and afraid of failure” (R3, p2). “I am very analytical about everything, to the point of dwelling on things, turning them over and over in my head” (I1, p1).

At the same time, recognition of these feelings confirms what is mentioned above in relation to her capacity to make contact with herself and to identify her emotions.

Furthermore, Lene attains a deep level of reflection that is evident in her ability to identify and describe the steps that lead her to either achieve her objective or to make a mistake. She recognizes, then, not only her weaknesses but her strengths as well, such that her insecurities are not an impediment, and she is aware of her qualities, although she does not always have confidence in them.

In spite of my young age, I believe in my level of professionalism, in my ability to provide clients with solutions where both sides win. (R1, p1)

Perhaps it is precisely this sense of insecurity that has led Lene to assume rigid positions in certain situations. This inflexibility could be a defensive way of responding to her feelings of insecurity. She herself suggests this when she states, “Initially, I thought that if I wasn’t able to generate a certain chemistry or understanding with someone then I would feel bothered and would close off my position, or, on the contrary, if the other party was very strong I would feel like I was at a disadvantage and would reduce my performance” (R6, p3).

In the second interview, Lene says that she had not considered this before and that she believes that her insecurities lead her to doubt what she does, to remain quiet, and even to hold back. However, she believes that this rigidity in her posture is more of a response to observing the insecurities of others, or when she is staking a great deal of credibility on what she is proposing. Lene is confident that when she is calm, things go better for her. Although this requires time and effort, the recognition of this tendency allows her to assume a different attitude (remark made in her second interview).



In her reflections, Lene shows a capacity to question, redefine, and give meaning to different paradigms:

Before this course, I was afraid of not getting through it, of not having innate aggressive negotiation skills. But a good negotiator doesn't need to be the sharpest nor the most astute or fastest or most aggressive person. So, I didn't need to become someone else, but rather to discover these unique skills that are in me that make a good negotiator, to follow simple steps, to be methodical, and to use the tools that I have learned. (R6, p2)

The previous excerpt shows Lene's ability to evolve, to question her beliefs and paradigms while maintaining her criteria, and to ascertain the perspective of others in order to learn and create new meaning.

Over the course of this class, I reinforced a comment my boss made when I realized the value of listening to others and, more than just listening, keeping my interests in mind. By being more aware, I think I can focus more on this point and try to go beyond listening and remaining quiet while the other person is speaking, to instead listen actively. (R6, p2)

In spite of Lene's strong capacity to reflect, evident in her ongoing self-evaluation that is at once favorable and critical, the validity and usefulness of the outcome of her reflections may be affected by an unbalanced narcissism; that is to say, by her capacity to appreciate and value herself. This opens the possibility of a lack of confidence in herself, which leads her to doubt her capacities and to magnify the power of others over her. In this sense, it may be that the obstacles in her reflective processes stem from difficulty in perceiving herself and others objectively and realistically. In point of fact, these perceptions are always subjective, but in the case of Lene, this subjectivity is affected by her lack of self-confidence and feelings of inferiority, which may create difficulties for her to interact with others.

In her second interview, Lene adds that respect for hierarchies plays an important role in her personality, since they were always part of her education. This is something that has a negative connotation for

Lene, to the extent that she feels inferior when someone who is more important confronts her. This is a situational issue—some personalities affect her more than others—and it is an issue in which she feels she has made gains because she knows that treating a boss as if they were God is not effective. Now she tries to accord each person the value they deserve, independently of their job or social position. However, it is still something that affects her.

Lene thinks, furthermore, that she has grown a lot in terms of self-confidence, although she knows that she still has a long way to go. That is why she wants to continue working on this issue, although not to the point of becoming egotistical. Lene is trying to balance her narcissism and focus on increasing her feelings of self-confidence, but not to an extreme point, which could turn her into the kind of person she does not like.

It would seem that the reflection process through the learning portfolio has allowed her to understand her reality better and expand her capacity to identify difficulties, which is an indispensable step to beginning to resolve them. “While we progressed through the class and I was learning something new, I felt like it was really logical and that it would be easy for me to apply. But when it came down to it, it wasn’t so easy. Within a situation, one tends to lose sight of oneself and not be very objective” (R6, p2). In Lene’s case, it seems that her reflective capacity led her to transform simple situations and to set the stage to elaborate other, more complex ones (change process).

Thinking about what was learned during the course throughout the reflective process, it seems that Lene improved her capacity to integrate and take into account the needs of others in order to work more collaboratively. Lene adds that, in general, the Specialization in Negotiation has helped her to be more at ease and to feel better about her interactions with others. “I feel like I am more relaxed with people” (I2, p1).

Therefore, being able to think about herself and about her characteristics as a negotiator—which are, in turn, related to her personal traits—has helped her to achieve the objective presented at the beginning: “For this purpose, and with the knowledge I have acquired,

my goal is to transform my limitations to raise my skill level and thereby reach a higher stage in my professional career” (R1, p1). “I have learned a lot lately; before I was more focused on the things that are not so positive” (I1, p1).

An additional consequence of her reflections was that Lene began to question the paradigms such as those mentioned in the descriptive section of this case. Whether consciously or unconsciously, those paradigms could have stood in the way of her achieving her goals: “I have discovered that this imagined idea that women are not entitled to ask for things is not valid. As a woman you can [ask for things]” (I1, p2).

Questioning paradigms can be an important step to generate changes in the way one thinks and acts. Given this, Lene adds in her second interview that before she took the course she thought that being a woman meant that some things were taken for granted and that she must conform to this. However, she is not a conformist, so she resolved to not remain the same and realized that it was possible to go further.

There is one element that this participant has not really faced, namely, extreme reflection leading to situations that are unrealistic, or reflection leading to a false sense of tranquility, particularly when a person blames themselves for certain situations. Lene reveals this when she comments that her mother would think a lot about things, but not take action. Lene thus vowed to herself that, “I won’t do the same thing” (I2, p1).

For this reason, it is important that Lene receive sufficient feedback on her reflection outcomes, since feedback allows her to see things that she does not see by herself. Lene clarifies in her second interview that she has some insecurities and fears, which work against her even though she knows she possesses great skills. At the personal level she is harder on herself and tends to have feelings of guilt, compared to the professional realm, where her sense of security is greater because she relies on what she knows and what she is prepared for.

However, Lene sees something positive in her sense of guilt, inasmuch as it allows her to be aware when she speaks badly about someone. This then compels her to go back and seek out the person later to talk calmly. While she may not necessarily apologize, she tries to explain to the other person what she thinks took place. This points to her ability to connect with others, to the extent of intending to make reparation with people affected by her actions.

### **7.3.3.1.3 Recapitulating Lene from the perspective of psychoanalysis**

The analysis shows Lene's predominant capacity to be aware of herself and to give meaning to her experiences, learn from them, and take the opportunity to grow from them, both personally and professionally. To do so, it is important that she be aware of the evolution of her learning process, which has allowed her to recognize how she has changed and has also given her the opportunity to bring new meanings to her learning experience.

One predominant aspect of Lene's reflective process is her methodical and serious manner throughout the reflection assignment, in spite of initial doubts about how negotiation theory could help her to change.

Lene recognizes that during the course (and the entire Specialization in Negotiation), she has made improvements in terms of her interactions with others. She observes her capacity to clearly and demonstrably understand and value others, allowing her to even rectify situations where someone has been affected by her actions.

While it is evident that Lene has changed in terms of managing her insecurities, she faces the challenge of continuing to make improvements in this regard, particularly by valuing her broad human capacities so that she can continue to strengthen them, a goal that she has set for herself.

At the end of the second interview, Lene comments:

This is really great; I love it. I have even thought about studying psychology, and I agree that my writings help me to read myself and understand how I am as a person at the conscious and unconscious level.

However, I'm sure that whoever did the analysis would have been able to see more things about me in person: my nonverbal communication, for example. (I2, p2)

### **7.3.3.2 JUAN**

#### **7.3.3.2.1 Initial description of Juan (Case 2)**

Juan is a 47-year-old man with a bachelor's degree in agricultural engineering. He has 21 years of professional experience and currently works as landman advisor and resettlement coordinator in a mining and hydrocarbon company. His job is to identify and acquire lands where the company operates. Juan is in charge of managing easements, controlling land invasions, and expropriations. He also has the responsibility of evaluating, preventing, and mitigating risks for communities.

For Juan, it is important to plan negotiations. This helps him to have clarity about the expectations and interests of the party he will be representing at the negotiation table, which, in turn, allows him to define the scope and limitations of decisions that may be made. In his own words:

I have frequently had to participate at the negotiation table with representatives of rural communities that live in difficult circumstances and who have big expectations about the negotiation process with the mining and Hydrocarbon Company that I represent. I dedicate a lot of time beforehand in the field and I talk openly with people. I look for facts and figures in order to identify opportunities to reach quick agreements that allow me to build confidence both with representatives at the table as well as with the community in general. (R1, p1)

This quote reflects not only what is clearly stated, but also the importance that Juan gives to the different actors involved in a negotiation, which results in informal and authentic encounters.

Among the weak points as a negotiator that this student identifies in himself is the potential to become emotionally involved if he detects a lie in the negotiation. To counter this, he generally negotiates with a team so that someone from the team can support him

if he feels affected by a suspicion of a lack of honesty. In the second interview, Juan shares that more recently he has tended to become less negatively engaged in these kinds of situations, and to do so, he prepares more and gives his team members more opportunities to participate. He even plays the role of observer at times. All of these are techniques that help him to find a counterbalance to the difficulties mentioned above.

While previously Juan had learned about negotiation empirically, as part of his learning objectives for this course he set the goal of “[developing] the personal and professional skills and abilities to allow me to go into a negotiation in a planned and strategic manner” (R1 p2).

This participant believes that he reached his learning objectives, particularly those related to communication tools and, as part of this, the way to formulate questions and active listening. In his own words: “I discovered that I like knowing that active listening helps others and me to base negotiations on true interests and not on how people express themselves” (R6, p1).

Juan considers that as part of his learning process, topics related to value creation were improved. In his initial interview, he adds that, while before the course he had the ability to create value (those abilities related to collaborative negotiation), he is now much more aware of these skills and has learned new tools to reinforce them.

Juan understands reflection as “the possibility to think about an issue that one is involved in emotionally. [...] if the issue doesn’t affect you personally, then it is difficult to reflect about it” (I1, p1).

Juan indicates that he could identify two particular moments when he developed reflection: the initial reflection, in which he did so to fulfill an assignment, and the final reflection, where he was able to identify and become emotionally involved. He believes that the way the questions were posed in the reflection prompts resulted in an emotional attachment to the topic.

When trying to establish possible connections between the reflection process and the learning in the course, Juan points out that when a relationship between the concept and the experience is not established the concept is easily forgotten; when the opposite occurs, however, he makes an effort to remember and apply the learned concept. That is why he highlights that allowing an emotional aspect to be introduced into an issue allows one to solve problems or to establish a link between concepts and actual experiences.

In the first interview, Juan associates what he has learned with the process of reflection, stating that he learns more when he has the opportunity to make conclusions and construct his own responses. On the contrary, he does not learn when he must memorize data or summarize readings. In the second interview he complements this idea by saying that now he reflects in a more systematic way and that he has created a space in his office that encourages further reflection. “There are no computers or tables there, only a board for writing or sketching what I am thinking” (I2, p 1).

As far as the feedback given to his reflections, Juan considers that even though it was useful, he took certain elements and disregarded others. He took the feedback into account when he felt that it was aligned with his needs or his experiences.

In terms of what he would change about the reflection process, he says that he would have liked to have a grading rubric for the reflection prompts, like the one he found for nonviolent communication (Reflection 3). Juan believes that these rubrics help students to become centered and to see that the true value of the exercise is in the experience and not in the concepts themselves.

Finally, this student considers Jiminy Cricket, the character from Pinocchio, who is used in the course as a metaphor to illustrate reflection as a form of dialogue with one’s conscious, to be valuable for the process of reflection. “Jiminy Cricket helped me to determine my own profile as a negotiator and to identify opportunities better” (R6, p5).

### 7.3.3.2.2 Analysis of Juan from the perspective of psychoanalysis

There is something particular about Juan's reflections, in that he had already dedicated space to reflection and was identifying the advantages that could be gained from it in terms of self-awareness and personal and professional development. In his first interview, he mentions that he tends to reflect "at the end of the day at home [...] in a specific space, with low lighting, in order to resolve work, personal, or economic problems" (I1, p1). One difference from his habit of reflection is that the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course was an opportunity for Juan to reflect in a written manner and with learning purposes.

Juan has been exercising his capacity to connect with himself and to perceive the expectations and needs of others for some time. However, he has found more challenges with the second capacity, since when he is developing activities related to his job he is more able to connect with others, especially with rural communities, rather than with other members of the company he works for. In this sense, one can identify a personality trait in Juan that may be somewhat contradictory. On the one hand, Juan values himself and his own needs, without these being an impediment to giving importance to the interests of his counterpart and to seeking to reconcile different interests. This attitude can be evidenced in the respect and the importance he gives to the negotiation parties and in the genuine encounters he has with communities. On the other hand, Juan struggles at times to connect with others. In his second interview he manifests that he was previously more focused on moving the project forward than in the people who were involved. This led him to earn a reputation as a "bulldozer." Juan adds that he has set himself the challenge of developing solidarity with people and that a process of coaching together with the graduate Specialization in Negotiation have helped him.

Juan is a curious person and this is manifest in the questions that he puts forward, which are characterized by his search for depth and understanding of different issues. This curiosity particularly helps him to explore the interests of the people involved in the negotiation.



Furthermore, an adequate perspective of reality can be observed in the case of this student. This ability has been useful when there is a need to identify problems, to set limits by taking his values into account, and to look for solutions. Juan seems to be strategic at interacting with people, listening to them with the purpose of identifying their interests.

Frequently, conflicts emerge because of problems with communication or misinformation. Therefore, I first promote a period of “grieving” so that the counterpart can unburden themselves of everything that they are feeling and have not been able to express. In this stage, I can be very tolerant and understanding, since through the flow of unburdening I tend to discover very useful information that allows me to acquire details about the true interests of my counterpart. Once that stage is over, I begin to make proposals about the form and logistics of what I want to achieve, and I seek clarity in terms of the logistics to be agreed upon and non-negotiable values such as respect, transparency, and teamwork in the construction of solutions. (R1, p1)

Undoubtedly, his capacity to make contact with himself contributed in large part to Juan’s clarity about his learning objectives from the beginning:

My objective in this course on Theory and Strategies of Negotiation is to develop the personal and professional skills and capacities that allow me to approach negotiations in a more planned and strategic manner through the practical application of tools and theoretical concepts and to therefore strengthen my profile as a negotiator. (R1, p1)

This clarity becomes more extensive as he recognizes what he is willing to do to achieve his proposed objective: “To fulfill these objectives I am willing to avail myself of my full intellectual capacity to un-learn and learn the concepts and tools to explore and recognize the aspects of my personality that are essential for negotiation” (R1, p1).

It is noteworthy that he points out that in order to learn some things, he must unlearn others. In addition, he demonstrates a sense of

self-assuredness that he identifies as knowing himself and knowing where he is going in this process.

Comparing these initial positions with Juan's process and achievements, it becomes evident that the course strengthened his capacity to integrate theory with practice. This capacity to integrate is also manifest when he realizes he has made errors and when he manages to learn from those experiences. In the process of reflection one can also see the evolution of skills he already possessed and the resulting awareness of potential that until then he may not have been conscious of or did not know how to exploit:

I reinforced some skills that I am now aware of, for example, value creation" (R6, p2). "I had never been conscious of improving my skills in order to create value. I discovered the fears that I had, for example, to make distant counteroffers and the tediousness of bargaining. I understood the reasons for those fears and learned to recognize that I wasn't good at claiming value and at determining what concepts to sharpen. (I1, p2)

That he has been able to identify his fears and consequently question his paradigms, giving new meaning to certain experiences, is further evidence of his learning process. "I have also broken away from the false belief that, faced with a first distant proposal, one may not make a counterproposal in order to reset the anchor" (R6, p5).

Juan recognizes the difficulties of ending the reflection process and that these difficulties often lead to a needless prolongation and deterioration of the possibility of finding resolution. This has implications for his perception of reality, specifically in relation to certain difficulties in establishing limits, which can, in turn, have an emotional effect where Juan is unable to stop thinking about a situation. Likewise, when he is unable to sleep. "After reflecting, sometimes it is hard for me to disconnect and to stop thinking or even to go to sleep, especially when I feel passionate about the issue" (I1, p1).

In spite of this, Juan indicates in the second interview that he has changed a great deal in this respect. In his opinion, this is owing to his interest in controlling the situation and always finding the best solution. Now he is confident that the time he invests in negotiations, as well as in focusing on the interests of the people in negotiations, will bring about the best solutions.

