
P R O
F I
25
L E
Number 2

ISSN 1657-0790 (*printed*) 2256-5760 (*online*)

PROFILE

Issues in Teachers' Professional Development

Vol. 25, No. 2, July-December 2023
Facultad de Ciencias Humanas
Departamento de Lenguas Extranjeras
Grupo de Investigación PROFILE

WWW.PROFILE.UNAL.EDU.CO

Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, a refereed journal, encourages the dissemination of classroom research projects and innovations by teachers of English, and is published twice a year (in January and July). It is currently registered in Scopus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, Latindex, EBSCO, Informe Académico, Academic OneFile, Red Iberoamericana de Innovación y Conocimiento Científico - REDIB, the Directory of Open Access Journals - DOAJ, and Dialnet. It is indexed in the MLA International Bibliography, Educational Research Abstracts online - ERA, The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), The Emerging Sources Citation Index (Clarivate Analytics), The European Reference Index for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (ERIH PLUS), IRESIE, LatAm Plus, Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts database - LLBA, Redalyc, SciELO Citation Index (Web of Science), CLASE - Citas Latinoamericanas en Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades, Publindex - Minciencias (classified in **category A1**), and Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) 2022: Quartile 1 (Linguistics and Language), Quartile 2 (Education).

Please send all correspondence to the journal editor:
Departamento de Lenguas Extranjeras, Grupo de Investigación PROFILE
Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
Ciudad Universitaria.
Carrera 30 No. 45-03, Bogotá, Colombia

Website: **www.profile.unal.edu.co**
Phone: 57 (601) 3165000 ext. 16780
Email: rprofile_fchbog@unal.edu.co

RECTOR
Dolly Montoya Castaño

DEAN OF THE HUMAN SCIENCES FACULTY
Carlos Guillermo Páramo Bonilla

ACADEMIC VICE-DEAN OF THE HUMAN SCIENCES FACULTY
Víctor Raúl Viviescas

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION VICE-DEAN OF THE HUMAN SCIENCES FACULTY
Alejandra Jaramillo Morales

HEAD OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT
Ruth Marcela Del Campo Machado

DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL PUBLISHING CENTER
Rubén Darío Flórez Arcila

SALES AND MARKETING
UN La Librería, Bogotá
Plazoleta de Las Nieves
Calle 20 No. 7-15
Tel. 601 3165000 ext. 29490

Ciudad Universitaria
Auditorio León de Greiff, piso 1.
Tel. 601 3165000 ext. 20040
http://www.uneditorial.com/

La Librería de la U
www.lalibreriadelau.com

CENTRO EDITORIAL
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS
www.humanas.unal.edu.co
Ciudad Universitaria, Carrera 30 # 45-03, Edificio de Posgrados de la Facultad de Ciencias Humanas (225), sótano.
Bogotá, D. C., Colombia
Copy-editing: Nathalie Barrientos Preciado
Coordinator of the School Periodicals: Daniel H. Trujillo
Design Coordinator: Michael Cárdenas
Design: Alejandro Sepúlveda Gauer
Printed in Colombia by pendiente
100 copies

PROFILE IS REGISTERED IN

Scopus
https://www.scopus.com/sourceid/21100886398

Ulrich's Periodicals Directory
http://www.ulrichsweb.com/ulrichsweb/

Latindex
https://latindex.org/latindex/ficha/12158

EBSCO
https://www.ebscohost.com/titleLists/eue-coverage.htm

Informe Académico
https://www.gale.com/intl/c/informe-academico

Academic OneFile
https://www.gale.com/intl/databases/gale-onefile

Red Iberoamericana de Innovación y Conocimiento Científico - REDIB
https://www.redib.org/

DOAJ - the Directory of Open Access Journals
https://doaj.org/toc/1657-0790

SciELO Citation Index (Web of Science)
http://wokinfo.com/products_tools/multidisciplinary/scielo/

Dialnet
http://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/revista?codigo=22417

IT IS INDEXED IN

MLA - the Directory of Periodicals & International bibliography
http://www.mla.org/bibliography

ERA - Educational Research Abstracts online
https://bit.ly/2XlroMs

The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)
http://eric.ed.gov/

The Emerging Sources Citation Index
http://wokinfo.com/products_tools/multidisciplinary/esci/

The European Reference Index for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (ERIH PLUS)
https://bit.ly/3bhCpJA

IRESIE (Índice de Revistas de Educación Superior e Investigación Educativa)
http://iresie.unam.mx/

LLBA - Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts database
https://www.proquest.com/products-services/llba-set-c.html

Redalyc - Red de Revistas Científicas de América Latina y el Caribe, España y Portugal
http://www.redalyc.org/revista.oa?id=1692

SciELO Colombia
https://bit.ly/3bZMN3d

CLASE - Citas Latinoamericanas en Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades
https://bit.ly/3n50TZ7

Publindex (Categoría A1)
https://bit.ly/2LYebnC

LatAm Plus
http://www.latamplus.com/

Scimago Journal Rank 2022: Linguistics and Language (Q1), Education (Q2)
https://bit.ly/3e5zmAG

PROFILE
Issues in Teachers' Professional Development
Vol. 25, No. 2, July-December 2023 | ISSN 1657-0790 (*printed*) 2256-5760 (*online*)

Contents

Issues from Novice Teacher Researchers

Issues Based on Reflections and Innovations

PROFILE
Issues in Teachers' Professional Development
Vol. 25, n.º 2, julio-diciembre 2023 | ISSN 1657-0790 (*printed*) 2256-5760 (*online*)

Contenido

Temas de nuevos docentes investigadores

Temas basados en reflexiones e innovaciones

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.109476

Editorial

We welcome this second issue of 2023 with good news regarding the most recent report of the Scimago Journal & Country Rank. The *Profile* journal maintains the positions in Quartile 1 in the Linguistics and Language area as well as the classification in Quartile 2 in the area of Education. Once more, we acknowledge the contributions of the key actors of our publication: the authors, who persevere in the editorial processes; the members of the editorial committees, who dedicate precious time to review the manuscripts and assist us in selecting quality contents; and our readers, who ultimately consult the published articles and, we hope, find valuable information there. They all encourage us to keep up our work and fill us with a sense of satisfaction when we see such a robust academic community built around the journal. Thanks again!

Before depicting the contents of this edition, we should point out that the articles selected revolve around two key areas: teachers' well-being and language policies. The former shows an increasing interest in the individual—the teacher and future teacher—and their emotions. In times when we have faced challenges like the ones brought by virtual and hybrid modalities to language teaching, it is good to witness educators' and researchers' commitment to examining situational factors, feelings, and opinions that invite to bear in mind the implications for successful teaching performance as well as for the optimal conditions that should characterize our professional and personal life.

Regarding language policies, the challenges and tensions reported by experienced and prospective teachers entering the teaching job or starting it in relatively new settings stress the need for an articulation between the mandates of laws and the human being. Likewise, the reflections on the conception of such policies insist, as pointed out in the past two decades in academic publications and different fora, that policies should be detached from instrumental viewpoints aligned with productivity, test measures, and hegemonic strategies aimed at supporting socioeconomic perspectives. Thus, if language policies claim the relevance of equal access to education in a foreign or second language and stress the role of the teacher in attaining this goal, they should take into consideration those who do the teaching job, that is, the teachers; their needs and the circumstances in which they work should not be taken for granted. Because of the disconnection between policy makers and the teacher or professional communities, we hope that more teachers and researchers get engaged in examining the different factors that can effectively articulate policy conception and implementation.

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Cárdenas, M. L., & Nieto Cruz, M. C. (2023). Editorial. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 25*(2), 9–12. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n1.109476

In this issue, we are delighted to share with you 13 articles—ten correspond to the section *Issues from Teacher Researchers*, two to *Issues from Novice Teacher- Researchers*, and one to *Issues Based on Reflections and Innovations.*

The topics discussed by researchers in the current issue concern preservice and in-service teacher education and professional development, teachers' identity permeated by the use of technologies in pandemic times in different contexts, evaluation/assessment, emotions, language teaching methods—including task-based learning—, national curricular plans for general and specific contexts, community knowledge, agency, hegemonic discourses and decolonial practices in higher education, and the development of pragmatic competences.

The section *Issues from Teacher Researchers* opens with an article by Daron Benjamin Loo (Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia). This autoethnographic study examined the tensions affecting the identity of a teacher in charge of an online English for academic writing module during the COVID-19 pandemic. These tensions highlight the teacher's performativity when using technology, which ultimately configured his teacher identity.

The second article is from Tatiana Becerra-Posada and Diana Cristina Arroyo (Universidad de Córdoba and Universidad del Norte, Colombia). These researchers explored qualitatively how preservice teachers make sense of task-based language teaching principles and characteristics, especially amidst remote instruction. The discussion centers around the challenges preservice teachers face when adapting task-based language teaching to the demands of new teaching contexts.

Next comes the article written by Verónica Ormeño and Minerva Rosas (Universidad de Los Lagos, Chile), who wanted to analyze the teaching practices during the pandemic from the perspective of preservice teachers, in particular the context and conditions under which these practices unfolded and the way the process influenced the participants' pedagogical and professional knowledge development.