The value that Juan gives to the process of reflection puts him in a unique position in terms of utilizing it as a learning opportunity, resulting in his being able to strengthen his ability to perceive different aspects of a given situation, taking in a broader view where multiple possible courses of action that are favorable to him and others emerge.

As far as personal skills, I gained competence by using tools such as nonviolent communication that are useful for me to understand the emotions of my spokespeople and to adopt a respectful posture regarding the feelings of others, without judging their behavior but rather exploring the true interests that are generally not expressed. (R6, p1)

### **7.3.3.2.3 Recapitulating Juan from the perspective of psychoanalysis**

Taking into account Juan's analysis, a narcissism that is seemingly balanced becomes clear, allowing him to value himself and defend his ideas, and at the same time to recognize others as separate and independent beings, with their own needs and expectations. The analysis also indicates another one of Juan's capacities, which is related to the possibility of integration of theory and practice, of experiences with the emotions that they generate, and of his own needs with those of others. Juan points out, however, that this last observation has been part of an ongoing process in which he currently finds himself, in order for him to feel solidarity with others and to give others the importance that they deserve.

Likewise, this student demonstrates an appropriate capacity to understand his emotions, to recognize them, and to give space in negotiations for others to express themselves and their own emotions. However, he is aware that this attitude does not necessarily imply a real

interest in others but rather a way to acquire information, which may help him to make proposals at the negotiation table.

The fact that this student was already in the habit of reflecting, the importance that he attributes to the process as part of his goal to build something new, and the way he emotionally connects with his reflections all allow him to take advantage of the reflective process that supported the changes and the lessons he reported.

Furthermore, an adequate perspective of reality can be observed in the case of Juan that has proved useful when it comes to identifying problems, setting limits by taking into account his values, and planning, all of which allow him to obtain clarity about the negotiation prospects.

In the second interview, Juan was satisfied when presented with the above vision of himself. He was particularly pleased to learn through our dialogue that a sense of guilt is generated when a person is truly concerned about the consequences their actions may have on others and has the ability to rectify the situation. In this regard, this participant feels that this knowledge aids him in his challenge of continuing to work on sensitivity and solidarity in the face of the feelings and needs of others.

### **7.3.3.3 FREDY**

#### **7.3.3.3.1 Initial description of Fredy (Case 3)**

Fredy is a 34-year-old man with a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering. He has ten years of work experience, six of which have been in social responsibility in the hydrocarbon sector. During the course and at the time the first interview, he was the coordinator of social management of operations in a Colombian hydrocarbon company. Among his responsibilities was coordinating social management with operations to make the social aspects viable. He was also in charge of coordinating the social management team of the company.

Fredy thinks of himself as disciplined and analytical, traits that he considers to be very good for planning negotiations and defining agendas. Among his identified weaknesses as a negotiator, he

recognizes a difficulty in listening as well as a lack of willingness and humility. Furthermore, he thinks he is impatient when he believes that his counterpart uses ideas and arguments that he considers to be false or intentionally misleading in order to strengthen their position. When this happens, this student feels the need to stop the intervention and to demonstrate to others that they are wrong.

As part of his learning objectives for the course, Fredy proposed to “become familiar with and work on the personal aspects that can empower me as a negotiator” (R1, p2). He also manifests his interest in learning “tools to know how to develop negotiation with individuals that have a different sense of ethics and personal values and who don’t act in accordance with Colombian law” (R1, p2).

Among the learning goals that Fredy achieved during the course, the one with regard to defining objectives and goals in negotiations in the planning stage stands out for how it contributed to his personal growth. This allows the organization where he works to compare what was planned to what was achieved (in a simple way) during the negotiation and for him to see whether he performed well in the negotiation. This has helped him to have a clear concept of self-evaluation of his performance as a negotiator and to reduce self-criticism.

The most important paradigm that Fredy reassessed as a result of the course was that of thinking that his interests are opposed to those of his counterpart. He learned that in many cases there are more common interests than he previously realized.

What Fredy likes best in the negotiation process is the possibility to influence others in order to create value at the negotiation table. “What motivates me and what I really like is the genuine appreciation from counterparts when they realize that good agreements can be reached that can go beyond the initial expectations that they may have had before negotiation” (R6, p5).

Fredy is accustomed to reflecting as much about what has occurred as about what will happen: “[It is usual for me] to dream or to wake up thinking about an issue” (I1, p1). This is so much the case that

the act of reflection sometimes keeps him awake or leads him to talk to himself, thinking about what he will say to others.

This student defines reflection as the posing of a series of questions, such as: What happened? Why did it happen? What could I have done better? What should have been better planned? What could others have done differently?

Reflection during the course was useful for Fredy to recognize his weaknesses better. Furthermore, although he is able to recognize his strengths, it is more important for him to concentrate on his weaknesses. In his second interview he explains that for him, making an error presents a better learning opportunity than doing things well.

Thanks to the reflection process, he additionally reinforced the lessons he was learning, such as the importance of preparation, as well as sharing and making explicit his point of view. Moreover, he came to understand that the only certainty in negotiation is the opening discourse, as afterward everything becomes uncertain (comment made in the second interview).

One of the reasons why Fredy values the reflection process is because he feels it is useful to see how negotiation can be applied to one's daily life and work in general. "While an essay helps one to understand a concept, reflection helps one to apply it" (I1, p1).

This student believes that the reflection process contributed to his learning about collaborative negotiation; especially because of the importance he gives to building relationships over the long term, where creativity and curiosity are critical. Fredy also values the learning portfolio and the reflection prompts.

The orientation that they give you is important; without them, one focuses on what one thinks is most important and misses the opportunity to go into topics that could be interesting. I identified with the part of the course where we had to reflect, and I saw it as one of the advantages. It helped me to look within. (I1, p3)

Something that Fredy would have changed about the reflection process would be to orient the process differently for different student profiles. With this in mind, he thinks that there could have been more guidance for certain students, while others could be left to be more free in the process. Likewise, in his opinion, the first class could have included an exercise where students carry out a negotiation for the group to observe and then pause to reflect, asking the other students how it could have been improved. Fredy adds that this could demonstrate that the usefulness and objectives of reflection are to stop and think about what could be changed and improved upon.

### **7.3.3.3.2 Analysis of Fredy from the perspective of psychoanalysis**

This student demonstrates an interest in learning, in changing some of his personal characteristics, and in maintaining others. One characteristic of Fredy is that he integrates experiences with lessons, using the ability of integration as a way to appropriate the concepts and to try to put them into practice.

Considering the learning objectives proposed by Fredy in his initial reflection and which are cited in the description of this case, it is evident that he has an interest in making self-improvements. It is also possible to identify aspects that he believes may negatively affect his performance as a negotiator. “Having had military training gives me an authoritative tone when I express my ideas and affects how they are interpreted, sometimes even sounding aggressive to the other party” (R1, p2).

His desire to explicitly change and to learn to listen better, to not become impatient, and to communicate his ideas adequately, as well as to avoid aggressiveness, are learning objectives that are very clear.

The reflections of this student are characterized by an adequate capacity for self-criticism that allows him to be aware of his mistakes and aspects to be improved from a neutral point of view, without blaming himself or feeling shame. This is equally associated with a capacity to make contact with himself and with a reality perspective.

I believe that, in terms of the personal objectives posed in reflection #1, I still don't know myself well enough to overcome being impatient. It still happens. Like I mentioned above, it's been a big help for me to prepare myself ahead of time for potential attacks that my counterpart may throw at me, and to know how to react and how to manage them. Nevertheless, there are still moments during a negotiation that take me by surprise and where I think that I am still really impatient. I need to understand myself better in order to continue to improve my skills as a strategic negotiator. (R6, p3).

The previous quote also demonstrates the value that Fredy places on learning, and, at the same time, his awareness that there is still a great deal to learn, particularly how to overcome the challenge of regulating his emotions. It can likewise be observed that this student gains greater self-assuredness and demonstrates some changes, which can be seen in the following quote: "I also discovered that I have more patience and can focus better on my objectives than I realized before. In other words, I have the capacity to adequately manage attacks and threats during negotiations" (R6, p2).

Another characteristic that is predominant in Fredy's reflections and that is demonstrated in the previous examples is his ability to take into account the interests of others, as well as to value the participation and input of others (capacity to connect with others). This aspect is illustrated in the following quote:

When I pose questions, I am building a mental map about the true interests of my counterpart. Once I have formed a hypothesis of the counterpart's interest and I have a mental map more or less laid out, I take a chance and share it and find that most of the time I hit it right on target. To my surprise, I overcome a preconception that is out there that my interests are contrary to the interests that my counterpart may have. It's very useful to identify common interests since that's where you can build and propose options that include all of the important things on the table. (R6, p4).

Although it was previously proposed that Fredy had many challenges to overcome in terms of regulating his emotions, various examples and instances in his portfolio display adequate ways of



understanding and expressing his emotions. This is seen when one understands what is taking place at the emotional level in the negotiation, where he makes a great effort to not engage in and not respond in kind to negative manifestations from his counterpart. “To analyze a situation from this perspective (without judgment) has allowed me to remain cool, to focus on my objectives in the negotiation and not on the attacks and value judgments that could take place” (R6, p7).

On the other hand, this student shows an interest in the image that he projects to others, which is related to his interest in caring about others.

[I fear] not being sufficiently skilled when I go to make an attack or threat when the situation requires it. More than presenting an attack or threat, I am concerned that I don’t know how to present it in such a way that my counterpart [doesn’t] feel offended or attacked. I think there are subtle ways of doing that. Maybe this is complemented by the ability to establish limits without having them be interpreted as a closed or obstinate attitude on my part. (R6, p6).

Fredy clarifies in the second interview that the objective of this previous observation is to establish limits, but without the intention of negatively affecting the other person in the negotiation. This is part of an appropriate handling of the reality perspective, as well as the capacity to connect with others.

This student shows throughout his portfolio the capacity to take into account a reviewed theory, as well as to integrate experiences with what he has learned. He can, therefore, look to the past and make associations with the present. This capacity allows him to integrate new concepts with familiar ones. “I had already built and developed certain skills as a negotiator empirically, but I didn’t have names to give them or concepts to associate them with. It has been really interesting to connect these points to the past” (R6, p2).

Fredy develops a few strategies that are not compatible with the collaborative approach of the course, but that he believes to be relevant and that he wishes to maintain. They are related to having influence

over others through the demonstration of power and are more closely associated with competitive negotiations than with a collaborative model.

In one reading for a negotiation course led by a consulting company called Scotwork, I read the following: before entering a negotiation, one should always seek to convince the other party, because that doesn't require any work. That is to say, at a minimum, one must concede at least one thing in order to gain another in exchange. Nevertheless, on many occasions, especially in my work, I go into a meeting with the objective of convincing [the other party], more than negotiating. And I say convince because we already know that, in the relationship with our counterparts, there is more [at stake] to lose through negotiation than there is through trying to convince. (R6, p8).

In the second interview, it was possible to discuss this issue and understand it in context. Fredy clarifies that in his job he is constantly confronted with negotiations with people whose values are at the edge of legality (an issue which he poses as a challenge in the initial description of the case). A typical example of these situations is that such people, after arriving at an agreement, go into the next meeting with the intent of changing the agreement in order to gain an advantage for themselves. In such moments, Fredy thinks that it is necessary to take a firm stance and to abandon the collaborative model for a time. In his words: "I thus had to resort to saying that I didn't come to renegotiate but to reiterate what we had negotiated the week before, where we had developed an inclusive and collaborative negotiation. The minimum of any negotiated agreement is respect for what has already been agreed upon" (I2, p1).

It is additionally possible to observe a trait that occasionally hinders Fredy's ability to connect with the feelings and needs of others, which results in him placing responsibility for his own behavior on others. An example that reveals this is the following: "Citizens who resort to illegal actions to impede the development of a project will not be captured or punished and will not be held liable" (R3, p1).

His manner of expression in certain situations, such as, "I felt tricked, cheated, disappointed," has a similar effect. Such language,

according to the nonviolent communication theory of Marshall Rosenberg (cited in the theoretical framework), refers to thoughts generated by feelings that demonstrate what a person thinks another person has done to them and that do not reflect their own feelings. In other words, it is placing responsibility on others for one's own feelings; in this case, "you tricked me, you cheated me, and you let me down." In reflection #3 (which is about nonviolent communication), however, a change of focus can be noticed through the questions that Fredy suggests be asked, which show his interest in changing the focus to integrate the interests of others with his own. "Could someone please explain why the workers are asking for a raise? The rate for the trucks? And the budget for the voluntary social investment? They have every right to ask for these things, but I propose that those issues be dealt with in another meeting" (R3, p2). This change shows Fredy's desire to connect with the needs of others, which is one of his dominant characteristics.

Fredy clarifies that he is capable of sustaining an attitude that takes other people into account when he feels that the other person is acting correctly. "I can be fair with a contractor who had a problem and needs help, but if someone blows it three times, then I don't feel like helping and I don't feel guilty about it" (I2, p1). This behavior, according to Fredy, is owing to a sense of justice.

### **7.3.3.3 Recapitulating Fredy from the perspective of psychoanalysis**

Ongoing learning is a predominant attitude for Fredy, and the lessons he learns imply integrating experiences from the past with the present. He applies this capacity of integration to appropriate concepts, seeking to put them into practice. One of the capacities that this student applies to his learning process is being self-critical. He made his previous observations from an 'I' perspective and therefore does not negatively judge himself, which reflects adequate management of a perspective of reality that he views objectively.

Fredy's interest in learning is accompanied by his capacity to improve characteristics of his personality in a measured and authentic manner. Therefore, he incorporates what he finds useful from the course, but when it is more convenient for him to continue doing

something that he has previously done, he does so. This reflects his sense of self-assuredness (which is connected to a balanced narcissism), an aspect that he seems to have strengthened during the course.

Fredy also demonstrates a capacity to connect with others, which, in turn, is reflected in his characteristic of extending the benefit of the doubt. He tries to understand a particular situation before drawing conclusions. In situations where he disagrees with the attitudes or values of others, he does not hesitate to directly define appropriate limits, which again demonstrates his clear reality perspective.

Taking into account his learning objectives, this student still has challenges when it comes to learning to regulate his emotions more effectively, changing his tendency to make judgments of others (as he himself suggests), and, finally, avoiding blaming others for his actions.

In his second interview, Fredy comments that he is pleased to see what is said about him as a result of his efforts in his reflections, saying, “The conclusions from this will allow me to continue to reflect and to continue to make improvements as a negotiator” (I2, p1).

#### **7.3.3.4 LARS**

##### **7.3.3.4.1 Initial description of Lars (Case 4)**

Lars is a twenty-seven-year-old man with a bachelor’s degree in management. He has nearly three years of professional experience and works for an association of coffee growers. He is in charge of coordinating international cooperation projects, overseeing their administrative and financial aspects. His work involves international activities, including contact with the European office.

Lars says in his initial reflection that he has come to realize that he is a natural negotiator and that he believes that this activity is inherent in human behavior. In his first interview, he confesses that in his previous experience of reflecting in high school, he only did it to meet a requirement and did not put his heart into his efforts. He does not usually reflect on everyday things. If he did ever stop to make a reflection about something that he had done, it was not as deep or specific as what he has done for this course.

For Lars, to reflect is to stop and look back on the path recently traveled. This implies analyzing a specific topic in which he tries to objectively take the position of a third party and refrain from using qualifications. In addition, he thinks that while reflecting, it is important to separate what he did from his emotions and to be very aware. “Usually, I am very impulsive and I need a high level of consciousness to do this, which I don’t really feel capable of doing” (I1, p1).

Lars says that he is generally capable of following instructions and reflecting but that his interest does not go any further. “It may be that my reflections are not very detailed and are superficial; I don’t feel like I can do it. [...] My classmates went a lot deeper” (I1, p1). Therefore, when given the choice between writing an essay and reflecting as a final assignment for the course, he preferred the essay, which he viewed as an argumentation.

Although reflection in the learning portfolio was not his activity of choice, this student was able to give credit to the process, sharing that, as much as he found the task boring, he did feel that it served the learning purpose. “I am not enamored of the reflection [process], but I am conscious that it serves a purpose in the learning process that we are in” (I1, p4). In this way, he pointed out that he was indeed learning some practical things in the class; for example, that his body language communicates things that he does not want to transmit, and that his emotions lead him to act in ways that he does not desire.

As making various reflections was part of the learning portfolio, each time he thought to himself: “Another reflection, what am I going to say?” (I1, p3). Nevertheless, when he has been asked to reflect for other courses in the Specialization in Negotiation program, it has been easier. In his own words: “The first time was terrible, but by the fourth or fifth, it wasn’t so bad. And now, when we are doing it for this cycle, it’s better” (I1, p3).

Even though Lars did not feel drawn to reflection, he states that he would not change it. He liked having clear instructions and a grading rubric. However, he would have liked to have seen examples of the reflections of others. He explains by saying that while he agrees that reflections are very personal, he believes that being able to read what

others reflect about themselves would have helped him to analyze himself.

Lars admits that while he did make an effort in the reflection process, attempting to analyze carefully and sincerely, he still lacked depth. “There were issues that I knew I could go deeply into, but I didn’t feel like doing it” (I1, p3).

In terms of the feedback that he was given about his reflections, this student says that it allowed him to become aware of where he could make improvements and indicated his strengths. He thinks that the overall process allowed him to incorporate what he has learned and to integrate theory into his work; this overall process includes being observed by his professors while engaged in negotiation, and being able to reflect and receive feedback from them and from his classmates.

#### **7.3.3.4.2 Analysis of Lars from the perspective of psychoanalysis**

This case does not include the last reflection (R6) in the learning portfolio, since it was optional and, as I mentioned before, Lars chose the option of writing an essay. To compensate for the absence of this reflection, two additional ones were reviewed in detail.

In some of Lars’ reflections, difficulties to make contact with himself can be observed. He recognizes this when he points out that, “To analyze something that is internal, something within, is hard for me because you can’t be 100% objective” (I1, p1). “I really don’t want to analyze whether or not I am egotistical, if I stand up, if I speak quickly, etc.” (I1, p3).

He also acknowledges it when he states that, “It’s easier to look at others than it is to look at yourself” (I1, p1). These limitations in making contact with himself make it difficult to identify his own expectations, which are reflected, on the one hand, by the fact that his initial reflection did not include any learning objectives for the course.

On the other hand, they are also reflected in some of the reflection excerpts in which he points out the difficulty in anticipating the consequences of his actions. For example, by mentioning in the first reflection the proposal that he made to a professor, it seems that he

jumped to suggest something that would imply a disproportionate amount of work and a situation that he did not consider at that moment: “Without thinking about it and maybe under a little pressure—something that I should learn to control—I [made] the proposal” (R1, p1).

This, taken together with his surprise and concern regarding the reflection assignment, suggests that he may have felt insecure about achieving certain objectives in areas that he was unaccustomed to managing: “It’s a tough task for me, since it is not one of my strengths” (R1, p1). This attitude can be explained by what Lars shares in the first interview about the discomfort he feels when speaking about his qualities, as he fears being seen as egocentric (as he communicates below). Moreover, when he does manage to identify personal characteristics, it is easier for Lars to refer to his faults. “I can name all my defects, but with skills, I always think: could it be that I am actually egocentric, self-centered?” (I1, p4).

For this student, it is difficult to give himself value and to express his value, which is perhaps related to a narcissism that does not seem to be balanced. “It’s hard for me to speak in the first person; I see the ego getting in. I’ve become accustomed to academic language by speaking in the third person” (I1, p3).

These difficulties with narcissism are also reflected when he assumes rigid positions without questioning them, leading to inflexible behavior that inhibits a range of possible actions. Such difficulties are exacerbated by a possible distortion of reality that impedes him on occasion from admitting that his performance in a negotiation was not ideal and, therefore, limits the possibility of recognizing errors and making corrections. “We (the restaurant owners) already knew that by not reaching our goal we would not reach an agreement, so that is why we were so inflexible; we didn’t have a problem with not reaching an agreement” (R5, p4).

This statement was made to justify not having reached an agreement in a case where negotiation theory was reviewed and discussed during class. It was clear that there were many possibilities to reach a collaborative agreement in that case and that it was more

advisable for the parties to do that than to walk away from the negotiation table.

There are appraisals in Lars' discourse that show his awareness of his limitations regarding his tendency to cling to his previous statements or to maintain a position even when he hears arguments that contradict it. In other words, Lars does manage to question some of his positions through reflections, which implies a change that could indicate a lesson learned. One example of this is that having the opportunity to reflect retrospectively forced him to put himself in the position of his counterpart: "It's clear that this person felt impotent, mad [...] on the other hand, there were bad feelings, little willingness, anguish, pressure to do things" (R3, p1).

This demonstrates that by reflecting about the past he manages to rethink the situation and become concerned about the consequences of his actions for the other person. This happens when he contemplates the possibility that acting differently is within his reach and that he could have been more respectful of the other person.

The situation would have been different if I had proposed to help this person later with the translation of a presentation that needed to be done immediately. Likewise, if my manner of expressing myself had been less cynical and mocking, the discussion would have taken a different tone. (R5, p2)

It can also be seen that Lars integrates lessons into some of his reflections on negotiation skills, clearly describing the scope and limitations of his performance. "We tried to get and share information, but we didn't go deeply into common points nor did we try to make the meeting less formal" (R5, p1).

The problem was defined, but there wasn't enough flexibility when it came time to resolve it. The goal was not redefined, and when it became impossible to do so, any option for negotiating was abandoned. [...] With respect to this point, from the moment the negotiation became engulfed in a dispute, the possibilities to close it were minimal. The goals for both parties were clear and made it impossible to reach an agreement. (R5, p2)



Although the above quote again makes evident that it is difficult for Lars to speak in the first person (he includes his negotiation partner in his remarks), it shows that Lars has a process that includes a realistic viewpoint of himself and his surroundings, and that he is self-aware. Thanks to this attribute, he proposes thinking before acting, making his position flexible and expanding his way of thinking. It is clear that, from a learning perspective, Lars is open to questioning his paradigms and manages to contemplate different options for thinking and acting. This, in turn, demonstrates his willingness to change in terms of making contact with himself. “I learned that, for me, it is difficult to think about things that I have done in the past” (I1, p1).

Lars demonstrates difficulties in regulating his emotions. This is related to the way he recognizes his affections and the influence they have on his actions. In the first interview, he mentions having realized that he is highly influenced by his emotions, stating, “I reinforced this because, maybe I knew it, but I had never sat down to think about it [...] my emotions lead me to do things I don’t want to do” (I1, p1).

#### **7.3.3.4.3 Recapitulating Lars from the perspective of psychoanalysis**

From this analysis, one can pose a proposition about the predominant psychological mechanisms of Lars. These are perhaps best summarized as difficulty in regulating his emotions, and challenges to make contact with himself and to connect to others, caused, in part, by an unbalanced narcissism that distorts his perspective of reality at times.

Furthermore, one could say that difficulty in regulating his emotions, making contact with himself, and connecting to others lead Lars to unconsciously seek refuge in situations that are more comfortable for him, such as ideas and theories. This apparent tendency to rationalize his emotions can be seen in his preference for essays over reflection and in an example from his second interview in which he talks about a period in his life when he was able to make positive changes to his emotional state by reading theoretical books and articles (with no initial goal to make those changes).

Through this process, he was able to appreciate how he was able to overcome his own resistance and to reflect about past events, as well

as to identify errors. This sets the basis to continue to work toward his objective of thinking before acting, and to review the way his emotions may affect his decision-making.

At the end of the second interview, Lars said, “I liked reading this; it’s good to be read by someone” (I2, p1).

### **7.3.3.5 MARIO**

#### **7.3.3.5.1 Initial description of Mario (Case 5)**

Mario is a twenty-seven-year-old man with a bachelor’s degree in engineering management. He has three years of professional experience. At the time of the first interview, he was working in the purchasing department of a multinational corporation that makes glass and related products. Among his activities, he is in charge of bringing together suppliers and finding benefits, such as cost reductions in products that the company acquires. He must also provide support to other areas of the organization and its directors in the search and research of providers.

One element that he considers to be in his favour in negotiations is that he is able to establish good interpersonal relations and to develop the skills necessary to work in teams. He considers the best way to interact with people with whom he negotiates to be cordially and ethically. In this way, Mario is characterized by a respectful and careful nature; it is also important to him that both parties in a negotiation be satisfied with the results. He enjoys the activity of negotiation, principally because he sees it as a learning opportunity.

The learning objective that Mario set for himself for the course was the following: “To learn the theory and process of negotiation as a whole, from preparation to the end stage, in order to analyze the surroundings and identify scenarios that could emerge during the process and then apply the tools I have learned” (R1, p2).

In terms of this learning objective, in Mario’s final reflection he states that it was feasible and he therefore achieved it. When he looks

at the objective in hindsight, however, he thinks it would have been better for him to go deeper into the topic of nonviolent communication and considers that doing so would have helped him in complex negotiations.

The changes that he noted in his performance in collaborative negotiations stem from the fact that he now looks for more information about the interests of his counterpart, whereas before the course he focused more on his own interests. He now asks questions that allow him to become familiar with the interests of others, whereas he previously failed to see the value of asking them. Mario explains that learning to do this has allowed him to identify common objectives and to reach better agreements that generate long-term relationships.

Throughout the course, Mario was able to identify qualities to create value. He considers himself to have the profile of a competitive negotiator who is dedicated to claiming value. While he previously believed that he negotiated win-win outcomes, in reality they were not so.

Mario understands reflection as a process of self-evaluation for an action and a subsequent analysis of whether that action was performed well or poorly. For him, that means looking retrospectively to see if there are things that he could change. However, he clarifies that he does not always change. For instance, when he believes that he has done things correctly; in such cases, he does not see any need to change.

Mario confesses that at the beginning of the course he thought that what was being asked of him in the reflections was outrageous. “I thought, ask me real things, data, theory; this, though, doesn’t make any sense” (I1, p1). He even commented to his boss and to others that he thought that the reflection process was “very strange” (I1, p1). Mario was surprised that the first reflection was a virtual assignment (taking place before the first class session) because he felt that it lacked context. He stated that if the reflections had been given more background, for example, if they had been accompanied by a lecture or if he had been told about the research behind the topic, he might have been more receptive. To reflect on the profile of a negotiator, however, without

understanding the meaning seemed to him a reflection from ground zero, and all the more so because he considers himself to be reserved.

For this reason, he decided to discuss the issue with his sister, who is 20 years old and studying communications. She told him that in her field she was often asked to do this kind of assignment and emphasized the importance of learning about oneself in order to interact with others. After this conversation, Mario decided to do the reflection, although he did so begrudgingly.

This student also admits that, thanks to the first round of feedback that he received, in which I (as his teacher) told him to examine himself more, he made progress. He now sees the usefulness of reflection. Starting with the conversation with his sister, he began to open up a little. During the exercises, he realized several things, such as that he tended to focus on negative aspects. He thus began to put up fewer barriers and became more collaborative. Mario comments that in terms of interpersonal relationships, it was similarly useful for him to become aware of times when he made mistakes with the other person. “You gave us the theory, and in the reflections one works on applying them in a negotiation. You say to yourself, ‘I am acting like a jackal right now.’ Reflections work because they are in context, but if you do it without a guide it’s not as useful” (I1, p2).

In terms of the learning portfolio, in which there were various reflections, Mario says that it holds the key to understanding the process of reflection.

If there had been one solely at the beginning, I would have continued to be negligent and in the end, I would have still been skeptical; I don’t think my manner of reflection would be any different than before. The fact that there are various [opportunities for] reflection gives you insight, and you open up a little more. (I1, p3)

Mario explains the reason for his having chosen to do the final reflection, even though he was given the option of writing an essay instead, by saying that he feels that he has never been very good at writing essays or reflections (he had never had to do them before). He

chose the reflection because he had begun to see what he was doing in negotiations.

### **7.3.3.5.2 Analysis of Mario from the perspective of psychoanalysis**

In the interviews, this student manifests the effort that is necessary for him to be self-aware and to learn from his experiences, and it is possible to see in his different reflections that he is capable of making contact with himself. This allows him to project a realistic vision of himself in which he indicates his assets and resources as well as his weaknesses.

In the initial part of Mario's portfolio, some mental mechanisms can be identified that limit his reflection capacities. For example, he excludes himself from being the subject of reflection, placing emphasis on facts and behaviors, speaking in the plural, and not analyzing what he could have done differently.

We proposed two options to the counterpart: to sell the restaurant or to partner with us. On one occasion when we made offers and they were not well received, we told them that a large part of success would be the use of the name. The options proposed sought for the couple to have their income assured and for us to have ownership of the restaurant. (R5, p2)

In the same line, one can see how he explains that the reasons for acting the way he did in a negotiation were due to an external event. In other words, he does not assume responsibility for what occurred. "We presented and expressed our interest in the restaurant. But we didn't focus on creating a safe environment, because, I imagine, it was [only] a case in the classroom setting" (R5, p1).

In the second interview, Mario said that placing emphasis on facts is, in part, the influence of the concept of nonviolent communication that was discussed in class, which emphasizes the separation of the act of observation from evaluation. Nonetheless, he agrees with what was said about him, stating that, "One tries to justify oneself when one lacks the capacity to reflect" (I2, p1).

In some of the reflections, one can additionally discern his opinion about certain situations rather than how he handles them. This is evident when he discusses what he thinks about a specific issue but does not refer to himself as a subject of reflection, as can be observed in the following example: “Both in inappropriate and inadequate communication there can be misunderstandings that hinder the negotiation process” (R1, p1).

Part of his learning objectives, mentioned in the initial description, are Mario’s interest in learning from others and including this learning in his interactions and decisions. It is important to highlight one psychological resource in this student, which is his interest in connecting with others, including the capacity to perceive others’ needs. This indicates a function where there is room for otherness. This can be illustrated in the following anecdote:

The factors that help me in my role of negotiator are that I am curious, I like to learn about all kinds of things, and, finally, from each person I negotiate with I can learn something, whether aspects to apply or to take into account to avoid. Furthermore, I find it easy to establish conversations and to relate to other people, and I enjoy the negotiation process. As I said earlier, I see it as an opportunity to learn. (R1, p1).

This text also shows Mario’s capacity of making contact with himself and attending to his own needs, as well as his ability to see where the other person stands with different perspectives and needs, which he also attends to. Another example of his capacity to connect with others is the following: “We were also able to apply a lot of what we learned in class in order to understand what the interests of our counterparts were through questions focused on finding out what the counterpart is looking for” (R5, p4).

We see here a person with a balanced narcissism, who perceives reality clearly, who sees others, and who differentiates between his own perspective and that of others. This case shows, then, Mario’s respect for others, an aspect that he himself mentions in his interview. When he manages to achieve empathy, he is capable of showing respect for others, although he occasionally acts in the opposite way.

Another one of Mario's resources is his capacity for self-awareness. Placing him in a secure position when he faces certain events, self-awareness helps him to sustain his point of view and to not have doubts about the reactions of others in the negotiation, instead sustaining his sense of self and what he believes to be important. "I also told him that he should help us and that I understood why he didn't, but that in the future we were going to take into account his ideas in the factory and start from the beginning if he thought that was the way to proceed" (R4, p2).

One possible limitation of this sense of security in Mario is that it could lead him to not question his actions, heightening his confidence that what he is doing is correct. This is manifest in his first interview. When asked if he is accustomed to reflection, he responds that only slightly and then recounts a conversation with his mother, who told him that he was stubborn and that his behavior would not get him very far. Mario comments on this, saying, "I have to make a big mistake in order for me to stop and reflect, and I think it is because I am not very flexible" (I1, p1).

Such rigid and incontrovertible positions could lead Mario to a distorted reality perspective, impeding him from seeing things that he does not consider relevant. In this order of ideas, we can see characteristics that may denote apparent contradictions in the meaning and the effect that reflection has for this student. On the one hand, he says that he does not usually reflect on his actions, that he does not like to do so, and that it is difficult for him. On the other hand, one sees a clear process of reflection throughout his portfolio. For some reason, it is hard for him to admit that he reflects. Perhaps not reflecting is a defensive characteristic born of a fear of questioning his positions and making changes. This would lead him, at times, to act in an intransigent way and not integrate, thereby limiting the possibility of reconciling his position with that of others (which is connected to an unbalanced narcissism). Mario agrees with this analysis and complements it by saying that when there is a situation or person that he dislikes, or with whom he cannot feel empathy, then he "is steadfast in not integrating" (I2, p1).

Contrary to the above, when this student is able to connect with his feelings and with others, he is capable of effecting a change in the situation. He can do so based on what he knows about himself, as well as taking into account certain aspects that he recognizes as difficult for him. He admits that, “Something that can make my role difficult as a negotiator or that can lower my eagerness to advance the negotiation is my intolerance when my superiors prolong [the process] or [impose] definitions when there is no need” (R1, p1).

The process that can be observed in the learning portfolio of this student indicates his having evolved (change process). Throughout his reflections one sees advances reflected in an improved capacity of making contact with himself and in the lessons learned. One can see an evolution in what becomes significantly descriptive, in which the student progresses from a difficulty to see himself as a subject of reflection to an ability to reflect about himself and his experiences in negotiations as a subject of reflection.