Our fourth article comes from the cooperative efforts of three Colombian researchers: Ingrit Juliana Díaz (Universidad del Cauca), Catalina Ipia Salinas (Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca), and Liliana Cuesta Medina (Universidad de La Sabana). The researchers conducted an exploratory qualitative study to delve into the gaps in the preservice teacher education and professional development of 15 English language teachers in a Colombian public university regarding their teaching knowledge and practice. Findings reveal several teacher deficiencies, classified into three axes: language proficiency, teaching awareness, and teacher challenges. The article offers a discussion on reconceptualizing teacher education in Colombia.

M. Martha Lengeling (Universidad de Guanajuato, Mexico) and Melanie L. Schneider (University of Wisconsin, USA) present the experiences of an American teacher teaching English in the Mexican context. The researchers wanted to explore, through a qualitative case study, the growth of the visiting teacher and its relation to teacher education practices. The results revealed the teacher's growing sensitivity to teaching context as she gradually

recognized differences between teaching English in the two countries, prompting a shift in pedagogy to one more compatible with teaching English as a foreign language.

Three researchers—two from Monash University in Australia and one from Colombia—analyze the enactment of the Colombian language policy called *Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo* (National Bilingual Plan). Diego Cardona-Escobar, Melissa Barnes, and Marc Pruyn found that the differentiated enactments of the plan raise unequal access to opportunities to build language capital and unequal levels of achievement among three public schools.

In tune with the discussion presented by the previous authors, five Colombian authors examine hegemonic discourses of English and socioeconomic development from the perspective of English, French, Italian, German, and Portuguese teachers. Ferney Cruz-Arcila (Universidad Pedagógica Nacional), Vanessa Solano-Cohen (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana), María Liliana Briceño-González, Ana Rincón, and Antonio Lobato-Junior (Universidad EAN) scrutinize the positionings of the foreign language teachers about the predominant narrative of English as the language of development and the role that the languages they teach may also play. Findings suggest that, although there is a strong tendency to uncritically accept and accommodate instrumental and anglonormative views of development, "small hopes" for configuring plural, locally sensitive, less instrumental, and ecological understandings are emerging.

The eighth article is a contribution by Karol Castillo, Luz Dary Cárdenas, and Sandra Lastra (Universidad del Tolima, Colombia). The researchers carried out a two-cycle action research to explore how Colombian students from rural and urban areas construct community knowledge when exploring funds of knowledge. Results revealed how students learned to see and re-signify their communities, territory, and funds of knowledge by exploring the knowledge held by their families and community members.

The following contribution to this section comes from teacher-researchers Frank Giraldo (Universidad de Caldas, Colombia) and Xun Yan (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA), whose research aimed at designing an online language assessment course. The course addressed assessment challenges, new methods, and authentic, valid, and ethical assessments. The findings suggest that the teachers wanted a course that mixed theory, practice, and principles of assessment.

Our last article in this section comes from researchers Azadeh Hassani and Zari Saeedi (Allameh Tabataba'i University, Iran). This case study explored the evaluation criteria applied by six supervisors of a private language institute. Several themes emerged: English and content knowledge, teaching skills, personal traits, fulfilling workplace expectations, and parents'/learners'/peers' feedback. The proposed framework can help increase language supervisors' teacher evaluation literacy.

The second section—*Issues from Novice Teacher-Researchers*—includes two articles. The first article is a contribution from Lucía Belmonte Carrasco and Guadalupe de la Maya Retamar (Universidad de Extremadura, Spain), whose exploratory, descriptive study

reports on the emotions of content and language-integrated learning for preservice teachers. Participants showed more positive than negative feelings. The study highlights the affective dimension of teaching content and language-integrated learning.

The second article of this section is a joint effort between Cindy Valdelamar González and Luzkarime Calle-Díaz (Universidad de Córdoba, Colombia). This team aimed to show the enactment of the National English Suggested Curriculum by the Ministry of Education. Using the ecological model of agency as a framework, the researchers situated teachers' actions within projective, iterational, and practical evaluative dimensions of agency to expand theoretical and empirical knowledge in the field. Findings show that teachers cope with the changes derived from policy differently.

Our issue closes with the section *Issues Based on Reflections and Innovations*, which includes one article. José Aldemar Álvarez Valencia and Andrés Valencia (Universidad del Valle, Colombia) propose a critical intercultural dialogue that may open a space for the effectively integrating Indigenous students' cultural semiotic resources into higher education curricula. Such resources can be an asset in resisting colonial dynamics within education. The authors highlight the structural barriers Indigenous students face to gain access to higher education and, once there, complete their university formation. The authors invite university stakeholders to join in an intercultural reflective process.

The topics in this issue are wide and varied, and readers can select those contents that best suit their teaching or research interests. This is just a sample of the many issues surrounding the practice of English language teaching, and we hope that the information gathered here may be helpful for teachers in their identity-formation process and in acquiring more tools to critically reflect on language policies.

Melba Libia Cárdenas
Journal Editor

María Claudia Nieto Cruz
Journal Director

PROFILE

Issues from Teacher Researchers

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.104914

"It Feels Like a Performance When I Teach Online": Autoethnography of Tensions in Teacher Identity

"Se siente como una actuación cuando enseño en línea": análisis autoetnográfico de las tensiones en la identidad docente

Daron Benjamin Loo
Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia

This autoethnographic study examined the tensions affecting the identity of a teacher in charge of an online English academic writing module during the COVID-19 pandemic. Reflections written over one academic year were examined using performativity as an analytical lens. The analysis identified three types of tensions: performing for proximity, performing to meet the institution's and student's expectations, and continuously changing performances. These tensions highlight the teacher's performativity when using technology, which ultimately configured his teacher identity. From these tensions, the paradox of technology may be observed. Specifically, tools supposedly productive for an online class may not necessarily be well received by students and may burden the teacher.

Keywords: autoethnography, COVID-19, English language teaching, performativity, teacher identity, teaching online

Este estudio autoetnográfico examinó las tensiones que afectaron la identidad de un profesor de inglés mientras impartía un módulo virtual de escritura académica durante la pandemia de COVID-19. Con base en la performatividad, se examinaron las reflexiones escritas del participante recopiladas durante un año académico. Así, surgieron tres tipos de tensión: actuar por proximidad, actuar para cumplir con las expectativas de la institución y de los estudiantes y tener que cambiar continuamente de acto. Estas tensiones resaltaron la performatividad del participante en el uso de la tecnología —que finalmente configuró su identidad docente— y permitieron observar que las herramientas supuestamente productivas para una clase virtual pueden no ser necesariamente bien recibidas por los estudiantes y pueden terminar siendo una carga para el profesor.

Palabras clave: autoetnografía, COVID-19, enseñanza del inglés, enseñanza en línea, identidad docente, performatividad

Daron Benjamin Loo https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9203-3608 · Email: daronloo@ums.edu.my

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Loo, D. B. (2023). "It feels like a performance when I teach online": Autoethnography of tensions in teacher identity. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 25*(2), 15–28. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.104914

This article was received on September 22, 2022 and accepted on March 23, 2023.

Introduction

Being able to teach online is something many teachers feel they should be familiar with but may have never gotten around to (Phillips et al., 2021). When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, there was an urgent need to equip teachers of all educational levels with skills, knowledge, and resources to cope with an online learning environment (Hofer et al., 2021). Yet, efforts may have been hampered due to the back-and-forth shifts between online and in-person classroom teaching, leading to teacher frustration and burnout (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). This may have contributed to a poor sense of ownership over online teaching, as teachers struggle and resort to just getting by (Kupers et al., 2022). Aside from the unpredictable circumstances caused by the pandemic, teachers are also confronted with other online teaching expectations, such as adapting specific tools or creating tasks or activities requiring high-level technical skills (Marshall et al., 2020). Dealing with the pandemic and working with institutionalized expectations are potent factors that can chip away at a teacher's sense of self, rendering their teaching practice a performance that instigates tensions in their professional identity (Nazari & Seyri, 2021).

In the examination of teacher identity, it is important to understand tension as it provides insights into how agency may be enacted, how teachers are given space to address or troubleshoot issues, or even how teachers may be able to recognize issues although they may not take further actions to solve them (Loo et al., 2017). Often tensions are glossed over as merely a logistical or situational challenge to be addressed and resolved as it occurs (Buchanan, 2015); however, a closer examination of tension can be enriching as it may instruct teachers on the pedagogical actions they take and the reasons behind them (Day et al., 2006). Interested in tensions affecting teacher identity, this study used autoethnography to examine online teaching through the lens of performativity. This study's findings will be valuable to teachers and teacher educators as they grapple with rapid and sudden changes affecting their immediate context and the broader educational realm.

Literature Review

Teacher Identity and Teaching as Performativity

Rooted in the teaching profession is the teacher's professional identity. Teacher identity, or the teachers' sense of self, provides a foundation for how teachers may conduct themselves. Sachs (2005) mentions that teacher identity helps

> teachers to construct their own ideas of "how to be," "how to act" and "how to understand" their work and place in society. [Teacher identity] is not something fixed nor is it imposed; rather it is negotiated through experience and the sense that is made of that experience. (p. 15)

This is exemplified by Canagarajah (2012) in his discussion of how his professional identity was shaped by his personal background and the different but relevant professional communities he interacted with. In his discussion, Canagarajah illustrated how he—as a South Asian immigrant to the United States of America—had to reckon with different perspectives and prejudices he encountered in different aspects of his profession. All of these, while challenging, provided the foundation from which he could develop his identity.