In answer to the question of how he felt during the final reflection of the course, he says, “A little more comfortable than I felt when writing the first reflection, but it is still strange for me. You begin to get practice and it’s a little easier. Obviously, looking within is difficult. In the end, it gets easier because there is more context and more issues” (I1, p2).

Here it is evident that the process of reflection is still an effort for Mario, but ongoing practice has made it easier.

### **7.3.3.5.3 Recapitulating Mario from the perspective of psychoanalysis**

One characteristic of this student is the predominance of paradoxical logic. One can see that he does not practice reflection for fear of questioning himself and that he criticizes the process. However, in his learning portfolio he demonstrates that he is capable of reflection, that his way of doing so has evolved, and that he recognizes its benefits. For the same reason, he is sometimes self-aware and at other times is not.



When Mario achieves empathy, he is capable of connecting with others, but without empathy he is not able to include others. It is also possible to see how he functions in terms of a balanced narcissism; in which he demonstrates a high level of self-assuredness. This leads him at times to the extreme of displaying inflexibility and not questioning his position. All of this is due to a psychological functioning where contrary elements coexist with others that are not contrary. It is not necessary to eliminate any one element for internal coherence to take place, as this paradoxical logic is part of the function of the unconscious dimension in the psychoanalytical perspective.

Perhaps it is for this reason that this case demanded the most time and effort from me. I did not come to these conclusions when I initially read the work carried out by the colleague who assists me with the first step of this analysis. When I reviewed the case in detail, however, I thought that, while the first step of the analysis was adequate, something was lacking to show the whole Mario. It was as if my psychoanalyst colleague had seen only one side of the coin and I had seen the other side, and only together could we substantiate this apparent paradox. Being his professor, I had closer interaction with him.

Furthermore, it may be concluded that Mario has given the process of reflection a chance and gradually included himself as a subject, using reflection to analyze situations that he has participated in to think about himself and to learn.

At the end of the second interview, Mario suggested that he thought that this analysis was right on target. He added that there are aspects of the interpretation that he will be able to accommodate to his way of being. Having the chat (second interview) helped him to understand and to define some of his traits.

### 7.3.3.6 ANALYSIS OF THE PSYCHIC CHARACTERISTICS OBSERVED IN THE FIVE CASES

The best definition of reality is the one that one builds from within; this form of learning, while it may seem slower (more traditional), allows the learning to be profound. It's very useful when one hopes to go deeply into a subject, although perhaps not to learn concepts or definitions (Juan, 11, p4).

Juan's previous statement is important to me for two main reasons: on the one hand, it illustrates a learning process characterized by slowness and depth and depicts a type of learning that is built through an internal dialogue. The previous quote also illustrates Juan's singularities within this case study. For this reason, it is not easy for me to do what I will now do in this section, that is, to refer to the cases by comparing them. In my view, when I refer to Lene, Juan, Fredy, Lars, or Mario, I treat each of them as a unique individual. Referring to them while comparing them to others has its risks because I feel that comparing the findings of these cases forces me to sacrifice perspective, details, and depth. I fear that by doing this, I cannot be faithful to the person behind the case.

In what follows I attempt to establish certain relationships as well as differences among the psychic characteristics observed in the five cases of the current study. I do so with the objective of gathering ideas to answer the second part of the second research question, which is underlined below.

Which psychic characteristics do students draw on when reflecting, and which of them are most closely connected to students' learning process of collaborative negotiation skills?

In order to accomplish the aim of this section, I have made a comparative table that is part of the appendixes, in which I include evidence of the characteristics observed in each case.

It is possible to observe examples of making contact with oneself (psychic characteristic#1) in the five students, with difficulties with that capacity found in only two of them. Those cases correspond to Lars and Mario, in which it was possible to evidence testimonies

based on their opinions instead of a dialogue within themselves. In addition, they sometimes refer to their own experiences in the plural (instead of the singular) and occasionally in the third person. Moreover, certain worries about reflecting and an ambivalent attitude regarding participation in the reflection process as part of their learning activities were evident in both of them. One difference between Lars and Mario should be highlighted, though, since the latter decided to give reflection a chance and the evidence of change is more visible in him. These changes were observed in both Mario's way of reflecting, as well as in his perception of the reflection process.

In relation to the second psychological characteristic—connecting to others—examples of it can be observed in every case except case 4 (Lars). This situation is mirrored with regard to difficulties in connecting with others. It seems that interaction with others was not part of Lars' reflection and negotiation experiences. I consider as a proposition that this may influence his negotiation performance, since negotiating implies interaction. This should not be understood to mean that Lars does not have the capacity to interact with others. For some reason, however, this characteristic is not predominant in his reflections, which makes it difficult to identify how he develops it. More precisely, it is not possible to know how Lars perceives others and what he thinks about other people's perceptions of him during the negotiation simulations.

In the other cases (1, 2, 3, and 5), it is possible to observe examples of the ways in which they connect to others, as well as some of the difficulties that they face in their attempts to do so. However, the quality and ways in which these students connect to others is very particular in each case. In the same line, the difficulties that Lene, Juan, Fredy, and Mario (cases 1, 2, 3, and 5) face to connect to others vary significantly from one case to the next.

Regarding the third psychic characteristic (reality perspective), good development as well as certain related difficulties could be observed in all cases. It is possible to evidence some commonalities in Lene, Juan, and Fredy (cases 1, 2, and 3), who experienced difficulties to set limits and to stop the reflection process. However, Lene and Juan

commented in the second interviews that they had perceived an improvement in it.

The fourth psychic characteristic is understanding and expressing emotions, and there were positive examples in Lene, Juan, and Fredy (cases 1, 2, and 3,), as well as certain difficulties in regulating emotions in Juan, Fredy, and Lars (cases 2, 3, and 4). I did not find any example of regulating emotions in Mario (case 5), which may be related to his comment that he considers himself a reserved person who does not express his feelings. This lack of emotional expression in Mario may also be related to his idea that reflecting in an academic setting is a strange thing to do.

With regard to narcissism (characteristic #5), examples of both balanced and unbalanced narcissism are found in all five cases. However, what characterizes narcissism in each student is very singular, making it impossible to define just one form of it.

The characteristic with the greatest and most diverse evidence found in this case study is #6, change process (working through). It is possible to observe various ways in which students changed, acquired learning, questioned paradigms, and established change resolutions. Nonetheless, the change process is not a predominant capacity in Lars (case 4), which cannot be considered a surprise. This is because, on the one hand, he did not choose reflection #6 for his final task, and the analysis of the change process is primarily based on this reflection. Instead, he composed a theoretical essay. On the other hand, the lack of this reflection made it impossible to have a complete collection of Lars' reflections, making it more difficult to trace his learning process.

Furthermore, in the two interviews I conducted with Lars, it was possible to observe that despite the value he gives to reflection, he does not credit it with very much, since it was an activity that he found difficult. That being said, Lars assured me that he did achieve some valuable changes as a result of the process, such as a more realistic vision of himself and the resolution he made to think before acting.

One of the reasons for the significant evidence found in most of the cases of this last psychological characteristic—the process of

change—may be related to the finding of the first level of analysis: reflection allows the outcomes of student learning to be evidenced. Therefore, the course and reflection through the e-learning portfolio in particular may have allowed these students to be aware of changes to different aspects of themselves.

In the second chapter, I explained that I chose three students (Lene, Juan, and Fredy) who were engaged with the reflection process and two (Lars and Mario) who had difficulties with it or who were not very motivated to reflect as part of an educational activity. I wanted to compare these two groups of students to understand if there were noticeable differences in the psychic characteristics connected to their ways of reflecting. I believe that the findings speak for themselves regarding those differences; however, I know that it is my responsibility to analyze my observations.

There is more evidence of capacities 1 and 2 in the first three cases (Lene, Juan, and Fredy), with only evidence of difficulties in making contact with themselves (characteristic #1) observed in Lars and Mario. I consider being able to make contact with oneself and being able to connect to others to be the main capacities at the basis of a reflection process that leads to learning collaborative negotiation skills. I will supplement these ideas in the final chapter. I also think that the previous capacities allowed cases 1, 2, and 3 to report compelling evidence of characteristic #6 (change process). However, I think Lene's capacity to make contact with herself and to connect to others is different than Juan's and Fredy's respective capacities. This is because I find Lene's way of making contact with herself and connecting with others more authentic. Furthermore, she seems to be more committed to learning, and it is possible to see the advantages that this represents for her personal and professional development as compared to Juan and Fredy.

It is also possible to observe more difficulties with characteristic #4 (understanding and expressing emotions) in Lars as well as evidence of unbalanced narcissism in both Mario and Lars. I believe that these difficulties may negatively influence both the reflection process and learning collaborative negotiation skills. I will refer to this in greater detail in the last chapter.

As I said earlier, although I chose to include Mario and Lars in this case study because I perceived certain similarities in their ways of developing the reflection process, there is one significant difference between them. This difference lies in the fact that even though Mario was reluctant to reflect at the beginning of the course, he decided to change his attitude and give the activity a chance. This is apparent when one considers Mario's evidence of a change process (characteristic #6).

For now, I propose that the first two characteristics—making contact with oneself and connecting with others—are the foundation of a reflection process that leads to learning. I additionally consider the development of these two psychic characteristics to be capable of ameliorating the possible negative influences of having difficulties with other psychic characteristics.

Reality perspective is another capacity that supports reflecting in a way in which the outcomes of reflection are based on objectivity. It may also permit students to set limits on different aspects, especially to constrain reflecting so that it does not become a never-ending process. It is important to additionally take into account the way in which the different psychic characteristics are combined in each person. This interplay can affect the reflection process and its outcomes in both positive and negative ways. For instance, while it is possible to observe evidence of unbalanced narcissism in Lene, Juan, and Fredy, as well as difficulties in regulating emotions in Juan and Fredy, I believe that these students can compensate these difficulties with the wide-ranging capacities evidenced in psychic characteristics 1, 2, and 3. On the other hand, while it is possible to evidence characteristic #1 (making contact with oneself) in Lars and Mario, it is also clear that they have difficulties with it. This, taken together with the lack of evidence of the capacity to connect with others in Lars and with the evidence of unbalanced narcissism in Mario, may negatively affect their ways of reflecting and its outcomes.

## 7.4 A CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE PSYCHIC CHARACTERISTICS FOUND IN THE SECOND LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

In this section, I seek to conceptualize the psychic characteristics observed in the students studied in the second level of analysis when they reflected about the learning process of negotiation skills. By doing so, I will address two of the research aims mentioned in the first chapter of this dissertation:

I intend to broaden understanding of the concept of self-reflection in the management education field through the identification and explanation of some of the psychic characteristics linked to it.

I will conceptualize these psychic characteristics, which are embedded in the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills that was observed in the cases.

In order to achieve my aim, I present evidence from the five cases. I then seek to create a “conceptual bridge” that establishes connections between the findings and psychoanalytical concepts. Finally, I offer a definition of the psychic characteristics based on the parameters that I took into account to develop the second level of analysis, the evidence of the characteristics found in the cases, and psychoanalytical concepts. Although I explain the characteristics separately, most of them are either intertwined or related to other psychoanalytical concepts.

The six characteristics that I identified through the second level of analysis are as follows:

- Making contact with oneself
- Connecting to others
- Reality perspective
- Understanding and expressing emotions
- Balanced narcissism
- Change process

Taking into account the methodological principle of abduction, I conceptualize the psychic characteristics integral to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills through the steps below, as I mentioned in Chapter 2.

I will summarize evidence of each of the psychic characteristics identified in the second level of analysis.

I will use conceptual bridges to establish connections between the evidence of the psychic characteristics found through the second level of analysis and certain psychoanalytical concepts. Terms related to the evidence and the parameters that I took into account to develop the analysis (explained in Chapter 2) will also be presented.

I will define each of the psychic characteristics, taking into account the evidence from the second level of analysis, the parameters, and psychoanalytical concepts that are closely connected with the psychic characteristics.

I will repeat this process with each of the six psychic characteristics that I observed in the second level of analysis. Moreover, I will explain the characteristics, taking into account both their positive connotations as well as some difficulties that students may have experienced with them.

## **7.4.1 MAKING CONTACT WITH ONESELF**

### **7.4.1.1 C1, making contact with oneself**

Making contact with oneself is the first characteristic that was found at the second level of analysis. The findings show that all five students were able to identify characteristics or personality traits in themselves. Moreover, they identified those traits either as a result of self-knowledge or as part of their learning experience. Evidence of student awareness of their respective expectations, needs, and emotions was found, as well as self-evaluation in neutral, critical, and favorable ways. Finally, there were indications of students' having reflected constantly and thoroughly, as well as of their interest in improving personal characteristics.



In the search for a conceptual bridge that establishes connections between the previous findings and the psychoanalytical approach, I found the closely related concepts of self-consciousness, reflective function, and introspection.

Lanctôt Bélanger (in De Mijolla, 2005, p. 1569) defines self-consciousness as follows.

Self-consciousness is the mental activity through which the subject feels a sense of being or existing as a unique and total individual. Although it does not obviate the idea of the unconscious, this notion comes out of reflexive philosophy and its derivatives that hold that the human faculty of consciousness, apparent to itself and having itself as its object, marks the primacy of consciousness in the definition of the human psyche. This sense of identity, this initial subjective stance, is established gradually, being linked with the general development of the human mind in its relationship to itself and the outside world.

Here, the idea of achieving a subjective stance is centered in the developmental process of the human mind in relation to itself and to the context that surrounds it.

Following this line of thought, Winnicott (1986) argues that during one of the early phases of development, the infant goes through the process of forming its psyche and simultaneously differentiating its internal world from the world outside.

During the holding phase other processes are initiated; the most important is the dawn of intelligence and the beginning of a mind as something distinct from the psyche. From this follows the whole story of the secondary processes and of symbolic functioning, and of the organization of a personal psychic content, which forms a basis for dreaming and for living relationships. (p. 45)

Fonagy et al. (2007) introduce the term reflective function and explain that it is an operationalization of the psychic characteristics that create mentalization. Mentalization is connected to “the development of the self as well as to its gradually inner organization” (p. 3). The

authors add that the concept of mentalization has been used in both psychoanalysis and cognitive psychology.

Central to Fonagy et al.'s approach is the capacity of individuals to understand mental states in themselves as well as others. This is why I will refer to this concept again when describing the capacity of connecting with others. "We argue that an evolutionary function of early object relations is to equip the very young child with an environment within which the understanding of mental states in others and the self can fully develop. We propose that self-reflection as well as the ability to reflect on other minds are constructed capacities that have evolved (or not) out of the earliest relationships" (Fonagy et al., 2007, p. 5).

In addition to offering the previous definition, Fonagy et al. (2007) summarize some of the aspects essential to the capacity to connect to oneself that reflective function features. "RF involves both a self-reflective and an interpersonal component that ideally provides the individual with a well-developed capacity to distinguish inner from outer reality, pretend from 'real' modes of functioning, and intrapersonal mental and emotional processes from interpersonal communications" (p. 25).

These aspects of reflective function are important because they allow individuals to become aware of the differences between inner and outer reality, pretend and real modes of functioning, and the others mentioned above. These distinctions are also the basis for characteristic 3, reality perspective, which will be explained later in this chapter. One element that differentiates Fonagy et al.'s perspective on reflective function from the term introspection is that awareness is not a characteristic of the former. "The shape and coherence lent to self-organization by reflective function is entirely outside awareness, in contrast to introspection, which has a clear impact on experience of oneself" (Fonagy et al., 2007, p. 27).

That is why these authors state that reflective function is a capacity by which human beings respond automatically to situations. In other words, they are not conscious of their response. This characteristic is unconsciously invoked, as they note below.

It is important not to conflate reflective function with introspection. Bolton and Hill (1996) note that the weakness of introspection is to define mental states in terms of consciousness or self-report rather than, as here, in terms of their capacity to make sense of, and thus regulate, behavior. Introspection or self-reflection is quite different from reflective function, as the latter is an automatic procedure, unconsciously invoked in interpreting human action. (Fonagy et al., 2007, p. 27)

Based on the evidence from the second level of analysis and influenced by the aforementioned psychoanalytical concepts, particularly those of authors such as Winnicott and Fonagy et al., I understand making contact with oneself as a capacity that an individual possesses when they are able to be in touch with who they are and with the psychological states that they experience. This characteristic allows individuals to be aware of their traits, expectations, needs, and feelings, as well as what is generally taking place within themselves. Making contact with oneself is also linked to a condition of balanced narcissism. This is because the process through which individuals recognize their strengths and weaknesses is influenced by the way they value them. I will come back to this point later when I discuss balanced narcissism.

I share with Fonagy et al. (2007) the idea of reflective function as a capacity of individuals to understand mental states in themselves as well as others. That being said, their proposal is not sufficiently clear. I believe this lack of clarity lies chiefly in their differentiation between reflective function and introspection mentioned above. They explain that awareness is necessary for the latter, whereas reflective function is an automatic response that individuals activate unconsciously.

In my view, self-reflection implies an awareness of situations, feelings, or needs. Thus, these authors' use of the term self-reflection or reflective function to explain a process that, according to their approach, is activated unconsciously, can seem confusing. As my experience has indicated that a person can be in touch with themselves both unconsciously and consciously, I disagree with the differentiation made above. However, as I will explain in section 7.4, I wonder if the capacity to unconsciously make contact with oneself is a prerequisite for also being able to do so in a conscious way.

### **7.4.1.2 Difficulties in making contact with oneself**

Evidence of difficulties in making contact with oneself was found in two of the five students (cases 4 and 5) from the second level of analysis. These students did not feel comfortable speaking about themselves, and reflecting implied an effort or even a feeling of fear that prevented them from changing. Also identified were difficulties in outlining goals, sharing expectations, anticipating their results in negotiations, and evaluating their progress. Furthermore, language characterized by expressions in the plural, third-person pronouns, and a focus on facts and opinions rather than their own experiences was used.

Difficulties in making contact with oneself can be understood as the problems a person faces when trying to get in touch with themselves or their internal world. They may involve difficulties with the various aspects related to the positive connotation of the capacity of making contact with oneself. An example would be difficulties in understanding one's feelings or strengths.

## **7.4.2 CONNECTING WITH OTHERS**

### **7.4.2.1 C2, connecting with others**

The capacity to connect with others is the second characteristic observed through the second level of analysis. The positive connotation of this capacity was found in four of the cases: Lene, Juan, Fredy, and Mario (1, 2, 3, & 5). In these cases, it was seen in students' curiosity or interest in identifying and valuing people's expectations, contributions, interests, and feelings. Indications of this characteristic were also observed in the action of compensating others when they seemed to be affected by the student's actions, or through the setting of limits without negatively affecting the other party.

Evidence of the capacity to connect with others could additionally be observed in the questions that were asked to change the focus of the interactions. Finally, this capacity to connect with others was also observed when students showed their interest in caring for and respecting others, as well as through the positive feelings that they said arose from working with people in collaborative ways.

In the search for a conceptual bridge that establishes connections between the previous findings and the psychoanalytical perspective, I found the two concepts of empathy and reflective function. I already mentioned the latter when referring to making contact with oneself, but I will return to it in order to develop it further.

As I noted above, I concur with Fonagy et al.'s (2007) idea that reflective function is a capacity to understand one's own mental states as well as those of others. "The infant develops its capacity to reflect on feeling states through the way the parent affectively processes the infant's experience" (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 137).

I also mentioned before that Fonagy et al.'s approach is based on the object relations established between the infant and its caregivers in early infancy. Basing themselves on Bowlby's and Fonagy et al.'s ideas, Diamond & Marrone (2003) highlight that this process is fundamental during the first year of the baby's life. "It can be said that during this period, thinking begins to be formed, based on shared intersubjective activity" (p. 137).

Parents and caregivers are not just in charge of providing a baby with basic care such as food, cleaning, and shelter; they are also responsible for the psychological conditions that will allow the infant to overcome the difficulties it experiences during the early period of life until it is ready to face them unassisted. "In other words, in optimal conditions, when the infant is in a state of distress and experiences a confused set of emotions, the caretaker, in reflecting and modifying the affect, tells the child she knows what he feels and helps him to organize his experience" (Diamond & Marrone, 2004, p. 139).

These authors also explain that the way in which the caregivers respond to the infant's needs requires more than mere attunement.

This 'something more' is the caretaker's ability to bear and 'be-with' the infant's experience and simultaneously provide a potential space to reflect, that is take a perspective on experience. This 'something more' is also the caretaker's capacity to envision imaginatively the child's view. This involves the capacity to see the

child as a subject with beliefs and motives. (Diamond & Marrone, 2004, p. 138).

Widlöcher (in De Mijolla, 2005) defines empathy in the following manner: “Empathy is the capacity for concrete representation of another person’s mental state, including the accompanying emotions” (p. 501). The cited author argues that Freud did not develop the concept of empathy any further than he did because he did not find a particular meaning of the term for the purposes of psychoanalysis. Kohut (1959) did develop this term, especially in his article “Introspection, Empathy, and Psychoanalysis,” and his work on the definition of empathy has contributed to a better understanding of the relationship between analyst and patient. While his contributions are of great value, I did not find it easy to adapt his conceptualization of empathy from his clinical work to the educational sphere. Kohut incorporates many terms from the analytical context that are not easily adapted to other settings, which is why I did not include this author’s way of understanding empathy.

Taking into account the previous evidence and concepts, I understand connecting with others to be the capacity an individual has when they are able to establish a connection with others. This connection is characterized by an awareness of the effects that the actions of others produce in one, as well as the effects that one’s actions may have on others. In my view, individuals apply the capacity to get in touch with themselves (C1) in order to successfully connect with others (C2).

Referring to children, Fonagy et al. (2007) state: “As they learn to understand other people’s behavior better, they become able flexibly to activate the representation(s) from these multiple sets that are best suited to respond to particular interpersonal transactions” (p. 24).

According to Fonagy et al. (2007), human beings learn to respond to interactions in an unconscious manner and are able to unconsciously invoke this learning in order to understand the actions of others, as noted before.

In the explanation I offered about connecting with others, I highlight awareness as a characteristic present in this process through which an individual seeks to get in touch with other people's feelings, needs, and expectations. Fonagy et al.'s (2007) way of conceptualizing the idea of reflection, as I mentioned previously, takes the reflection function to be an automatic procedure, meaning that it does not require awareness. This leads to the question that I posed when referring to the first psychic characteristic, namely: Is the capacity to activate the reflective function unconsciously necessary in order to also do so in a conscious way?

#### **7.4.2.2 Difficulties in connecting with others**

Evidence of difficulties in connecting with others was found in four of the cases (1, 2, 3, & 4) of the second level of analysis. Taking into account this evidence, it can be stated that it was occasionally difficult for these students to reconcile their position with others' positions, or to connect to the feelings and needs of others. Furthermore, some of the students placed responsibility for their own issues on others. Obstacles could also be seen when students gave too much importance to hierarchies, which complicates interaction with others. Students also struggled to connect with others when their attention was centered more on the projects being worked on than the people involved in them.

Difficulties in connecting with others can be understood as the problems a person experiences when trying to be in touch with another. These difficulties may include the various aspects mentioned in the positive connotation of the capacity such as reconciling different positions and giving importance to other people's needs.

### **7.4.3 REALITY PERSPECTIVE**

#### **7.4.3.1 C3, reality perspective**

The third characteristic found in the second level of analysis is reality perspective. Evidence of the positive connotation of reality perspective was found in all five students of the second level of analysis, shown through students' ability to identify and describe steps to achieve an objective, or through their ability to determine what led

them to make a mistake. Similarly, a reality perspective is indicated when students demonstrated awareness of their errors or aspects they wished to improve from a neutral position.

The indications of reality perspective show that it was useful for students to identify problems and difficulties, search for solutions, and set limits with people. This characteristic can also be evidenced in behaviors and values such as differentiating between one's own and other people's perspective, taking responsibility for one's actions, and, finally, through a sense of justice.

In the search for a conceptual bridge that establishes connections between the previous findings and the psychoanalytical perspective, I found the two concepts of the reality principle and creativity.

Referring to the reality principle, Roussillon (in De Mijolla, 2005) states: "The reality principle is one of the two major principles that govern the workings of the mind. It designates the psyche's necessary awareness of information concerning reality and stands in contradistinction to the pleasure/unpleasure principle, which seeks the discharge or elimination of drive tension at all costs" (p. 1450).

This notion is taken from Freud (1920), who stated that the pleasure principle is replaced by reality testing. "They have therefore retained a mental activity in which all these abandoned sources of pleasure and methods of achieving pleasure are granted a further existence—a form of existence in which they are left free from the claims of reality and of what we call 'reality-testing'" (Freud, 1917, p. 371c).

According to Roussillon (in De Mijolla, 2005), this process of transformation raises questions about external reality and the presence or absence of the object of satisfaction, as well as about internal reality and the realism of the perceived pleasure.

Winnicott (1971), for his part, refers to creativity, clarifying that the meaning he gives to it is far from the general sense of creation and instead denotes the attitude of human beings toward external reality. "I



am hoping that the reader will accept a general reference to creativity, not letting the word get lost in the successful or acclaimed creation but keeping it to the meaning that refers to a colouring of the whole attitude to external reality” (p. 87).

According to Winnicott (1971), the above process is possible thanks to the potential space formed between the infant and the mother when she allows it to build a sense of trust so that the infant feels that the environment is reliable. “I have tried to draw attention to the importance both in theory and practice of a third area, that of play, which expands into creative living and into the whole cultural life of man. This third area has been contrasted with inner or personal psychic reality and with the actual world in which the individual lives and that can be objectively perceived” (p. 138).

Taking into account these findings, and principally influenced by Freud, Fonagy et al., and Winnicott, I understand reality perspective as a capacity that allows individuals to remain grounded in reality and to understand the real world in an objective way (from a third point of view). The reality perspective is linked to the capacity of making contact with oneself and may include aspects such as:

- Awareness of one’s possibilities to affect others and the world
- Understanding of how reality affects oneself
- Capacity to set limits
- Ability to differentiate theories or other people’s opinions from personal experiences, as well as “inner from outer reality, pretend from real modes of functioning, and intrapersonal mental and emotional processes from interpersonal communications” (Fonagy et al., 2007, p. 25)
- Ability to observe oneself from an objective perspective, or from “the position of another” (Diamond and Marrone, 2003, p. 133)

The capacity of reality perspective supports reflecting in a way in which the outcomes of reflection may rely on objectivity.

However, it is not easy for individuals to be grounded in objectivity. “The problem is made obscure because the degree of

objectivity we count on when we talk about external reality in terms of an individual is variable. To some extent objectivity is a relative term because what is objectively perceived is by definition to some extent subjectively conceived of" (Winnicott, 1965, p. 88).

Following this idea, Diamond & Marrone (2003) link the ability to think from a third perspective to the reflective capacity. "We have also pointed out that to develop an awareness of the self and others involves the ability to take a perspective on oneself from a position of another, and that is also the basis of the reflective capacity" (p. 133).

Finally, the cited authors draw attention to the risks of losing perspective when the "inner world" is understood mainly in reference to itself. "From our perspective this self-reference is of course a fallacy, but to avoid the tendency to hermetic closure of subjective experience it is always important to establish and re-establish the relational links of inner-outer, of feelings and thoughts subjectively with acquired attachment styles and historical interactions" (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 45). These processes are intertwined with the two capacities that I presented previously—making contact with oneself and connecting with others—as well as with the condition of balanced narcissism whose discussion is forthcoming.

#### **7.4.3.2 Difficulties with reality perspective**

Indications of a distortion of reality perspective were found in all five students of the second level of analysis. Some students experienced difficulties in perceiving themselves and others objectively. Others struggled to stop reflecting, which sometimes led to insomnia. Other indications of a distorted reality perspective were students' difficulties in admitting that their performance was less than ideal, which, in turn, limited the possibility of recognizing or changing their behaviors. In addition, students did not question their actions in some of the cases, reinforcing their certainty that change was unnecessary.

These difficulties with reality perspective can be understood by taking the aspects described in the positive connotation of the term and considering them in a negative light. For instance, the person may

analyze situations in ways that are either too objective or highly subjective. Both ways may keep an individual from accessing the reality perspective, as Winnicott (1965) points out.

People may be leading satisfactory lives and [...] may be schizoid or schizophrenic. They may be ill in a psychiatric sense because of a weak reality sense. To balance this, one would have to state that there are others who are so firmly anchored in objectively perceived reality that they are ill in the opposite direction of being out of touch with the subjective world and with the creative approach to fact. (p. 89).

## **7.4.4 UNDERSTANDING AND EXPRESSING EMOTIONS**

### **7.4.4.1 C4, understanding and expressing emotions**

Understanding and expressing emotions is the fourth capacity found in the second level of analysis. Evidence of understanding and expressing emotions was found in three of the students of this level of analysis: Lene, Juan, and Fredy (1, 2, & 3). Indications of this characteristic include the ability to allow people to express their feelings and to promote grieving in negotiations. It was also possible to observe examples of students' capacity to identify or deal with emotions and to understand what was occurring at an emotional level in a negotiation. Some students demonstrated a serious effort to not get caught up and not respond in kind to negative manifestations from the other party. Finally, other students claimed that getting emotionally caught up in the issue allows them to take better advantage of the reflection process.

In the search for a conceptual bridge to establish connections between the findings and the psychoanalytical perspective, I found the closely related concepts of affect-regulation and self-regulation in the intersubjective perspective. Diamond and Marrone (2004) understand these concepts almost as synonyms, explaining that they derive from the human need to regulate affects or emotions.

Citing Frijda (1988), Diamond and Marrone (2004) discuss the term emotion and highlight that it concerns the way in which individuals respond to events by evaluating the importance that they

hold for them. “In contemporary definitions, emotion is characterized as a ‘response to events that are important to the individual, and which importance he or she appraises in some way’” (Frijda, 1988, p. 349, in: Diamond & Marrone, 2004, p. 101).

With regard to the term self-regulation, Diamond & Marrone (2004) write that it has been used in the research field of infant development by authors like Stern (1985), among others, explaining it as follows:

What is ‘regulated’ are the emotions or affects, and by implication, the emotional or affective states. This regulation takes place at complex levels of psychoneurological processes, in which brain circuits play a fundamental part. But what is important to note is that these processes are inherently interactive with the environment; they take place in an intersubjective context. (p. 101)

This idea of Diamond & Marrone (2004) is in accordance with what I mentioned earlier about Bowlby’s (1980) integration of neurobiological processes and the interaction with the environment that facilitates the development of a so-called optimal pathway in infants. Furthermore, Bowlby’s ideas about affects are related to his attachment theory, which states that emotions are stimulated by relationships with “significant others.” In line with this point, Fonagy et al. (2007) explain the importance of the role that caregivers play in helping infants in their process of learning to understand and modulate their emotions. For this reason, they named this function affect-regulation.

None of us is born with the capacity to regulate our own emotional reactions. A dyadic regulatory system evolves where the infant’s signals of moment-to-moment changes in his state are understood and responded to by the caregiver, thereby achieving regulation. The infant learns that the arousal in the presence of the caregiver will not lead to disorganization beyond his coping capabilities. (p. 37)

To define this characteristic, I take into account the evidence from the second level of analysis and the concepts from the mentioned psychoanalytical perspective as well as the nonviolent communication

approach discussed in the collaborative negotiation chapter. Therefore, my definition of the characteristic of understanding and expressing emotions is the capacity of awareness of one's own and others' emotions in such a way that the person expresses them adequately and does not become driven by them. It may include aspects such as:

- Allowing others to express their feelings, understanding them, and avoiding engaging in negative ways with them
- Achieving a sense of inner stability and comfort (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 102)
- Contending with feelings of ambivalence and maintaining this state
- Identifying appropriate moments and ways of expressing emotions
- Taking advantage of the emotions of others (during negotiation processes) as a way to understand people's needs and expectations
- Taking responsibility for one's feelings and emotional states, avoiding blaming others for the ways that one feels

#### **7.4.4.2 Difficulties in understanding and expressing emotions**

Difficulties in understanding and expressing emotions were found in cases 3 and 4 (Fredy and Lars) of the second level of analysis. These difficulties could be seen through the impatience that arose in these students when they believed that something said at the negotiation table was false. Additionally, indications of this characteristic could be observed when the students became carried away by their emotions during negotiations.

Freud (1932) draws a difference between two kinds of anxiety by focusing on the origin of the feeling. "We then started off from a distinction between realistic anxiety and neurotic anxiety, of which the former was a reaction, which seemed intelligible to us, to a danger—that is, to an expected injury from outside—while the latter was completely enigmatic, and appeared to be pointless" (Freud, 1932, pp. 81-82).