Given the different factors involved, teacher identity is thus a multi-faceted concept. It is not only shaped by communities where one belongs or with whom a person interacts but also by various factors such as emotions and agency of the self, as well as the broader pedagogical discourses regarding the profession and the teaching field (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). This further renders teacher identity as a concept that is multi-layered and dynamic; it is prone to slight shifts as teachers find themselves in novel or unfamiliar circumstances (Canagarajah, 2012; Sahling & De Carvalho, 2021; Varghese et al., 2005).

A teacher's identity may be shaped by several performative expectations found in the teacher's work or teaching setting. There are formal performative expectations, such as institutional requirements for a teacher's pedagogical practices (Canagarajah, 2012), or even informal expectations, such as the self-reflection or self-assessment of how a teacher performs in a novel or unfamiliar setting (Sahling & De Carvalho, 2021). In such situations, teachers craft their practice or beliefs based on the expected performance and streamline them according to their classroom setting (Vick & Martinez, 2011). Furthermore, performativity places teachers in a situation where they are constantly compared with others, which may promote competition instead of collegiality (Holloway & Brass, 2018). This leads to the expectation that teachers should and will readily accept having to be competitive by showcasing various pedagogical performances.

Meanwhile, those resistant to competition are considered unsuitable for teaching (Lambert & Gray, 2021). The expectation for performativity is not only driven by stakeholders at the educational institution but also by those with an influence over policies and the general public (Perryman & Calvert, 2020). Ball (2003) elaborates on three types of performative technologies. The first is market technology, which aims to create a competitive work environment for teachers and the institutions they represent. Next is management technology, which refers to a structure that oversees teachers and teaching behavior. There are certain ideals promoted by management technology, such as teachers' willingness to sacrifice and being self-disciplined for the betterment of the institution. The third technology is the measurement of performance, where indices are presented to teachers as goals to achieve. These indices are reiterated pervasively to present them as "natural."

Moreover, with the 21st-century focus on efficiency, pedagogical deliverables, and milestones have been integrated into educational systems to track and assess teachers' performance (Perryman & Culvert, 2020). With these various technologies of performances to address, a teacher's sense of identity is affected significantly. Hence, when the performances expected of teachers do not align with their vision of themselves, various tensions may arise (Ball, 2003; Gray & Seiki, 2020).

Online Teaching as Performance: Tensions on Identity

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, online teaching happened at all educational levels. Many teaching and learning software programs were introduced to support the online classroom, yet these tools are not without issues (see Davis et al., 2019). Studies have shown that teaching online is not determinant only of the individual teacher's skills, knowledge, or readiness; it is shaped by many factors, including institutional support and students' readiness (Hofer et al., 2021). This dynamic situation, where multiple variables are involved, is conceptualized by Koehler and Mishra (2009) through a framework called technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (TPACK). This framework recognizes the dynamic interaction between knowledge bases considered core for teachers of any educational level. The integration of these core bases is subject to various variables, such as the subject taught, the student's familiarity with technology, or the intended academic outcomes or expected learning experiences. This interaction is essential, given that integrating technology requires not only knowledge of the technological tools used but also the pedagogical processes that can be used along with those tools.

Tensions will likely arise when teachers are expected to integrate technology into teaching, especially in urgent situations like the global pandemic. These expectations, in the form of powerful discourses, may conflict with a teacher's classroom practices, especially when teachers try to reconcile and realign potentially divergent views about how learning should

be facilitated. It should be noted that new and seasoned teachers have individual professional beliefs regarding teaching and learning processes (Sullivan et al., 2021). Furthermore, tensions are not only due to divergent views but could also result from practical or logistical issues (Cohen, 2008; Diehl, 2019; Sydnor, 2017).

When teachers face challenges, including in online teaching environments, their responses may be shaped by how they perceive themselves. This perception—their identity—will contribute to their decision-making process (Enyedy et al., 2006). In addition, there will be times when teachers are faced with urgent needs to adapt and change materials or teaching practices, such as the current need to respond to the pandemic (Diehl, 2019). This may affect their sense of identity, which may include questioning their professional worth given the lack of knowledge and skill in information computer technology (Choi et al., 2021); feeling unprepared to manage an online learning environment (VanLone et al., 2022); or feeling lost because they lacked a point of reference due to limited or no experience in online teaching (Littlejohn et al., 2021).

Method

The study's objective was to examine teacher identity through the lens of performativity, with attention given to tensions experienced by a teacher. Data collection and analysis were conducted through autoethnography. This methodology is suitable as it is "a transnational, plurilingual, multicultural/intercultural discipline, conceptually located in a globalizing/globalized context of uneven, postcolonial power relations" (Stanley, 2019, p. 13). Furthermore, autoethnography is critical, providing a space where the voices of the marginalized may be heard (Sahling & De Carvalho, 2021). To this end, Stanley (2019) argues that autoethnography "exists to allow for non-hegemonic (usually subaltern) ways of knowing and meaning-making to exist within the academy" (p. 16; see also Canagarajah, 2012; Loo, 2017). The primary goal of autoethnography is "the interrogation of the socio-cultural processes of identity construction that have led the researcher to [a particular] point in their identity formation" (Hickey & Austin, 2007, p. 371). In particular, autoethnography examines the situatedness of an individual within the sociopolitical and cultural context of a particular time. Its consciousness-raising intent also compels an individual to be reflective and, in so doing, confront critical issues that may not be typically raised in a conventional or conservative educational setting (Hickey & Austin, 2007). A focus on teachers' roles—what they do—fits in with the technologies for accountability, as there can be more explicit identification and evaluation of actions taken. On the other hand, identity recognizes a fluid sense of self, which leads to beliefs and practices that may conflict with each other and are susceptible to change due to various factors (Mockler, 2011).

Data Collection and Analysis

Data used in this autoethnographic study were collected from reflective journal entries written by the researcher/teacher—the author of this paper, Daron, who was teaching an English academic writing module to graduate students, both master's and doctoral. These reflections were written over two semesters of an academic year, from August 2020 to May 2021. By the end of this period, there were 38 reflective pieces, totaling 3,142 words. This reflective exercise was part of a larger project examining challenges faced by another colleague and me in becoming coordinators and teachers of new courses. However, this study focuses on my reflections on using technology to teach my classes online. Writing over two semesters allowed for various issues to be accounted for and for them to build upon each other (see Sahling & De Carvalho, 2021). The analysis was performed through iterative reading, drawing connections between reflective entries, and being critically self-reflexive. This step aimed to tease emergent patterns and keep the focus

on the ethnographer's self. Emergent patterns were also discussed in light of relevant studies on teacher identity, such as those by Canagarajah (2012) and Sahling and De Carvalho (2021), and studies on tensions arising from teaching online, such as that by Choi et al. (2021), Littlejohn et al. (2021), and VanLone et al. (2022). This was done to map out the classroom experiences with the broader context and reflect the tenets of individual autoethnography, where glimpses of the larger social and cultural context of the autoethnographer are shown (O'Keeffe & Skerritt, 2021).

Study Context and Participant

The context of this study is an English academic writing module at a comprehensive state university in Singapore. At this university, students are expected to take several skills-based core modules, such as scholarly communication. The writing module where this study took place is one such module. The core modules are meant to equip students with academic literacy skills to help them in their other discipline-specific modules.

This module met twice weekly for a two-hour tutorial for 13 weeks each semester. As the coordinator, I taught three sections of the same module. These sections met consecutively in a day. By the end of the day, I would have taught six hours non-stop. International students attended this module, most of them from China.

Due to the pandemic, the module had to be shifted online around February 2020, and as of May 2022, it was still being taught online. At the time of this study, I had worked at this institution for slightly over six years (and recently relocated back to Malaysia). Throughout these years, I mainly taught academic writing to graduate students from different disciplinary backgrounds. I believe in providing practical and relevant writing instruction to my students; hence, there would be many opportunities for students to share their observations or even materials in my lessons. These are then discussed with the students, which allowed me to understand students' disciplinary conventions. This is done to encourage an extent of independence among students in developing their academic writing skills (Loo, 2020, 2021).

Given the abrupt shift to online teaching, official instructions were progressively provided as time passed. Most of these instructions, however, were concerned with the management of courses (e.g., attendance-taking, organizing and managing online assessments). The teaching staff was also encouraged to use tools paid for by the institution (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Office 365, and the in-house learning management system, which provided assessment tools and a video database for teaching staff to upload their content). Thus, instead of structures or descriptors about how online teaching should be achieved being provided from the top, or the administrative or management level, the study context saw performance being shaped by market technology (Ball, 2003), that is, teaching shaped by officially sanctioned tools provided by the institution.

In the larger social context of the participant, there was already established discourse regarding the role of technology in preparing university students to be future-ready graduates (Low et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2017) through national-level efforts such as SkillsFuture and Smart Nation Singapore (Gleason, 2018). These efforts emphasize the need for workers from all sectors to be capable of adapting to various innovations and technologies (Ng & Wong, 2020). The arrival of the pandemic, however, had "ostensibly further intensified the economisation of post-secondary education and training where providers have been forced, with the physical closure of their premises, to migrate to online platforms" (Watermeyer et al., 2021, p. 862). In the study context, there were events promoting technology-based pedagogy, such as blended learning, and the view that the pandemic has catalyzed to initiate an evolution of how teaching activities are conducted by the university ("Delivering quality education through blended learning and international exposure," 2021).