Difficulties in understanding and expressing emotions can be understood as the kinds of problems individuals face when trying to understand their own and others' emotions, when they are unable to express them adequately, or when they do not allow others to do so. The difficulties may include the various aspects mentioned in the positive meaning of the term, such as:

- Engaging in a negative way with one's own or other people's emotions and acting reactively
- Feeling overwhelmed by reality, which is linked to the capacity of reality perspective
- A feeling of anxiety whose source is enigmatic, or that is constant and not easy to bear with

An additional difficulty with understanding and expressing emotions may be explained through Freud's concept of rationalization as a psychic defense. This refers to an unconscious explanation through logical arguments of some adopted behavior, attitude, or position that is in fact rooted in different motivations of which one is unaware, such as affective sources. "When conscious decision-making is split off and not integrated with affective life, it can be a rationalization" (Diamond and Marrone, 2003, p. 147).

## **7.4.5 BALANCED NARCISSISM**

### **7.4.5.1 C5, Balanced narcissism**

Balanced narcissism is the fifth psychic characteristic found through the second level of analysis. Evidence of balanced narcissism was found in all five cases. Indications of balanced narcissism are students' awareness of their capacities and the ability to value them. Some students felt secure in the professional spheres since they could rely on what they know and be prepared. Other students showed an interest in the image they transmit to others, or in how they maintain a certain perception of themselves. It was also possible to observe, on the one hand, a certain degree of flexibility in the positions that students held. On the other hand, some students positioned themselves securely, which helped them to hold on to their opinions or not be led to doubt their positions in the face of the reactions of others.

In the search for a conceptual bridge to establish connections between the previous findings and the psychoanalytical perspective, I found the concepts of narcissism and self-esteem. Referring to the former, Vincent (in De Mijolla, 2005) states that the term narcissism refers to self-love, recalling the Greek myth of Narcissus. The same author clarifies the different meanings Freud gave to the term in the quote below.

By proposing the notion of narcissism, Freud (1914c) meant to show how four different phenomena were related: narcissism as sexual perversion; narcissism as a stage in development; narcissism as libidinal cathexis of the ego; and narcissism as object-choice. He also described an ego-ideal as the heir of infantile narcissism and as a psychic agency of self-observation. (Vincent, in De Mijolla, 2005, p. 1105)

Taking into account the different meanings that Freud associated with narcissism, it is important to clarify that the term has been the subject of debate and copious study in psychoanalysis. Furthermore, this concept has traditionally had a negative or even pathological connotation since psychoanalysis commonly refers to it in the context of pathologies of narcissism such as psychosis and borderline personalities.

As part of the development of human beings, narcissism is related to a strong feeling of self-love that protects individuals against illness. “Narcissism in this sense would not be a perversion, but the libidinal complement to the egoism of the instinct of self-preservation, a measure of which may justifiably be attributed to every living creature” (Freud, 1914, pp. 73-74). Eventually, though, human beings must love others in order to not become ill. From Freud’s perspective, an individual becomes ill as a result of the frustration created when they are unable to love others. “The individual does actually carry on a twofold existence: one to serve his own purposes and the other as a link in a chain, which he serves against his will, or at least involuntarily” (Freud, 1914, p. 78).

In referring to the way in which Kohut understands narcissism, Diamond & Marrone (2004) point out that “aside from pathological

narcissism, narcissism might be understood as an indispensable lifelong component of human needs, with its own developmental course” (p. 7). In order to avoid the pathological meaning of narcissism, authors like Bowlby and Diamond & Marrone prefer to talk of self-esteem or self-worth. Diamond & Marrone (2004) explain that in any case the feelings of self-love and enjoying one’s own achievements constitute an essential condition to experience a sense of wellbeing (p. 7).

Bowlby (1973, p. 203) said that in the working model of the self that anyone builds, a key feature is his notion of how acceptable or unacceptable he himself is to the eyes of his attachment figures. In this brief statement he implicitly highlighted the fact that self-esteem stems out of experiences with significant others. Children who are treated sensitively by their caregivers tend to have a high self-esteem. (As cited in Diamond and Marrone, 2004, p. 55)

I seek to avoid these debates on narcissism by focusing on the way in which I understand and use it in the context of the present research aims. I do not understand it as a psychic characteristic along the lines of the other characteristics that I have developed here. Following this notion and in referring to narcissistic needs, Diamond & Marrone (2004) state that, “In conclusion, needs that have been called ‘narcissistic,’ and [that] we define as ‘needs for validation of the self’ or ‘self-esteem needs,’ can be regarded—as Bleichmar suggests—as constituting an independent motivational system” (p. 118).

According to this perspective, narcissism is part of humans’ psychic development. Depending on the nature of the relationships between infant and caregivers, it may be a lasting characteristic of the individual or become part of their psychic structure. As the latter development of narcissism is structural, it is thus more difficult to change.

Taking into account the evidence from the second level of analysis and the previously mentioned concepts from psychoanalysis, I understand balanced narcissism as a necessary psychic condition in humans’ normal development by which a person is able to value themselves and others in objective ways. As a result of this development, the person is able to appreciate their good traits and



achievements and to share them through the relationships that they establish and the projects that they carry out. “Everything that a person possesses or achieves, every remnant of the primitive feeling of omnipotence which his experience has confirmed, helps to increase his self-regard ... self-regard has a specially intimate dependence on narcissistic libido” (Freud, 1914, p. 98).

Some aspects that may be observed in a balanced condition of narcissism are the following:

- Ability to value oneself in objective ways (observing one’s strengths and weaknesses objectively)
- Sense of agency and competence (Diamond & Marrone, 2003)
- Sense of internal coherence and continuity (Diamond & Marrone, 2003)
- Sense of inner security
- Ability to maintain limits and opinions, simultaneously respecting those of others
- Ability to maintain a level of flexibility that takes into account the reality perspective

A condition of balanced narcissism is complemented by the capacities of making contact with oneself, connecting with others, and reality perspective.

#### **7.4.5.2 Unbalanced narcissism**

Evidence of unbalanced narcissism was found in all of the cases of the second level of analysis. For instance, some students expressed insecurities about achieving certain goals in a new environment. Other students showed a lack of confidence, which could lead them to doubt their capacities. Additional signs of this characteristic could be observed in those cases that assumed defensive and rigid positions, did not question their actions, acted intransigently, or attempted to influence others through strategies of power (instead of interest-based strategies, which are more associated with the collaborative approach). In line with the previous indications, evidence of a lack of willingness and humility to negotiate were also found in some cases. Finally, some

students experienced discomfort when talking about their qualities as negotiators due to their fear of being perceived as egocentric, and it was clear that they found it easier to see their faults than their good assets.

With the purpose of understanding the unbalanced condition of narcissism, I would like to share some of Freud's ideas about narcissism.

“Many people are unable to surmount the fear of loss of love; they never become sufficiently independent of other people's love and in this respect carry on their behaviour as infants” (Freud, 1932, p. 88). As Freud suggested, a magnified, extreme manifestation of narcissism can be seen when a person experiences problems with respecting and loving others, or with including them as equals. Furthermore, a person whose narcissism is unbalanced may highlight their achievements and traits in an attitude of megalomania, which can be understood as a way (or defense mechanism) to hide fears of inferiority or low self-esteem. “The main source of these feelings [of inferiority] is, however, the impoverishment of the ego, due to the extraordinarily large libidinal cathexes which have been withdrawn from it” (Freud, 1914, pp. 98-99).

Alternatively, a condition of unbalanced narcissism may lead to feelings of insecurity, low self-confidence, or low self-esteem, which keep the person from appreciating their traits or achievements.

An unbalanced condition of narcissism may occur when some situation (like difficulties in early relationships) disturbs the normal development of narcissism, and as a result the person experiences difficulties in valuing themselves and others in objective ways. As a consequence, the person either will not be able to appreciate their good traits or achievements, or they will value them in extreme ways to the point that they experience difficulties in recognizing and appreciating other people's traits.

Some aspects that may be present in an unbalanced condition of narcissism are:

- Lack of confidence or humility.
- Overwhelming insecurities and fears.

- Recognition of one's faults rather than qualities.
- Acting intransigently and/or assuming rigid positions.
- Not questioning one's thoughts or actions.
- Difficulties in valuing other people.
- Highlighting one's achievements or strengths in extreme ways.

The reason I did not explain the findings of the second level of analysis using, for instance, the term self-esteem like some of the authors mentioned above is because I find the self-esteem concept ambiguous. A person can have either normal self-esteem or low self-esteem, and these polarities do not allow me to adequately explain all of the aspects listed above. For example, if I state that a person (who has either normal self-esteem or low self-esteem) highlights their strengths in extreme ways, it can be unclear. Moreover, the term self-esteem leaves readers to assume that the esteem or appreciation is toward the self. In my view, it is confusing to explain that a capacity called self-esteem enables a person to value themselves and others at the same time.

## **7.4.6 CHANGE PROCESS**

### **7.4.6.1 C6, change process**

Change process is the sixth characteristic found in the second level of analysis. Evidence of the positive connotation of change process was discovered in all of the cases. Some of those indications are related to the process of identifying and transforming situations through the use of more refined tools such as associating past and present, as well as elaborating or getting the big picture of the situation. In the same line, some students strengthened their capacity to integrate theory with practice, or their experiences with their learning. Other evidence pointed to personal evolution, including questioning paradigms and giving them new meaning, as well as acquiring awareness of students' own potential and how to take advantage of it. It was additionally possible to observe indications that some students increased their self-assuredness or the capacity to connect with themselves. Finally, some students were able to achieve a more realistic vision of themselves and their surroundings.

In the search for a conceptual bridge to establish connections between the previous findings and the psychoanalytical perspective, I found the concepts of insight and working through.

Perron (in De Mijolla, 2005) describes insight in the following way:

In psychoanalysis, insight is a process whereby one grasps a previously misunderstood aspect of one's own mental dynamics. It refers to a specific moment, observable during the treatment, when the patient becomes aware of an inner conflict, an instinctual impulse, a defense, or the like, that was previously repressed or disavowed and that, when it emerges into consciousness, elicits surprise and a sense of discovery. (p. 837)

Blacker (in De Mijolla, 2005) differentiates insight from introspection, stating that the former allows the person "to experience his own psychic dynamics in a new way" (p. 871).

In the context of psychoanalysis, the term "working through" is used to describe the way that patients change through their treatments by overcoming the resistances that repression creates. "Working-through is the name for an operation resulting from the putting into effect of several processes during treatment" (Péran, in De Mijolla, 2005, p. 1879). Freud, in *Remembering, Repeating, and Working Through*, states: "The aim of these different techniques has, of course, remained the same. Descriptively speaking, it is to fill in gaps in memory; dynamically speaking, it is to overcome resistances due to repression" (Freud, 1914, pp. 147-148).

An additional facet of the term working through is that the work is developed at the surface of the process, and, according to Péran (in De Mijolla, 2005), this nuance is not captured in its English translation. The original word in German is *durcharbeiten*, which is not easily translated.

Even though from a psychoanalytical perspective the term working through refers to a process that occurs during analytical treatment, throughout the second level of analysis of the fieldwork I

have associated working through with the changes students made through their learning process, as evidenced in the written reflections in their learning portfolios. In fact, “Peterfreund (1983, p. 83) emphasizes that what psychoanalysis has long referred to as ‘working through,’ can be viewed, in large part, as a learning process, as an updating, readapting and checking for consistency of working models” (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 49).

I understand the process of change as the ability an individual possesses when they are able to strengthen or transform skills or personal traits, as well as when they are able to give new meaning to their beliefs or paradigms. This capacity implies an awareness of change.

The aspects listed below may be present in the change process:

- Openness to change and use of that motivation to accomplish learning challenges.
- Awareness of new aspects of oneself.
- Ability to integrate different elements such as old with new, theory with practice, experiences with knowledge.
- Application of knowledge to practice.
- New meaning given to experiences or paradigms.
- Widening of the self-awareness capacity.
- Changed ways of thinking and acting.

Through the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, some students acquired awareness of new aspects of themselves, which could be called insight. Some of them strengthened some of their traits, improved their ways of doing some things, or started using new skills. In these cases, students underwent a process of change that can be called learning. The difference between this evolving process and what psychoanalysis describes as working through is that the latter implies a process through which individuals work with their unconscious dimension in order to overcome resistances that are repressed. This process of overcoming resistances is exclusive to a clinical context, and it is not believed to occur in a teaching context. Therefore, the changes that took place in students through the course were both consciously addressed and consciously accomplished.

#### **7.4.6.2 Difficulties with the change process**

When a student faces difficulties with the change capacity, they are unable to accomplish relevant changes using reflection as part of a learning process. This may occur either because the student did not change or because they were unable to see evidence of change. The latter is related to difficulties with the capacities of making contact with oneself and reality perspective, and at the same time with difficulties in evaluating what the student has done. This may also occur because they are not able to value themselves. In this case, the difficulties are linked to the condition of unbalanced narcissism. I did not find evidence of difficulties with the process of change in any of the cases of the second level of analysis. Some of the cases (1, 2, & 3), however, featured more compelling evidence of a process of change than others. These were the cases of Lene, Juan, and Fredy.

#### **7.4.7 REFLECTIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS OF THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE PSYCHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

In what follows, I will explain my belief that I have helped broaden the existing knowledge about reflection as a mental capacity (an explanation that will be completed in the next chapter). Second, I will refer to some considerations and further questions regarding the possible applications in management education of the conceptualization developed in this chapter. In order to do so, I will discuss the possibilities for individuals to make changes to their psychic characteristics as well as the necessary tools.

In the next chapter, I will refer in detail to how I have broadened the existing knowledge about self-reflection as a mental capacity through the conceptualization of the psychic characteristics associated with reflection. One important aspect I highlight is that I do not believe that the six psychic characteristics are all related to reflection in the same way. For this reason, I consider the psychic characteristics most closely connected to self-reflection and that best support the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills to be the first three: making

contact with oneself (C1), connecting with others (C2), and reality perspective (C3).

Following what I have described in this chapter about the first two psychic characteristics, there are two ways by which a person goes through the process of making contact with themselves and connecting with others: consciously or unconsciously. The conscious way implies a process of awareness, while the unconscious way does not. One question that I cannot answer through this research is whether a person who is not able to make contact with themselves and to connect to others in an unconscious way, would be able to do so by means of reflection (that is, in a conscious way).

Accordingly, in the cases in which the capacity to reflect about other's people minds (reflective function) did not evolve in the infant, according to Fonagy et al., (2007) the infant will not be able to activate it unconsciously. This leads me to pose the following question: Would a person who is unable to connect with others unconsciously be able to do so consciously? The previous questions are connected to the following three. On the one hand, to what extent can adults change? And, on the other hand, what kinds of methods will promote those changes? Do educational or therapeutic processes allow people to change the psychic characteristics described in this chapter?

I will offer a few preliminary responses to some of the previous questions, seeking to adhere to the findings of the second level of analysis. Referring to working models, I wrote previously that Fonagy et al. (2007) highlight that those kinds of representations endure unconsciously and without significant changes, providing reliable notions of the relationships between infants and caregivers. I believe that the evidence of change in cases 1 and 3 of the second level of analysis was possible because those students (Lene and Fredy) have the capacity to draw on characteristics 1 and 2 while reflecting. In cases of that type, I find that tools from the educational setting, such as the nonviolent communication approach, can trigger students' development of their psychic characteristics, such as 1 and 2.

In my view, this is not the case of Juan (case 2), since he struggled at times with connecting with others (as I mentioned earlier).

As Juan pointed out during the second interview, in addition to participating in the Specialization in Negotiation, he had also been undergoing a process of coaching. He did so partially because of his interest in developing solidarity with people. Although Juan stated that the tools mentioned above have been helpful in order to achieve his goal, he has yet to meet his challenge. In my view, he might benefit from a method such as therapy that allows him to work in a different way to understand his unconscious motivations and process them. Thus, educational approaches may benefit some students in their processes of change, while something else will be necessary in other cases. It is not possible to assert that other methods such as therapy will allow people to change characteristics that were not fully developed in early infancy.

The previous ideas are propositions. As I explain in Chapter 8, psychic changes are the result of the dynamic interplay of various factors. It is therefore difficult to predict if a person will be able to change, if education will result in changes, and if therapy will be necessary. "In another group of cases we are surprised by an attitude in our patients which can only be put down to a depletion of the plasticity, the capacity for change and further development, which we should ordinarily expect" (Freud, 1937, p. 241)



# CHAPTER 8. WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT SELF-REFLECTION AS A TOOL FOR LEARNING COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATION SKILLS?

“Education is longing for a deeper more connected, more inclusive, and more aware way of knowing. One that connects heart and hand and head and does not split knowledge into dualities of thought and being, mind and body, emotion and intellect, but resonates with a wholeness and fullness that engages every part of one’s being” (Kind, Irwin, Grauer, & de Cosson, 2005, p. 33).