Findings

From the examination of my reflections, three types of tensions became apparent. These three are by no means exhaustive, but they demonstrate pertinent tensions arising from a mismatch between perceptions of the self with the expectations and circumstances of the teaching and learning environment (Canagarajah, 2012; Choi et al., 2021; Littlejohn et al., 2021). In this section, these three tensions are discussed. Excerpts of relevant reflections are also provided. These excerpts are labeled according to the semester (Sem 1 or Sem 2), followed by the week (W1 to W13) and the tutorial number (T1 or T2).

Tensions From Performing for Proximity

This tension reflected the mismatch between performances that aimed to draw students closer to the lesson and the student's reactions or participation toward these efforts. This is seen in my reflections on several incidents, such as students' lack of participation despite the creation of open activities and the realization that proximity may be intrusive. The former was reflected upon in the third week of the first semester, where I noticed that students were not any more participative, despite the creation of an online space where they could freely contribute language use encountered beyond their class, and for which they were not evaluated (Loo, 2021).

Besides creating proximity through facilitating learning spaces, I also wanted to enhance proximity through feedback provision. Due to the perceived distance from my students, I decided to be more explicit with my feedback. However, this resulted in tension in my teaching practice, as it was my belief that feedback should not be extensive; instead, feedback should be brief but sufficient to prompt students to act. This is done so that students will work through errors or resolve issues in their writing independently.

> It's very easy for online lessons to be one-sided, where it is just me doing a lot of the talking. I've noticed that this has been the case for my first two groups that I meet on Tuesdays and Fridays. To get the students more engaged, I had created an Excel spreadsheet where they can upload vocabulary items that they encounter in their readings for other modules. So far, only one student has been consistently contributing, and this gives me about 5–10 minutes to discuss these words at the start of a lesson. In these discussions, I walk through the students what I think these words mean (like a think-aloud process). This hopefully helps them become more cognizant of their own meta-language, and then I compare what words mean with what the dictionary says. This has been quite fruitful in getting people to respond. (Sem 1, W3-T1)

> Given that we are online, I do find myself to be more transparent with my feedback. Even though I am of the belief that a teacher should not be giving feedback for every single issue, given the unique circumstances we are in, I thought I should be more open with the comments/revisions I gave and did in students' work. (Sem 1, W8-T2)

Even though the shift online allowed students to attend classes remotely, this learning environment required them to reveal an aspect of their lives that would typically remain private. Just as I had hoped for some visibility in the students' experience with language use beyond their classroom, the issue of visibility of the students during the lesson also became a cause for tension. I initially expected students to be visible but became aware that this expectation may intrude into the student's personal space, given that many of them were joining the online lessons from their homes or private spaces. This concern resounded with a recent court case in the USA, where there was a successful suit against an institution for infringing upon a student's privacy in its online assessment methods (Bowman, 2022).

> While we are in a classroom setting, everyone is still on their own—far away from each other. To allow others a glimpse into what is on their computer screen almost feels intrusive...there needs to be preparation as to what can be seen by others, and what should be hidden away. This

> is quite the contrary to self-disclosure that is promoted. What this really looks like is the filtering of information, that is, manipulating personal data to circumvent any "problematic" attributes. (Sem 1, W6-T1)

This tension may have arisen given that I had hoped that an open space where students were not evaluated would encourage participation (for more information about this activity, see Loo, 2021). My intention to account for students' language use beyond the class also demonstrated my perception of proximity, where students would think of English language learning opportunities even when not in my class.

Tensions in Expectations for Learning Environment

Tension also arose from the mismatch in expectations for the learning environment. As seen earlier, I assumed that students would be more willing to participate, especially in activities that were not evaluated. This expectation was also extended to some classroom practices I thought were familiar to the students. For instance, before the shift online, I was used to facilitating classroom discussions by building on students' responses. This was not the case online, as I had to initiate discussions and appoint students to respond. This may be due to the lack of proximity and visibility between students. Since classes were held on Zoom, students were probably only watching the screen I shared, which may lead to minimal engagement with classmates. This made it difficult for me to ascertain students' participation, let alone encourage them to take part in discussions or other activities.

> Online teaching went relatively well. I think having the experience of teaching online the past semester and for a two-week period during the break prepared me (and helped me refine my online persona and classroom management skills). Being online, in some ways, also made me very cognizant of what I had to do during my class period. I am more wary of the learning objectives and tasks that I had to complete. Even though there were opportunities for discussion, they were decided by me, and not necessarily when opportunities presented themselves. This is quite different from my experience in a physical classroom, where an activity or a lesson may be shaped by the immediate response from the students. This sense of control over what happens in my class is also made apparent through my students' visibility (visually available, raising questions). In my first group, none of the students turned their webcams on for the most part; they were only visually available when I had asked them to do so for a group activity. For the second and third group, however, students were very willing to be present visually, without me having to implore them to show themselves. (Sem 1, W2-T1)

The change in the learning environment impacted me, given that I was used to evaluating how I did based on my students' engagement. This did not necessarily align with my view of this course, which I thought should provide opportunities for student-led inquiry, and my view of the graduate students, whom I thought should take charge of an extent of the learning processes.

The shift online also instigated the use of new assessment tools. In this course, the assessment was traditionally completed in class, where students had to write an essay on a Word file within a time limit and email their completed essay to me. Each class had about 10 to 15 students, and I could monitor the whole class by walking around and checking each student's computer screen. Nonetheless, assessment became more complicated with students being online and on their own. This was compounded by the institution's trialing of an online examination tool that allowed examiners to monitor students as they took the test (through the students' webcam and built-in microphone). Using this tool was not intuitive, and it was during this period that I realized that an online learning environment required more than the conventional classroom knowledge typically

associated with a traditional, in-person class (e.g., Littlejohn et al., 2021). Now, students had to be familiar with features that they did not have to think of before. For instance, during the assessment, I had to explain to students how to check the capacity of their computer or laptop's hard disk drive. This was one of the many necessary steps, given that the assessment tool will not work unless the student's computer or laptop has sufficient storage space. Moreover, when there was no sufficient space, I had to request students to make space. Similar to the concern about intruding into students' private space, I did not feel comfortable making such a request, especially since the software was being trialed for institutional procurement and would not be used in the course beyond this particular assessment.

> Doing the assessment online with new features was revealing in that it showed what students had and did not have and how we problem-solved through these situations. It also showed the strength of students' communication. There were students who were more nervous as they could not really express the problems they encountered on their side, and there were those who had higher language proficiency and could explain to us coherently what their problems were—with help being rendered more quickly. (Sem 1, W6-T2)

Recognizing that utilizing novel tools may not necessarily support the students' learning experience, I reverted to providing students with the "usual" teaching and learning practices in the second semester. Nevertheless, even though this made the activities more familiar, I still wondered if students preferred how the class should be conducted.

> I decided to work from home. I gave the students the usual experience: a couple of breakout room sessions to discuss, and also getting students to write on the "whiteboard." This makes me wonder if I am doing the right thing because the sequence of the online lesson feels too similar to an in-person classroom. Shouldn't teaching online be slightly or overtly different? I don't want to be seen as uninformed and blindly considering teaching online as exactly the same as teaching in-person. (Sem 2, W9-T1)

Tensions From Changing the "Performance"

Another tension was the exhaustion that I experienced from performing in the online lessons. Over two semesters, there were various instances where I reflected on the changes made to my teaching practice or the learning environment to avoid being tired from performing to students in a class setting (Sem 1, W5-T1) and in one-on-one settings (Sem 1, W8-T1). However, changes were also made to ensure that I was understood by my students, such as that seen in efforts to make physical gestures visible and understandable to the students (Sem 1, W13-T1). These reflections highlighted the tension in wanting to conserve energy and look after my physical well-being, with the need to be "interesting" and comprehensible to the students. The concern for validation perhaps stems from an incumbent evaluation technology within the institutional context, where the academic and teaching staff are evaluated based on their teaching and classroom practice and performance.

> I tried not to be too animated and found myself asking if I was "interesting" to the students. Is everything just a performance to the students? Why do I need to make myself likable to them? Should they not know for themselves the significance and value of the materials covered in this class? Having said this, I found myself being able to conserve my voice, which is something I had struggled with in the last four weeks...where I would end up with a tired and sore throat at the conclusion of the last class of the day. (Sem 1, W5-T1)
>
> I found myself making a concerted effort to conserve my voice as the conferencing was one after the other. This was to conserve energy so that I was able to go through all the students in the day without being too exhausted. (Sem 1, W8-T1)

> I've noticed myself being aware of the gestures I use in an online lesson. I try to fit as much of my upper body in the video, and make sure that my hands and their movements are visible to the students. (Sem 1, W13-T1)

Besides wanting to conserve my energy and voice, I thought that graduate students should be able to find value in their learning experiences. They should still be able to participate despite how interesting (or not) the class appears to be. This has been an assumption I held that was shaped by literature on this matter. In particular, studies have indicated that self-regulation is important for graduate students when developing their academic literacy skills. This is because the graduate students themselves could apply academic literacy skills and knowledge in various academic communication contexts (Blau et al., 2020; Zhao, 2016).

Changes to my performance continued in the second semester. It was then changed to my physical teaching practices and teaching materials. As discussed earlier, various online activities and tools were used to create proximity with my students and support the institution in acquiring potentially helpful software. However, efforts in introducing novel learning tools in the classroom may not be perceived positively. This has been reported in recent studies, where students may not be receptive to online synchronous classes and activities (Chung et al., 2020). Thus, it may be that I realized that the investment return for introducing different tools into the classroom might be low. Moreover, simplifying the teaching materials could further respond to my desire to care for my well-being.

> In this lesson, I relied fully on students engaging with my PowerPoint and with my questions...there were instances of silence, and not knowing what to say. I invited them to contribute in the chat. This perhaps shows a mismatch between my and the students' expectations of online tutorials...perhaps students just want to listen and see me on Zoom and nothing more? (Sem 2, W2-T2)

> Again, by just relying on PPT and Zoom, I had the students annotate on my screen. I think it works if there is at least one student who is willing to contribute, otherwise, everyone will just remain in the comfort of their space (away from me) and just be a passive listener. (Sem 2, W3-T1)

The simplification of the teaching practice and materials saw a restriction of activities to a few tools. This probably lessened the cognitive demands for learning new software and allowed students to work on tools they were familiar with, such as Zoom and PPT. This change also saw a shift in my expectation towards my students; instead of expecting students to participate freely, I accepted that not many would participate or interact and that contributions from one or a handful of students would suffice.

Discussion

This autoethnographic study examined tensions affecting teacher identity within the performative constraints of technology use in the classroom during the COVID-19 pandemic. As seen through the reflections, tensions arose primarily from the mismatch between the perceptions of my role as an English academic writing teacher of graduate students and the teaching and learning situation, including the students' responses and perceptions towards the online teaching practices. Furthermore, I realized that certain pedagogical practices promoted for an English for academic purposes classroom were not supportive of the circumstances of the students, such as the value of integrating discussions and the provision of brief feedback that prompt students to take action (Chun, 2009; Loo & Sairattanain, 2021). Moreover, the efforts to create proximity despite having online remote lessons were not necessarily successful, as my students were not receptive. This may be due to the students' cultural background and familiarity with English classes. Since almost all of them are from China, they

may be used to teaching English in a more teacher-centered or authoritative manner, where instructions come directly from the teacher. Proximity may be challenging to achieve, too, given that Chinese students have been reported to view English as inherently belonging to native speakers (Haidar & Fang, 2019). I also became cognizant of privacy issues stemming from using online tools.

Moreover, from the reflections, it appeared that students' familiarity with technological tools was a concern. Specific tools were also not necessarily supportive of the classes, as these tools were integrated because they were being trialed by the institution and not because they provided pedagogical support for the teaching and learning processes. Since these tools are being trialed, there may be pressure for them to be adopted. In this sense, the institution's tools are not entirely neutral, as there will be certain expectations for them to be used. What is observed here is Ball's (2003) discussion of market technology, where teachers are compelled to take on pedagogical approaches or tools sanctioned by those in power.

Perhaps due to the performativity expected based on market technology, changes became relatively frequent, which led to tensions. Through these, I could see my teacher identity manifesting through the agency that I enacted. This rendered the teaching and learning processes dynamic, given that the changes were regularly implemented as I made sense of my position as an English teacher and the circumstance I found myself in (Canagarajah, 2012; Varghese et al., 2005). Doing so was illustrative of my awareness that my performance as a teacher was being scrutinized, not only by my students but by the larger context, such as those to whom I report and the institution. In this sense, we may see that teachers' identity is not only shaped by their own personal and professional beliefs or perspectives but by circumstances comprising the teacher, students, the class setting, and the institution (Canagarajah, 2012; Sahling & De Carvalho, 2021). These tensions reflected my teaching perspective, and I could also see how my physical well-being was affected. From a practical and pedagogical point of view, it is safe to say that working online or from home would not constitute less work; in fact, the possibility of less work due to the pandemic has been found to cause a greater somatic burden (see Collie, 2021), and perhaps a more significant burden on a teacher's sense of self.

While some may view continuous changes as a form of teacher productivity, a more critical outlook should be fostered. In particular, continuously making changes may be due to the deeply rooted and pervasive discourse of performativity, in that teachers are constantly expected to go through cycles of self-evaluation and changes. This reflects the discourse of being self-entrepreneurial, where teachers partake in various processes to improve practice to meet formal and informal institutional expectations, such as the technologies discussed by Ball (2003). This includes making contextual adjustments based on the teaching circumstances, whether working through reform in the curriculum while managing personal pedagogical beliefs (Noonan, 2019) or by meeting the various accountability technologies implemented to keep teachers in check (Holloway & Brass, 2018). It should be noted, however, that when changes are enacted, performativity does not lie only within the teacher. To a large extent, students also need to "keep up" with these changes, and only those with particular skills, knowledge, or experience can ensure the success of their teachers' pedagogical performances or the institution's.

The need to partake in constant changes constitutes a part of a teacher's identity, especially in today's teaching environment, where teachers compete with others based on good teaching practices. As such, teachers may inexplicably take on official or formal assessment structures in their personal and professional development. When such structures are ingrained within the teachers' natural teaching practices, competitiveness between teachers may intensify to the

point where the structures may need to be reconfigured to distinguish teachers' performances (Sullivan et al., 2021), leading to a cyclical process where performance and competition are constantly being redefined.

Conclusion

The examination of performativity, as understood through tensions affecting teacher identity during an online module, indicated an extent of hyper-reflexivity by the researcher. Hyper-reflexivity is an essential component of teacher identity development, where there is a consistent questioning of the suitability of teaching or learning practices enacted by a teacher. This could entail what Pillow (2003) terms "reflexivities of discomfort," where there is a conscious effort to destabilize and decenter the self to uncover individual assumptions and to offer a truthful and ethical representation of others. This provides more critical depth to examining teacher identity, where a teacher's perspective is critically discussed in light of personal emotions or experiences, not just the teacher's students or materials used in their teaching. Such personal reflexivity, using autoethnography, also allows the teacher's voice to be heard without necessarily diluting through comparative means with other teachers' voices, such as in conventional narrative inquiry studies.

Nonetheless, while insightful, this study is limited in terms of offering a singular perspective of the tensions experienced by shifting a class online. Perhaps a more nuanced discussion can be achieved by involving multiple subjectivities, i.e., inviting critical friends to participate in the reflection (see Loo & Sairattanain, 2021). Despite this limitation, I believe this study exemplifies the valuable potential of reflecting upon one's reflections through autoethnography or other qualitative means. This approach not only better gauges the complexity of one's teacher identity but also illustrates the extent and types of teacher agency taken and afforded in different challenging circumstances.

References

Adedoyin, O. B., & Soykan, E. (2020). Covid-19 pandemic and online learning: The challenges and opportunities. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2020.1813180

Ball, S. J. (2003). The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, *18*(2), 215–228. https://doi.org/10.1080/0268093022000043065

Beauchamp, C., & Thomas, L. (2009). Understanding teacher identity: An overview of issues in the literature and implications for teacher education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *39*(2), 175–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640902902252

Blau, I., Shamir-Inbal, T., & Avdiel, O. (2020). How does the pedagogical design of a technology-enhanced collaborative academic course promote digital literacies, self-regulation, and perceived learning of students? *The Internet and Higher Education*, *45*, 100722. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2019.100722

Bowman, E. (2022, August 26). Scanning students' rooms during remote tests is unconstitutional, judge rules. *NPR*. https://n.pr/3EKUCdF

Buchanan, R. (2015). Teacher identity and agency in an era of accountability. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, *21*(6), 700–719. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2015.1044329

Canagarajah, A. S. (2012). Teacher development in a global profession: An autoethnography. *TESOL Quarterly*, *46*(2), 258–279. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.18

Choi, H., Chung, S.-Y., & Ko, J. (2021). Rethinking teacher education policy in ICT: Lessons from emergency remote teaching (ERT) during the COVID-19 pandemic period in Korea. *Sustainability*, *13*(10), 5480. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13105480

Chun, C. W. (2009). Contesting neoliberal discourses in EAP: Critical praxis in an IEP classroom. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *8*(2), 111–120. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2008.09.005

Chung, E., Subramaniam, G., & Dass, L. C. (2020). Online learning readiness among university students in Malaysia

amidst COVID-19. *Asian Journal of University Education*, *16*(2), 45–58.