## 8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to give an overview of the learning attained through the current research, as well as its implications for students and teachers. Although I discuss the findings of the first level of analysis, there will be a particular focus on the extent to which the findings of the second level of analysis contribute to a better understanding of reflection as a mental capacity and its significance for supporting students’ learning of collaborative negotiation skills. An additional objective is to explain the relationships between the psychic characteristics linked to reflection and some of the intrapersonal and interpersonal skills that a negotiator needs to develop a collaborative strategy. I pose some research questions to supplement and validate the findings of the current research and finally present its conclusions and limitations.

In order to accomplish the aim of this chapter, in section 8.2 I will connect my findings to the literature considered in this dissertation. I will explain where I have challenged the existing knowledge, where I have confirmed it, and where I have broadened it. In section 8.3 I seek to build a bridge between the two levels of analysis, establishing common threads and arguing that the second level of analysis

supplements the first. In section 8.4 I will present some theoretical and methodological contributions of the research by focusing on two aspects: the changes that I have implemented in the graduate Specialization in Negotiation and the ways in which management teachers may benefit from use of the conceptualization of the psychic characteristics associated with reflection for student assessment. Then, in section 8.5 I pose future research questions, which seek to either validate the findings of the current research or to supplement them. This is followed by the limitations that I identified in the current study, which are presented in section 8.6. Finally, in section 8.7 I offer conclusions based on my findings, contributions, and reflections.

## **8.2 CONNECTING MY FINDINGS TO THE EXISTING LITERATURE**

In what follows, I will connect my findings to some of the literature presented in Chapter 2: Collaborative Negotiation and Chapter 3: Reflection for Learning. I will additionally refer to where I consider that I have extended, challenged, or confirmed the existing knowledge about the value of reflection for learning collaborative negotiation skills.

### **8.2.1 WHERE DID I EXTEND THE KNOWLEDGE?**

I have extended the knowledge about self-reflection as a mental capacity through the findings of the second level of analysis and through the conceptualization of the six psychic characteristics associated with reflection developed in Chapter 7. However, I do not consider each of the six observed characteristics to be related to reflection in the same way; I believe that some of the characteristics are more closely related to reflection than others. As a reminder, the second research question is: Which psychic characteristics do students draw on when reflecting, and which of them are most closely connected to students' learning process of collaborative negotiation skills?

Seeking to answer this question, I propose that the psychic characteristics that are most closely connected to students' learning process of collaborative negotiation skills are the first three: making contact with oneself (C1), connecting with others (C2), and reality

perspective (C3). Characteristic 1 allows students to become aware of traits that they can take advantage of for value creation, and to be in touch with the intra- and interpersonal skills useful for collaborative negotiations that they possess. Through characteristic 2, students can identify their own and other people's feelings and interests. Moreover, they can become aware of the effects of their counterparts' actions on them, as well as the effects that their own actions may have on others. And characteristic 3, reality perspective, allows negotiation students to remain grounded in reality and to understand the negotiation context. This characteristic also helps students propose options to solve problems and supports students' learning processes so that their reflection outcomes rely on objectivity.

In addition to the previous propositions, I suggest that it is important to go further than merely considering the psychic characteristics separately; the interplay of the different characteristics must be taken into account as well. Awareness of the dynamic coming together of these characteristics in each person is essential. In my view, these different dynamics may affect the reflection process and its outcomes. For instance, as we observed in Chapter 7, in spite of the evidence of unbalanced narcissism in Lene, Juan, and Fredy, as well as the difficulties in regulating emotions in Juan and Fredy, I believe that these students offset these obstacles through their other psychological resources. These resources are evidenced, to my mind, through the wide-ranging capacities that these students displayed: psychic characteristics 1, 2, and 3 (as discussed in Chapter 7). This is why I suggest that the adequate development of these three psychic characteristics may mitigate the difficulties that students experience with them or with other characteristics.

This particular combination of characteristics can also be considered in light of its connection to aspects of the learning context, which is the other factor that I refer to as a means of influencing learning. The aspects provided in the e-portfolios in the current case and the dynamic interplay of the psychic characteristics that students avail themselves of when reflecting affect students' reflection outcomes in diverse ways.

I will furthermore return to Kornblith's (2012) contention (see Chapter 4) that philosophers have overestimated the value of reflection, emphasizing that some of the powers attributed to reflection are not realistic. She suggests that it is not possible to attribute them to any one psychological process. I believe that Kornblith makes an important point, underscoring the importance of taking into account the psychic characteristics that are linked to reflection.

Moreover, I hope to have contributed to the answering of Kornblith's question on how reflection as a psychological process works through my findings in the second level of analysis. As mentioned in the "Reflection for Learning" chapter, this question sought a more realistic view of what can be achieved through reflection. I believe that the findings of the second level of analysis provide a starting point for the author's search for answers.

My findings do not entirely align with Kornblith's concerns. In the e-learning portfolios of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, students underwent an individual process that included an interactive activity with their teacher (me), who supplemented their work with guidance and feedback. Kornblith, however, considers reflection to be an individually developed process. Therefore, in order to answer Kornblith's concerns more precisely, a study exploring the reflection process, as an individual activity is necessary. This would serve as a contrast to the student-teacher interaction, as structured in the current research.

## **8.2.2 WHERE DID I CHALLENGE THE KNOWLEDGE?**

In light of the value of reflection for learning proposed by authors from the education field and included in Chapter 4, I consider that I have challenged their theories. Writing in that chapter that I sought to problematize the value of reflection for learning, I believed that the connection between reflection and learning is neither as direct nor as strong as that claimed. I based my contention on the perspective of authors such as Rogers, 2001; Boud & Walker, 1985; Pavlovich et al., 2009; and Hedberg, 2009, who assert that reflection allows students to make contact with themselves and to improve their learning processes. Moreover, some of these authors state that reflection may

facilitate the changing of behavior, values, and feelings; challenge beliefs and assumptions; and give meaning to experience. Reflection, according to these perspectives, can also enable students to increase their commitment and learn in deep ways.

Students definitely had valuable learning outcomes evidenced in the current research, with some outcomes coinciding with the aspects that the mentioned authors addressed. Some students increased their knowledge about collaborative skills, as described in detail in the first level of analysis. Furthermore, through the first level of analysis it was possible to evidence that students consolidated some of the intra- and interpersonal skills that are important for collaborative negotiation. Nonetheless, as I stated in Chapters 4 and 6, I cannot conclude that this took place thanks to reflection; I will instead argue that reflection holds potential for learning collaborative negotiation skills. This means that reflection supports the possibility to develop learning; however, certain conditions are necessary for its fruition.

Although students inarguably achieved learning through the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, as documented by their testimonies in the first level of analysis, reflection cannot be credited for that. I thus continue to emphasize that reflection has the potential of contributing to the learning process, finding the connection between reflection and learning to be less conclusive than the authors mentioned above.

### **8.2.3 WHERE DID I CONFIRM THE EXISTING KNOWLEDGE?**

Taking into account the previous ideas, I find Scott's (2010) proposal about what reflection allows students to do more realistic. She suggests that students understood the meaning of their learning and observed changes in themselves as a consequence of reflecting through learning portfolios. I consider the final part of her statement, italicized in the previous sentence, to echo my findings from the first level of analysis, in the sense that it affirms that reflection makes learning evident.

Following this line, I also sympathize with Hedberg's (2009) argument that learning is processed through reflection and therefore will be "more likely integrated into thoughts and actions" (p. 11). From my perspective, it is important to maintain modest expectations with regard to what reflection can realistically accomplish, as Hedberg does when considering its likelihood of integrating learning into thoughts and actions.

Taking into account the previous ideas, I reaffirm what I stated in Chapter 6—the first level of analysis—regarding the potential of self-reflection for the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills: reflection allows students' learning to be evidenced. I will therefore limit myself to stating that reflection is a way of perceiving learning, for both the teacher and the student. It is not currently possible, however, to ascertain anything else with regard to the first research question on how reflection contributes to the learning process of these skills.

A review of the three propositions of what reflection can add to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills, as explained in Chapter 6, is apt here. I consider the formulation of these propositions to be the fulfillment of the first research aim, which is analysis of the above question in the context of management education.

- Reflection makes acquired skills evident.
- Reflection makes awareness of personal traits evident.
- Reflection makes re-evaluated paradigms evident.

These propositions were confirmed in the second level of analysis thanks to the wide-ranging evidence of psychic characteristic 6, change process, found there. The five students of the sample displayed their awareness of what they had learned through a variety of ways. This constitutes a bridge between the two levels of analysis, which I will further refer to in the next section.

### 8.3 BRIDGING THE TWO LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

In the first level of analysis it was possible to evidence that some of the skills that students consolidated are very close to the principles of the nonviolent communication approach. More specifically, in Chapter 6, I referred to a variety of evidence of subcategory #1: consolidation of skills to identify needs and feelings in oneself and in others. This subcategory may also be associated with three of the psychic characteristics found in the second level of analysis. First, it is related to making contact with oneself (C1), since students need to be in touch with their psychological states to identify their needs and feelings. Second, it is associated with the second psychic characteristic, connecting with others. This is because in order for students to identify needs and feelings in their counterparts, it is essential that they be able to establish a connection with others. Finally, the above-mentioned subcategory is related to the fourth psychic characteristic, understanding and expressing emotions, taking into account that identifying feelings is one of the key elements of subcategory #1. Students will be able to do this if they draw on this characteristic when reflecting.

I believe that one of the explanations for these connections is that the elements of the nonviolent communication approach developed through the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course are intended to encourage students' psychic characteristics. The main link between the skill of identifying needs and feelings (in one and in others) and the psychic characteristics mentioned above (1, 2, & 4) is their involvement of an intersubjective process. "Rather than unilateral decision-making, co-thinking enables comparing views and strategies, negotiation, adaptation, learning from the other and being open to change, questioning oneself, (and) seeing the situation from a number of perspectives" (Diamond & Marrone, 2004, p. 147).

The mentioned bridge establishes an overlap between skills and psychic characteristics, which could prove theoretically problematic. However, a commonality between these two terms is that both are associated with students' possibilities of being able to do something. I believe that if a student possesses the psychic characteristic to "do

something,” then they will be able to apply that skill to specific negotiation situations.

Another bridge between the two levels of analysis is that the cases from the second level of analysis and the sample of the first level of analysis made their learning evident through reflection, as I mentioned in the previous section. The three categories evidenced in the first level of analysis were:

- Consolidation of skills useful for collaborative negotiation
- Generation of self-awareness of personal qualities
- Re-evaluation of beliefs and paradigms

They were also observed in the second level of analysis. However, students from the second level of analysis additionally underwent a process of interpretation thanks to the use of applied psychoanalysis, which made a difference in the process. They were also asked in their second interview with me to validate the findings of the psychological portrait of them that I had constructed.

Moreover, I believe that these five students of the second level of analysis were able to go further in their learning processes. This is because their participation in this research was a way for them to think more deeply about their learning and their process of reflection. The dialogue established through the interviews and through the portraits developed using a psychoanalytical perspective provided these participants with a more complete perspective of their skills and their profiles as negotiators. A window was opened to discuss their psychic characteristics, giving students a more complete idea of who they are as negotiators. The individual approach of the ongoing learning process for these five students supplied a holistic portrait of them as negotiators, letting them receive feedback from different professionals such as my psychoanalyst colleagues and myself.

Taking the previous ideas into account, I believe that the second level of analysis supplements the first level. This also constitutes a form of response to the first research question: What can reflection add to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills? Hypothetically



speaking, I would say that reflection may add certain things to the learning of collaborative negotiation skills such as awareness of skills to create value. This may occur when students include in their reflection processes certain psychic characteristics such as making contact with themselves.

## **8.4 WHAT ARE MY CONTRIBUTIONS?**

In the following, I will present what I consider to be the main contributions of the current research, focusing on two levels: theoretical and methodological.

### **8.4.1 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

#### **8.4.1.1 The way of understanding reflection as a mental capacity, connected to other psychic characteristics**

The first theoretical contribution of the current research is a more accurate way of understanding reflection as a mental capacity, based on the conceptualization of the six psychic characteristics connected to it, namely: making contact with oneself, connecting with others, reality perspective, understanding and expressing emotions, balanced narcissism, and change process. This enhanced accuracy includes a more realistic idea of how reflection may support students' learning processes, based on the dynamic interplay of the psychic characteristics of the person. It also takes into account some of the factors of the learning context and seeks to achieve two of my research aims, mentioned in Chapter 7, which are:

- I intend to broaden understanding of the self-reflection concept in the management education field through the identification and explanation of some of the psychic characteristics linked to it.
- I will conceptualize these psychic characteristics, which are embedded in the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills that was observed in the cases.

#### **8.4.1.2 A link between the psychic characteristics essential to self-reflection and the intra- and interpersonal skills useful in collaborative negotiations**

The second theoretical contribution is the link that I discovered between the characteristics that are associated with self-reflection and those that are important to negotiate collaboratively. This is because the first and second psychic characteristics that a person can draw on when they reflect are also the basis of the intra- and interpersonal skills that are important for a negotiator to develop as part of a collaborative approach.

Altruism and cooperativeness (Axelrod 1984; Trivers 1971)—the “quid-pro-quo” strategy of helping non-kin if, and only if, they have done something for one—might also be underpinned by the mechanism of attachment. Attachment is likely to minimize the adverse effects of “cheaters”—individuals who do not reciprocate equitably in groups over time and to whom we are unlikely to become attached. (Fonagy et al., 2007, p. 122)

Following this line, I believe that the two above-mentioned psychic characteristics contribute to better understand the psychology of a collaborative negotiator and the possibilities and limitations for them to develop some of the intra- and interpersonal skills described in Chapter 3.

#### **8.4.1.3 Assessing students through a focus on individual psychology**

The third theoretical contribution is a way of assessing students through a focus on individual psychology. In fact, I consider this contribution to have both theoretical and methodological facets. The theoretical part is based on the notions that I (and, I hope, some colleagues) will now be able to use to assess students based on the findings of the second level of analysis: the psychic characteristics connected to reflection.

As I stated in the first chapter, one of my motivations for researching the potential of reflection for learning came from the realization that my students reflected in many different ways. This observation led me to ask myself: Who is this person? And, why do

they reflect in this way? The answers to these questions helped me to understand that the reflection process is the result of the psychic characteristics that a student draws on during the process coupled with the support of elements found in the learning context. This means that student A reflects in ways different from student B, but neither set of ways is superior to the other.

Consequently, I realized the difference between providing feedback recommending that a student go deeper in their reflection process, and helping them to grow in their awareness of the psychic characteristics that they utilize when reflecting. The latter was found to be more centered on students' uniqueness and, therefore, more helpful for encouraging them to foster the reflection process. The methodological aspect of this final contribution is, thus, based on the application of the ideas obtained from the second level of analysis to assess students.

## **8.4.2 METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

### **8.4.2.1 A portrait of students' negotiation profiles as a method**

The construction of a portrait of a student's negotiation profile and the psychic characteristics that they draw on when reflecting is a method in and of itself. The individualized process undergone by each of the five students in the second level of analysis led to the identification of students' negotiation profiles. This method together with the knowledge of the six psychic characteristics connected to reflection allows educators to assess students in meaningful and personalized ways that are aligned with a student-centered approach. I have adapted the mentioned method for two of the courses of the graduate Specialization in Negotiation: The Initial Profile as a Negotiator and The Final Profile As a Negotiator, which were proposed after a redesign process of that program.

### **8.4.2.2 The e-portfolios and reflection prompts**

The design of the e-portfolios with the reflection prompts that have been tailored for the purposes of the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course is a contribution for negotiation teachers. As I mentioned in the chapter on learning portfolios, the reflection prompts

and the guide on how to reflect—which constitute the main tools of the e-portfolios—rely on a guided process intended to enhance students' learning. That is why I believe they may be used by negotiation teachers—with small changes made as needed—in courses that are focused on the development of knowledge and skills for bilateral negotiations.

I also believe that the findings of the second level of analysis can prove valuable to management education professors in areas such as leadership, entrepreneurship, and personal development to enhance assessment of students' individual processes when they use tools like journaling and reflection.

#### **8.4.2.3 Changes to the level of the course**

Some alterations could be made to the learning portfolios that I described in Chapter 5. First, I could introduce a common thread to clearly connect the different reflection prompts and explain the purpose of each of them. In addition, I could give students more free rein while reflecting so that they do not feel limited by the questions from the reflection prompts. I could also include questions addressed to analyze how strategically students believe that they are negotiating, as mentioned in Chapter 5 as well.

#### **8.4.2.4 Changes to the level of the program**

Finally, I have proposed and designed the two aforementioned courses of the graduate Specialization in Negotiation, taking into account the findings of the current research. The goal was to place greater importance on the challenges students face when seeking to consolidate the intra- and interpersonal skills useful in negotiations. Moreover, I have offered tools in the courses in order to enhance the reflection process through the e-portfolios. These tools use a peer mentoring methodology that lets students dialogue with each other about their learning processes to encourage growth.