Cohen, J. L. (2008). 'That's not treating you as a professional': Teachers constructing complex professional identities through talk. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, *14*(2), 79–93. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600801965861

Collie, R. J. (2021). COVID-19 and teachers' somatic burden, stress, and emotional exhaustion: Examining the role of principal leadership and workplace buoyancy. *AERA Open*, *7*. https://doi.org/10.1177/23328584209861 87

Davis, N. L., Gough, M., & Taylor, L. L. (2019). Online teaching: Advantages, obstacles and tools for getting it right. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, *19*(3), 256–263. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2019.1612313

Day, C., Kington, A., Stobart, G., & Sammons, P. (2006). The personal and professional selves of teachers: Stable and unstable identities. *British Educational Research Journal*, *32*(4), 601–616. https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920600775316

Delivering quality education through blended learning and international exposure. (2021, December 1). *NUS News*. https://nus.edu/3UdKYG3

Diehl, D. K. (2019). Teacher professional learning communities and institutional complexity: Negotiating tensions between institutional logics. *Sociological Spectrum*, *39*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/02732173.2018.1564099

Enyedy, N., Goldberg, J., & Welsh, K. M. (2006). Complex dilemmas of identity and practice. *Science Education*, *90*(1), 68–93. https://doi.org/10.1002/sce.20096

Gleason, N. W. (2018). Singapore's higher education systems in the era of the fourth Industrial Revolution: Preparing lifelong learners. In N. W. Gleason (Ed.), *Higher education in the era of the fourth Industrial Revolution* (pp. 145–169). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-0194-0_7

Gray, P. L., & Seiki, S. (2020). Institutional performativity pressure and first-year teachers. *Frontiers in Education*, *5*, 71. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2020.00071

Haidar, S., & Fang, F. (2019). English language in education and globalization: A comparative analysis of the role of English in Pakistan and China. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, *39*(2), 165–176. https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2019.1569892

Hickey, A., & Austin, J. (2007). Autoethnography and teacher development. *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, *2*(2), 369–378. https://doi.org/10.18848/1833-1882/CGP/v02i02/52189

Hofer, S. I., Nistor, N., & Scheibenzuber, C. (2021). Online teaching and learning in higher education: Lessons learned in crisis situations. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *121*, 106789. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106789

Holloway, J., & Brass, J. (2018). Making accountable teachers: The terrors and pleasures of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, *33*(3), 361–382. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2017.1372636

Koehler, M. J., & Mishra, P. (2009). What is technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK)? *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *9*(1), 60–70. https://www.learntechlib.org/p/29544/

Kupers, E., Mouw, J. M., & Fokkens-Bruinsma, M. (2022). Teaching in times of COVID-19: A mixed-method study into teachers' teaching practices, psychological needs, stress, and well-being. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *115*, 103724. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103724

Lambert, K., & Gray, C. (2021). Hyper-performativity and early career teachers: Interrogating teacher subjectivities in neoliberal educational assemblages. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2021.1933912

Littlejohn, A., Gourlay, L., Kennedy, E., Logan, K., Neumann, T., Oliver, M., Potter, J., Rode, J. A. (2021). Moving teaching online: Cultural barriers experienced by university teachers during Covid-19. *Journal of Interactive Media in Education*, *1*(7), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.5334/jime.631

Loo, D. B. (2017). Trust the researcher? Autoethnography as a tool to study English teaching professionals. In King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (Org.), *Proceedings: Doing Research in Applied Linguistics 3 and 19th English in South-East Asia Conference, 2017* (pp. 45–58). Knowledge Exchange for Innovation Center. https://bit.ly/3ANOXlB

Loo, D. B. (2020). Integrating critical thinking in online language tasks: Considerations for an academic writing class. *International Journal of TESOL Studies*, *2*(2), 52–61. https://doi.org/10.46451/ijts.2020.09.05

Loo, D. B. (2021). The language ecology of graduate students: An exploration through vocabulary contribution. *Issues in Language Studies*, *10*(2), 65–82. https://doi.org/10.33736/ils.3903.2021

Loo, D. B., & Sairattanain, J. (2021). Disrupting discourses of deficiency in English for academic purposes: Dialogic reflection with a critical friend. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2021.1947355

Loo, D. B., Trakulkasemsuk, W., & Jimarkon, P. (2017). Examining narratives of conflict and agency: Insights into non-local English teacher identity. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, *14*(2), 292–306. https://doi.org/10.18823/asiatefl.2017.14.2.6.292

Low, S. P., Gao, S., & Ng, E. W. L. (2019). Future-ready project and facility management graduates in Singapore for industry 4.0: Transforming mindsets and competencies. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, *28*(1), 270–290. https://doi.org/10.1108/ECAM-08-2018-0322

Marshall, D. T., Shannon, D. M., & Love, S. M. (2020). How teachers experienced the COVID-19 transition to remote instruction. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *102*(3), 46–50. https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721720970702

Mockler, N. (2011). Beyond 'what works': Understanding teacher identity as a practical and political tool. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, *17*(5), 517–528. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2011.602059

Nazari, M., & Seyri, H. (2021). Covidentity: Examining transitions in teacher identity construction from personal to online classes. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2021.1920921

Ng, D. F. S., & Wong, C. P. (2020). The role of school leadership in Singapore's future-ready school reform. *European Journal of Education*, *55*(2), 183–199. https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12392

Noonan, J. (2019). An affinity for learning: Teacher identity and powerful professional development. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *70*(5), 526–537. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487118788838

O'Keeffe, S., & Skerritt, C. (2021). Exploring teacher identity using poststructural tools. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, *44*(2), 179–192. https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2020.1753691

Perryman, J., & Calvert, G. (2020). What motivates people to teach, and why do they leave? Accountability, performativity and teacher retention. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, *68*(1), 3–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2019.1589417

Phillips, L. G., Cain, M., Ritchie, J., Campbell, C., Davis, S., Brock, C., Burke, G., Coleman, K., & Joosa, E. (2021). Surveying and resonating with teacher concerns during COVID-19 pandemic. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2021.1982691

Pillow, W. (2003). Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *16*(2), 175–196. https://doi.org/10.1080/0951839032000060635

Sachs, J. (2005). Teacher education and the development of professional identity: Learning to be a teacher. In M. Kompf & P. Denicolo (Eds.), *Connecting policy and practice: Challenges for teaching and learning in schools and universities* (pp. 5–21). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203012529

Sahling, J., & De Carvalho, R. (2021). Understanding teacher identity as an international teacher: An autoethnographic approach to (developing) reflective practice. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *20*(1), 33–49. https://doi.org/10.1177/14752409211005380

Stanley, P. (2019). Autoethnography and ethnography in English language teaching. In X. Gao (Ed.), *Second handbook of English language teaching* (pp. 1–20). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58542-0_55-1

Sullivan, A., Johnson, B., Simons, M., & Tippett, N. (2021). When performativity meets agency: How early career

teachers struggle to reconcile competing agendas to become 'quality' teachers. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, *27*(5), 388–403. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2020.1806050

Sydnor, J. (2017). "I didn't realize how hard it would be!": Tensions and transformations in becoming a teacher. *Action in Teacher Education*, *39*(2), 218–236. https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2016.1226202

Tan, J. P. L., Choo, S. S., Kang, T., & Liem, G. A. D. (2017). Educating for twenty-first century competencies and future-ready learners: Research perspectives from Singapore. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, *37*(4), 425–436. https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2017.1405475

VanLone, J., Pansé-Barone, C., & Long, L. (2022). Teacher preparation and the COVID-19 disruption: Understanding the impact and implications for novice teachers. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, *3*, 100120. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2021.100120

Varghese, M., Morgan, B., Johnston, B., & Johnson, K. A. (2005). Theorizing language teacher identity: Three perspectives and beyond. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, *4*(1), 21–44. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327701jlie0401_2

Vick, M. J., & Martinez, C. (2011). Teachers and teaching: Subjectivity, performativity and the body. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *43*(2), 178–192. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2009.00552.x

Watermeyer, R., Chen, Z., & Ang, B. J. (2021). 'Education without limits': The digital resettlement of post-secondary education and training in Singapore in the COVID-19 era. *Journal of Education Policy*, *37*(6), 861–882. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2021.1933198

Zhao, W. (2016). Academic English teaching for postgraduates based on self-regulated learning environment: A case study of academic reading course. *English Language Teaching*, *9*(5), 214–224. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n5p214

About the Author

Daron Benjamin Loo received his PhD in Applied Linguistics from King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Thailand. He currently lectures at Universiti Malaysia Sabah, teaching university students English for academic communication and academic literacy. His research interests include the identity and professional development of English language practitioners.

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.103146

Colombian Preservice Teachers Enacting Task-Based Language Teaching Principles Before and During the Transition to Remote Teaching

Docentes en formación colombianos implementando los principios de la enseñanza de lenguas basada en tareas antes y durante la transición a la enseñanza remota

Tatiana Becerra-Posada
Universidad de Córdoba, Montería, Colombia

Diana Cristina Arroyo
Universidad del Norte, Barranquilla, Colombia

This qualitative study explores how a group of preservice teachers make sense of task-based language teaching principles and characteristics, especially amidst remote instruction. We draw on the analysis of 13 preservice teachers' lesson plans and teaching guides as they transitioned from in-person to remote instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic. An analysis of the lesson plans using task-based language teaching principles as a framework revealed that preservice teachers implemented principles differently during in-person and remote teaching. Interestingly, the use of the principles sometimes contrasts with what the participants report in their reflections. We discuss the challenges English as a foreign language teachers face when adapting methods such as task-based language teaching to the demands of new teaching contexts.

Keywords: task-based language teaching, English as a foreign language, preservice teachers, remote teaching, teacher education

Este estudio cualitativo explora cómo un grupo de maestros en formación da sentido a los principios y características de la enseñanza de lenguas basada en tareas durante la transición de la instrucción presencial a la remota provocada por la pandemia de COVID-19. El análisis de los planes de clase de trece maestros en formación reveló que ellos implementaron los principios de la enseñanza de lenguas basada en tareas de manera diferente durante la enseñanza presencial y remota. Curiosamente, el uso de dichos principios a veces contrasta con las reflexiones de los participantes. Discutimos los desafíos que enfrentan los profesores de inglés como lengua extranjera al adaptar métodos como la enseñanza de lenguas basada en tareas a las exigencias de los nuevos contextos de enseñanza.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje basado en tareas, formación docente, inglés como lengua extranjera, instrucción remota

Tatiana Becerra-Posada https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3156-6907 · Email: tatianabecerra@correo.unicordoba.edu.co
Diana Cristina Arroyo https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5877-1383 · Email: densuncho@uninorte.edu.co

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Becerra-Posada, T., & Arroyo, D. C. (2023). Colombian preservice teachers enacting task-based language teaching principles before and during the transition to remote teaching. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 29–47. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.103146

This article was received on June 12, 2022 and accepted on March 13, 2023.

Introduction

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) emerged as an alternative pedagogy to challenge the inadequacy of communicative language teaching in India in the 1980s. Since then, it has become a widely researched language-teaching approach, generating reluctance (Swan, 2005) and advocacy (Ellis et al., 2019; Long, 2016).

The influential role of TBLT in language research and policy has placed it as the dominant method for foreign and second language teaching (Hu & McKay, 2012; Van den Branden, 2016). However, the practitioners' perspectives, learning, and experiences on TBLT remain limited in research, thus limiting TBLT's potential for impacting classrooms meaningfully (Bygate, 2020; East, 2017).

Indeed, East (2014, 2017, 2021) has advocated for research that explores how preservice and novice teachers integrate this method into their work, including their attitudes, challenges to learning the task concept, and TBLT's implementation.

We agree with Bygate's (2020) urgent summon to explore TBLT research, not just as an end in itself but as a resource in the light of "the practices, demands, pressures, and perspectives of stakeholders in real-world language classrooms" (p. 275). This is particularly relevant to the many challenges school administrators, parents, teachers, and students faced during the COVID-19 lockdown (Madianou, 2020). Research has looked into teachers' responses to the challenges of remote instruction (Corrales & Rey-Paba, 2021) and their effective use of digital technologies (Fořtová et al., 2021); however, few studies have examined how preservice teachers coped with these particular teaching circumstances. Our study addresses these concerns and aims to contribute to the calls for exploring TBLT as a tool within the myriad practices and knowledge practitioners hold, especially amidst current vulnerable times.

Thus, this article describes how preservice teachers adjusted their emerging teaching practices, informed mainly by TBLT, while transitioning to remote instruction amidst the COVID-19 pandemic-enforced lockdown. The research question guiding this study asked: How did 13 preservice teachers in an English language teaching (ELT) program adapt their implementation of TBLT-supported lessons in their field practicum during the transition to remote teaching amidst the COVID-19 lockdown?

Our findings describe the TBLT principles these preservice teachers used to design and teach their English as a foreign language (EFL) lessons in person and remotely. Shedding light on how preservice teachers grappled with TBLT principles amidst the world health crisis, we hope to contribute to understanding preservice teachers' learning, emerging practices related to TBLT, and tasks within remotely instructed EFL lessons. Such understandings will add to current research on teachers' learning in L2 teacher education research (García-Montes et al., 2022; Sagre et al., 2022) and illuminate new perspectives on teachers' learning of TBLT.

Literature Review

TBLT and Tasks

Characterizing tasks within TBLT can be a complex endeavor (Van den Branden et al., 2009), but the scholarly consensus is that tasks should have four defining characteristics (Ellis, 2009). First, tasks primarily focus on meaning during message negotiation with a communicative purpose; therefore, a task requires learners to manipulate both the semantic and pragmatic functions of language to convey their message during a communicative exchange. Second, a task requires the completion of a communicative outcome rather than a linguistic one. Third, tasks require interaction, engaging learners' linguistic resources rather than a pre-planned language structure. Fourth, a task includes a gap to be filled; for example, learners may need to exchange their opinions to reach

a consensus or find missing information needed to achieve the task goal (Ellis, 2009).

Such characterization is fundamental for conceptualizing tasks as the organizing unit of the learning activity (Ellis, 2009; Van den Branden et al., 2009). However, research with TBLT practitioners (Erlam, 2016; Li & Zou, 2022) has demonstrated that understanding and following these criteria poses difficulties for language teachers. In line with this, Erlam (2016) examined how teachers in a New Zealand school implemented the four criteria outlined by Ellis (2009). By examining 43 teachers' work plans, Erlam found that teachers struggled to include learners' linguistic resources (67 %) and a communicative gap in their tasks (79%). Thus, the execution of TBLT principles may look different in practice than the theoretical framework suggests.

Teachers' Implementation of TBLT

Given the global prevalence of TBLT in different teaching contexts, studies have explored TBLT and its pedagogical applications in real classrooms. On the one hand, some studies have pointed out the challenges teachers face to understand, take ownership of, and "successfully" implement TBLT. Some challenging factors include teachers' misunderstanding of TBLT, thus resulting in a "narrow" interpretation of TBLT and difficulties adapting it to the context (Ellis et al., 2019). Another challenge is teachers' uncertainty about the characteristics of tasks; for instance, East (2014) and Van den Branden (2016) doubt teachers' effective implementation of TBLT, as they have found that teachers struggle to differentiate tasks from traditional exercises.

Teachers may also endure tensions between the learner-centered pedagogy of TBLT and traditional teacher-centered approaches. For instance, the learner-centered focus of TBLT requires more expertise and is more demanding than other communicative approaches (Plews & Zhao, 2010). TBLT requires understanding learners' real-life tasks and authentic communicative needs; furthermore, TBLT favors purposeful and comprehensive language use rather than accuracy, making learning more meaningful and relevant. Lai (2015) also pointed out that this learner-centered pedagogy is at odds with culturally embedded traditional approaches in Asia, as teachers' and students' roles change. Addressing such challenges requires efforts to include teachers' and learners' cultural practices, like teacher-learner interactions, within TBLT implementation.

The reported challenges to implementing TBLT in real classrooms have provoked criticism about this approach's theoretically and academically prescribed conceptualizations that prevent teachers from enacting it (Swan, 2005). To address such criticism, scholars have examined the teacher's role in TBLT implementation in real classrooms (East, 2014; Ellis, 2017). East's study (2021) with beginning language teachers in New Zealand provides valuable insights into teachers' understanding of TBLT. The practitioners' conflicting views of TBLT actively evolve through a training program, impacting their initial teaching practice. Similar studies have evidenced the complexity of TBLT implementation in classrooms (East, 2021). This finding underscores the need for long-term research that explores TBLT implementation as a gradual, repeated, reflective, and revisional process for teachers. In sum, these studies summon practitioner and research collaboration (Long, 2016), advocating for a broader and more collaborative vision (Bygate, 2020) to bridge theory and practice by including teachers' perspectives and contributions to the pedagogical development of TBLT.

Preservice Teachers and TBLT

Bridging the gap between theory and practice in TBLT will benefit from exploring the learning experiences derived from initial training and early applications of this method. Therefore, the challenges of implementing TBLT should be more closely

explored among preservice teachers, whose teaching repertoire is still being shaped.

In their initial stages of teaching practice, preservice teachers hold onto their expectations and beliefs on how to teach in the context they encounter in the classroom (Glisan & Donato, 2017). For instance, when examining preservice teachers' emerging beliefs, Johnson (1994) found that they hold precarious images of themselves as teachers and teaching, which conflicts with their instructional practice. Johnson claims that preservice teachers likely default to practices inconsistent with their self-images as teachers because of the constraints of their first teaching experiences, confronting their preconceived notions of teaching to their actual instructional practice. Consequently, Johnson highlights the importance of a practicum environment that supports teachers in discovering and shaping their beliefs.

This situation is mirrored in preservice teachers' first attempts at implementing TBLT: their complex perceptions of teaching shape how they incorporate prior and novel concepts to acquire procedural teaching knowledge. In this regard, Littlewood (2016) states that preservice teachers struggle to overcome their apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) when implementing TBLT principles. Littlewood argues that TBLT is fertile ground for preservice teachers' emerging practices combining experiential and learned knowledge.

The divergence in how TBLT training develops into teaching practice for beginner teachers has increased interest in the subject. For instance, Ogilvie and Dunn (2010) argue that despite TBLT being included in teacher education courses and well received by preservice teachers, this disposition does not translate into classroom practice. The authors point out the need to offer more support and attention to preservice teacher education to instill the connection between theory and practice in preservice teachers, enabling them to apply what they learn about TBLT in their classrooms.

Similarly, Chan (2012) adds to the understanding of how beginner teachers incorporate TBLT into their lessons by adjusting their practices to specific contexts. By examining the patterns of interaction and strategies included in 20 lessons from five novice teachers in Hong Kong, Chan found that teachers' lesson structure differed in terms of strategies, provision of scaffolding, and attention to learners' needs. These differences were even more apparent during the implementation of the lesson. The study accentuates the complexity of teachers' balancing their knowledge and intentions in TBLT with challenges in their teaching.

All this research highlights the need to address the variable ways in which preservice teachers use their training in TBLT to respond to the characteristics of their teaching contexts.

Challenges During the Pandemic

Emerging research on the emergency transition to remote instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed that teachers around the globe made drastic adjustments to their teaching. Teachers' adjustments and reworking of their lessons and practices and their reflections and learnings during the lockdown have motivated a renewed look at how teachers encompass theory to face the uniqueness of their teaching realities. For instance, Corrales and Rey-Paba (2021) studied instructors' perceptions in a group of teachers at a private university. These teachers reported development in areas other than teaching, mainly in skills to adapt to a new teaching modality and methodologies, as well as in peer support and a more humane approach to teaching and learning.