## 8.5 FURTHER RESEARCH QUESTIONS

I propose that the six psychic characteristics observed in the second level of analysis be further investigated in order to validate my findings. Although I consider the second level to be sufficiently deep to make a claim for some kind of generalization, it will be important to study the six psychic characteristics in a larger sample and to include additional factors such as culture. This is because research on cross-cultural negotiation has identified cultures that tend to be more collaborative than others. For a similar reason, gender should be explored, as there are studies reporting differences between the negotiation approaches used by men and women. It will also be interesting to extend the scope of the research to other social fields oriented toward personal development, in which it is fundamental that individuals learn different kinds of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills.

Furthermore, I consider it important to explore the following question in the management education field: How can a method be developed to approach the differences in students' reflections by focusing on their psychic characteristics? Or, how can teachers who use self-reflection (or journaling) as a part of their teaching practice take advantage of the findings of the second level of analysis of the current research?

This research is significant in the context of management professors who want their students to reflect in personal ways, and students openly sharing their feelings, needs, and personal experiences. When these two conditions are present, teachers need a committed way of accompanying these processes faced by students. The outcomes of the research may help teachers to give feedback that can help students feel respected and understood both personally and professionally. This feedback may simultaneously challenge students to go further in their processes.

Finally, I still face challenges to include tools that enhance the learning of collaborative negotiation skills in the learning context. I would like to have clearer ways of evaluating students' learning of collaborative negotiation skills. This could then become a future

research question: How should learning environments be designed to best support students' learning of collaborative negotiation skills? Also: What are accurate ways of measuring and assessing the learning of collaborative negotiation skills in management students? I think that this kind of research could establish ways for both students and teachers to track their learning processes and outcomes more clearly.

## 8.6 THE RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The reflection outcomes documented through the e-portfolios relied on information provided by students about their learning processes, thus limiting the findings to students' perceptions. Since I did not include direct ways of evidencing students' reflection outcomes to complement those used in the current research, this was inevitable.

In addition, I did not study reflection in an individual manner. As opposed to a method by which some of the students reflected while others did not, the entire class participated in a reflection process through e-learning portfolios. The former structure could have allowed comparisons to be made between the two groups, generating more precise conclusions of what reflection produces in students with regard to learning. I consider this to be one of the factors influencing my conservative answer to the first research question. However, another reason is that learning is a process in which many factors are involved, making it difficult to establish direct connections between learning tools and learning outcomes.

In order to have a third point of view as I developed the two levels of analysis, I received support from some colleagues. In addition, I asked the students of the second level of analysis to validate the interpretations of the psychic characteristics that I observed in them. Despite these efforts, it is possible that my perspective influenced my analysis of the empirical information of this research, which has its advantages and limitations. This is because I chose to study my own course and students, and I naturally have personal opinions and feelings that may have affected my conclusions and actions in this study. One advantage, to my mind, is that I was deeply involved with the research, and I developed it with a very complete array of information. Nonetheless, I am aware that the close relation to my object of study

and my blind spots (values, beliefs, and opinions) may have unconsciously interfered with the interpretation of the empirical data. In the current case, those blind spots may have been highlighted from my close relationship with the object of study. I think that this may have particularly influenced the elaboration of the e-learning portfolios, discussed in Chapter 5, since I did not have a third point of view when developing that part.

## 8.7 CONCLUSIONS

- As I wrote earlier, I can confidently state that reflection contributes to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills by making learning evident to students and teachers. Students did accomplish verifiable learning through the Theory and Strategies of Negotiation course, as evidenced through their testimonies, but I cannot credit reflection for that. For this reason, I argue that reflection has the potential to contribute to the learning process, but the connection between reflection and learning is neither as direct nor as strong as some of the authors mentioned in section 8.1.2 tend to claim.

- I conclude that there are six psychic characteristics associated with reflection: making contact with oneself (C1), connecting with others (C2), reality perspective (C3), understanding and expressing emotions (C4), balanced narcissism (C5), and change process (C6). Moreover, I state that the first three characteristics are most closely connected to the self- reflection process within students' learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. The previous findings support understanding of the contributions of reflection to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills as being influenced by students' possibilities to draw on the mentioned psychic characteristics and by elements of the learning context.

- Despite the importance that I give to the previous ideas, I consider it very difficult to predict when change will occur in the educational environment. This difficulty arises from having observed the richness of the in-depth cases of the second level of analysis. It is also difficult to predict when education will allow students to change or

learn, and when additional processes outside the boundaries of the educational context, such as therapy or yoga, will be necessary.

In this way, I think that what reflection adds to learning is unique in each case. For instance, if a student draws on the first psychic characteristic (making contact with oneself) while reflecting, there could be any number of effects on the learning process. The contribution of reflection to learning is unpredictable in every case, since it is the result of the dynamic interplay of different factors from the learning context and the individual. More research may be needed before arriving at more accurate and general statements about what reflection can add to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills. However, even if more accurate explanations are reached in the future, I believe it will be critical to validate them in every particular situation.

The previous ideas in addition to the findings of the second level of analysis led me to question and revise my prior assumptions. One assumption that has been discarded is that everyone is equipped with the individual psychic characteristics that allow them to make contact with themselves. Another is that everyone is able to have the inner dialogues that I expect them to have when I ask them to reflect about themselves.

## **8.8 IMPLICATIONS**

The fourth and final aim of the current research was to analyze the consequences of understanding reflection as a mental capacity for the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills, which is connected to other psychic characteristics. “In going deeper, the student’s voice grows as he or she moves beyond describing objects toward the development of a relationship with the subject through the recognition of personal insights. Indeed, students may explore their ‘shadows’” (Brearley, 2002, as cited in Pavlovich et al., 2008, p. 54). In my view, this quote speaks to the processes that students engage in when reflecting about themselves, which are not exclusively confined to the educational sphere. These processes feature a certain degree of overlap between teaching and activities such as coaching, mentoring, and therapy, since the dialogues established between the students and



the teacher through the written reflections are of a very personal and sensitive nature. These kinds of processes, in which self-reflection is a central and systematic part of a course, focus on both personal and professional development. In that order of ideas, it will be important to make students aware of the nature of these processes and to offer alternative activities in the event that some decline to participate in them.

### **8.8.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS**

In accordance with the previous ideas, if a student does not feel comfortable reflecting as part of an educational setting, or if they do not reflect in the way their teacher expects them to. It then becomes important to analyze if we as teachers are constraining students by asking them to do things they are not able to do or are not interested in doing. It is also paramount that we ask ourselves what reflection outcomes we can expect of students who are not engaged in a reflection process. Perhaps some of the learners who are not interested in developing reflections will nonetheless have outcomes aligned with our expectations. It will be important, however, to analyze to what extent the reflection process can help these students grow.

### **8.8.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS**

With regard to the context of management professors who use portfolios, reflection, or journaling as a part of their teaching practice, it is essential that they know what to expect when they ask students to reflect about themselves. They are certain to find differences in students' reflection outcomes and receive essays that disclose students' traits, feelings, and fears. I suggest that teachers be ready and prepared to assess students' reflections and to do so with coherence and respect. "Moving the dialogue to the student requires a space without judgment or prejudice. It is one of compassion and empathy for the experiences that others have been engaged in" (Pavlovich et al., 2008, p. 40). This process includes the possibility of assessing students' learning, taking into account their psychic characteristics in order to best support their personal development. I believe that this way of interacting with students constitutes a student-centered approach. "The challenge, then, is to develop a format that creates clear guidelines for students

regarding what is expected with this form of writing, while still placing the students' awareness at the center of the process" (Pavlovich et al., 2008, p. 40). Moreover, if professors who use journaling, self-reflection, or learning portfolios take into account students' psychic characteristics to assess their learning, they may enhance opportunities for transformative teaching.

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# APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A

**Table A1.** *Making contact with oneself*

<b>Case #1 Lene</b>	<b>Case #2 Juan</b>	<b>Case #3 Fredy</b>	<b>Case # 4 Lars</b>	<b>Case #5 Mario</b>
<p>Identifies and communicates expectations.</p> <p>Recognizes strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Continual self evaluation, both critical and favourable.</p> <p>Identifies her own emotions.</p> <p>Reflects thoroughly and continually about herself.</p>	<p>Is able to reflect and to contact himself through it.</p> <p>Evidences self-knowledge.</p> <p>Learns to detect personality traits that help or hinder negotiations.</p>	<p>Has a neutral awareness of errors or aspects that he can improve.</p> <p>Is aware of his needs.</p> <p>Shows interest in improving himself.</p> <p>Shows interest in learning and changing personal characteristics.</p>	<p>Learns to identify (occasionally), His own characteristics, especially his faults and bad traits.</p> <p>Conscious of limitations in being able to connect with self and to reflect.</p> <p>Clearly describes the scope of his performance and what lacks.</p>	<p>Evidences self-knowledge.</p> <p>Projects a realistic vision about himself, in terms of what he labels as strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Shows the capacity to get in touch with himself.</p>

**Table A2.** *Difficulties making contact with one self*

Case # 4 Lars	Case #5 Mario
<p>Must make an effort to identify his expectations.</p> <p>He did not include his learning objectives for the course.</p> <p>Difficulties anticipating the results of his actions.</p> <p>Discomfort speaking about his own qualities.</p>	<p>Excludes himself as a subject of reflection, emphasis on facts and behaviors and writes in plural.</p> <p>Comments on his opinions but not on his experiences</p> <p>Fear of questioning his positions and changing.</p> <p>In spite of an evolution, reflection continues to require effort.</p>

**Table A3.** *Connecting to others*

Case #1 Lene	Case #2 Juan	Case #3 Fredy	Case #5 Mario
<p>Identifies expectations of others.</p> <p>Attempts to compensate others when they seem to be affected by her actions.</p> <p>Feels better working in a collaborative way.</p>	<p>Perceives expectations and needs of others.</p> <p>Curiosity leads him to explore the interests of people, giving meaning to the experiences of both parties.</p>	<p>Takes into account the interests of others and values their participation and input.</p> <p>Care for others.</p> <p>Puts limits, without negatively affecting the other person.</p> <p>Poses questions to change the focus of interactions.</p>	<p>Interest in interacting with others.</p> <p>Capacity to perceive needs and respect of others.</p>

**Table A4.** *Difficulties connecting with others*

Case #1 Lene	Case #2 Juan	Case #3 Fredy	Case #5 Mario
Gives a lot of importance to hierarchies, which at times leads to difficulties interacting with others.	Centers his attention more on moving the project forward than in people who are involved.	At times, not easy to connect to the feelings and needs of others, leading to placing responsibilities for his own issues on others	Does not find easy to reconcile his positions with others’.

**Table A5.** *Reality perspective*

Case #1 Lene	Case #2 Juan	Case #3 Fredy	Case # 4 Lars	Case #5 Mario
Identifies and describes steps to achieve an objective, or that led to committing an error.  Seeks to find solutions to difficulties.	Identify problems and look for solutions.	Shows awareness of his errors or aspects that need improvement from a neutral position.  Sets limits without the intention of having a negative impact in others.  Intends to apply a sense of justice.	Takes responsibility for his own actions	Differentiates between his perspective and others’ perspectives.

**Table A6.** *Difficulties with reality perspective*

<b>Case #1 Lene</b>	<b>Case #2 Juan</b>	<b>Case #3 Fredy</b>	<b>Case # 4 Lars</b>	<b>Case #5 Mario</b>
Difficulty in perceiving herself and others objectively and realistically.	Occurs when sometimes he can't stop thinking about a situation and when he cannot sleep.	Reflection leads him occasionally to insomnia and to talk to himself.	Difficulty at times to admit that his performance was less than ideal, which in turn limits the possibility to recognize it and to change.	Not questioning about his actions, which sharpens the certainty that he maintains regarding the correctness of his actions

**Table A7.** *Evidences of Understanding and expressing emotions*

<b>Case #1 Lene</b>	<b>Case #2 Juan</b>	<b>Case #3 Fredy</b>
Capacity to identify emotions.	<p>Promotion of grieving in negotiations in order to let the other party unload and thereby gain information.</p> <p>Get emotionally caught up in the issue allows him to take better advantage of reflections.</p>	<p>Understand what is occurring at an emotional level in the negotiation.</p> <p>Make a concerted effort do not to get caught up and do not to respond reciprocally to negative manifestations from the other party.</p>



**Table A8.** *Difficulties Understanding and expressing emotions*

<b>Case #3 Fredy</b>	<b>Case # 4 Lars</b>
<p>Becomes impatient when he believes that something said in the negotiation is false. Become impatient when he believes that something said in the negotiation is false.</p>	<p>Gets carried away by his emotions.</p>

**Table A 9.** *Balanced narcissism*

<b>Case #1 Lene</b>	<b>Case #2 Juan</b>	<b>Case #3 Fredy</b>	<b>Case # 4 Lars</b>	<b>Case #5 Mario</b>
<p>Aware of her capacities.</p> <p>In professional sphere, her security is greater since she can rely on what she knows and what she can prepare.</p>	<p>Capacity to value himself.</p> <p>Self-assuredness.</p>	<p>Self-assuredness.</p> <p>Interested in the image he transmits.</p>	<p>Flexibility in the positions he holds.</p>	<p>He positions himself securely for events and will not change opinions, nor doubt his position because of the reactions of others.</p> <p>Maintains his self perception.</p>

**Table A10.** *Unbalanced narcissism*

Case #1 Lene	Case #2 Juan	Case #3 Fredy	Case # 4 Lars	Case #5 Mario
<p>Insecurities.</p> <p>Assumes defensive rigid positions.</p> <p>Lack of confidence in herself, leading her to doubt her capacities</p> <p>Lack of self-confidence and sense of inferiority.</p>	<p>More focused on moving the project forward than in people who are involved. This led him to earn a reputation as a “bulldozer”.</p>	<p>Influence others through power, which is more associated with competitive negotiations than with collaborative negotiations.</p> <p>Lack of willingness and humility to negotiate.</p>	<p>Insecure about achieving certain goals in a new environment.</p> <p>Fear of being perceived as an egocentric person.</p> <p>Easier to see his faults and discomfort to talk about his qualities.</p> <p>Rigid positions and inflexible behaviour.</p>	<p>Acts intransigently leading him do not to integrate.</p> <p>No questioning of actions.</p>

**Table A11.** *Change process*

Case #1 Lene	Case #2 Juan	Case #3 Fredy	Case # 4 Lars	Case #5 Mario
<p>Personal evolution.</p> <p>Questions paradigms, re defines and gives new meaning to experiences.</p> <p>Transforms simple situations sets basis for the elaboration of other more complex ones.</p> <p>Changes in how she thinks and acts.</p> <p>Feels better in interactions with others, and to work better in a collaborative way.</p>	<p>Strengthened his capacity to integrate theory with practice</p> <p>Became aware of the potential that he had not learned to exploit</p> <p>Identified his fears and defenses</p> <p>Questioned his paradigms and redefined his experiences</p> <p>Strengthened his ability to perceive refinements of situations and to get a bigger picture</p>	<p>Integrated experiences with what he learned.</p> <p>Took ownership of the concepts and intended to apply them.</p> <p>Greater self-assuredness and evidence of some changes.</p> <p>Looks at the past and makes associations with the present, achieving greater self assurance.</p> <p>Put value in what he learned and what is to be learned.</p>	<p>Achieve a more realistic vision of himself and his surroundings.</p> <p>New options of thinking and acting indicate a process of change in self-awareness.</p> <p>Makes proposals, such as thinking before acting.</p>	<p>Greater capacity to be connected to himself and in lessons.</p> <p>An evolution in reflecting about his experiences.</p> <p>Is able to include himself as subject of reflection.</p>



## SUMMARY

In her doctoral thesis, Margarita Canal explores the value of self-reflection to facilitate the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills as well as how self-reflection as a mental capacity functions. She draws on theories of self-reflection from the higher and management education fields, incorporating a psychoanalytical approach as well as a philosophical perspective that questions certain positive effects associated with reflection. The study provides a more realistic view of what reflection can add to the learning process of collaborative negotiation skills, proposing that reflection makes learning evident to both teachers and students. Moreover, the research sheds light on the understanding of reflection as a mental capacity, based on the conceptualization of the six psychic characteristics connected to it, namely: 1) making contact with oneself, 2) connecting to others, 3) reality perspective, 4) understanding and expressing emotions, 5) balanced narcissism, and 6) change process. This knowledge constitutes a contribution that allows management teachers who use journaling, self-reflection, or learning portfolios to take into account students' psychic characteristics to assess their learning in meaningful and personalized ways aligned with a student-centered approach and, at the same time, enhance opportunities for transformative teaching.