García-Botero et al. (2021) explored how over 400 students in an ELT BA program used computer-assisted methodology for teaching/learning during the COVID-19 lockdown. The study revealed students' perceptions of their teacher's methodologies, underscoring the lack of empathy and the overuse of lectures during online lessons. These elements are then related

to students' active and autonomous learning and class interaction, highlighting the ongoing need for teacher training on remote teaching and for reflecting on teacher roles to ensure empathy, communication, and assessment throughout the lessons.

Fořtová et al. (2021) followed a qualitative analysis to examine the teaching experience of 63 teachers in a master's program in the Czech Republic. Analysis of their post-lesson reflections revealed that the participants found the online environment limiting and described it as an unauthentic learning experience. However, despite their initial reluctance to the new environment, the teachers shifted to being able to adapt their practices to the new environment and maneuver the technologies required to deliver their lessons.

The previous studies briefly showcase emerging research on how the appropriation of learned teaching practices occurred during a challenging time, such as the transition to remote instruction. However, to our knowledge, adjusting to a new modality in TBLT has not been investigated. Hence, this study focuses on how novice teachers adapted their emerging TBLT practices to face the transition to remote teaching during the COVID-19 lockdown. Our previous review shows that this topic has not been explored yet. Such exploration will add to understanding how practitioners take ownership of their acquired knowledge in the face of unique constraints in their teaching contexts.

Method

This qualitative study (Lapan et al., 2012) was conducted in an ELT program at a public university in the Colombian Caribbean region during the first semester of 2020. The study followed a documentary analysis of the preservice teachers' lesson plans, teaching materials, and reflection reports during their practicum course, led by one researcher. In this program, preservice teachers take the practicum course after two semesters of teaching methods courses that focus on the theoretical backgrounds of language teaching. During the practicum, the preservice teachers are usually expected to teach 40 hours of EFL in high school with the supervision of an experienced high-school teacher who acts as a formative supervisor. The preservice teachers' tasks generally include planning and delivering lessons, designing materials, and assessing students.

The participants in this study faced disruption in their field experience due to the emergency transition to remote instruction. When the lockdown started, all the participants had planned and delivered an average of two lessons in their practicum, which required between three and five weekly hours of direct teaching. Thus, the first half of the practicum classes were delivered in person, and the second half took place remotely with the aid of teaching guides, which students were required to work on independently. On average, the participants implemented three lessons through teaching guides delivered to students once a week using WhatsApp, Zoom, and Google Docs.

Participants

The participants in this study (Andrea, Pamela, Ernesto, Naty, Lorena, Jose, Miguel, Juliana, Jaime, Kelly, Sara, Sergio, and Milena; all pseudonyms) were 13 students (eight women, five men) in their ninth semester of an ELT undergraduate program and who were taking the teaching practicum course. With one exception, participants designed and implemented the lessons individually. Because they instructed the same level groups in an English teaching program offered by their home university to public primary schools, three students (Pamela, Naty, and Lorena) worked as a group during in-person teaching. However, due to changes in the participants' distribution during remote teaching, two worked as a team, while the third (Lorena) worked individually in the same school. The lesson plans of this small group were analyzed, paying attention to the participants' work dynamics.

The participants served as preservice teachers in secondary grades in public schools in urban and rural towns in Córdoba, a department located in northern Colombia. Secondary school learners' ages varied across grades in the schools, ranging from 11 to 20 years old. Learners belonged to low- and middle-class communities whose linguistic repertoires include standardized Spanish and local dialects. Preservice teachers described their learners as active, dynamic, and curious. However, the participants also mentioned the learners' lack of access to digital technologies as one of the main limitations of teaching during the pandemic.

Data Collection

We collected data concerning the tasks from the unit and lesson planning artifacts (e.g., plans and materials) preservice teachers created during their practicum experience. At least one in-person and two remote lesson plans were analyzed per participant. In total, we analyzed 47 lesson plans collected through Google Drive folders. We also collected the participants' perceptions regarding their lesson planning and their reactions to the day-to-day teaching process through self-reflection reports that they completed during and at the end of the semester as part of their final project for the course. These self-reflections were presented in videos, blog posts, and written journals.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed a deductive approach, using the definition of TBLT principles in Ellis (2009) as a predefined analysis framework. We conducted a documentary analysis of the participants' lesson plans, artifacts, and self-reflection reports. We organized the data according to type and teaching modality. The categories used for the analysis were generated according to the operationalization of TBLT principles in lesson planning. Similarly, the participants' comments in their self-reflection reports were analyzed for their reference to the themes indicated in the analysis framework. Through this analysis, we obtained a detailed description of the elements in the lesson plans and self-reflection reports and found correspondences with TBLT principles. We discussed and reached a consensus over discrepancies following intercoder reliability practices that foster systematicity and transparency of the data coding process and reflexivity among team members in qualitative research (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020).

Results

The analysis of the lesson plans demonstrated that the preservice teachers' planning decisions generally involved various task types and TBLT principles. Furthermore, we observed differences in the participants' in-person and remote designs. Below, we describe the most salient findings for each principle.

Focus on Meaning

Our analysis of the lesson plans revealed that focus on meaning was the most used principle during in-person and remote lessons. The participants resorted to multimodal texts to facilitate a focus on meaning in their tasks. Milena used a poster (Figure 1) about dreams and a video about youth aspirations to focus on describing plans for the future in her remote lessons. She provided guiding questions and prompted students to demonstrate their understanding of the main themes in these texts.

Andrea also focused on meaning by having students extract information from pictures and videos about famous landmarks worldwide. Miguel also used pictures (Figure 1) to trigger students' descriptions of tourist places in Colombia. Similarly, Sara relied heavily on infographics that illustrated people's routines, and Jaime included a text that combined pictures and printed text to exemplify the moves of a story (Figure 2). These preservice teachers' tasks included multimodal descriptions of places, dreams, routines, or anecdotes, completed synchronously

Figure 1. Milena's and Miguel's Posters

or asynchronously, depending on each participant's teaching context.

Our analysis also revealed that focusing on meaning became difficult for some participants during remote instruction. We observed a repeated instructional pattern that required initial meaning-making from images and then moved to a focus on form. We describe two participants' lesson plans to evidence such a pattern.

Lorena's planning (Figure 3) started requiring students to make meaning from a picture portraying a town model and various means of transport, accompanied by textual clues describing the latter. However, a focus on the vocabulary of means of transport and the grammar forms became more evident in the final stages of the lesson plan. A similar pattern was observed in Ernesto's planning for his first virtual lesson, which included an online memory game and images of people's leisure activities. Ernesto's shift toward vocabulary is more evident as he included lists of related words and phrases that students were expected to use for filling in the blanks.

Figure 2. Jaime's and Sara's Multimodal Texts

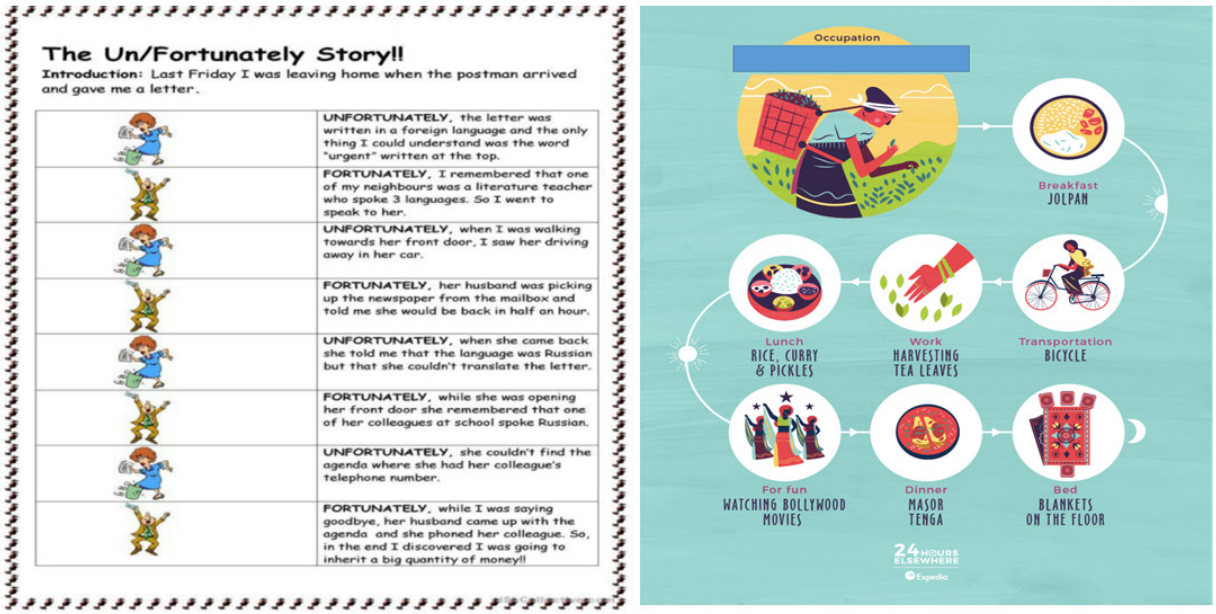


Figure 3. Picture of Lorena's Task

There are 9 means of transportation in the image. Do you recognize them?
Try to guess the means of transportation in the image by the following descriptions (*intenta adivinar los medios de transporte por su descripción*).

A. It is read and it is big. It is a public means of transportation. ___

B. It is yellow. It has 4 wheels. ___

C. It is orange and it is small. It has 2 wheels. ___

D. It is blue and white, and it is very long. ___

E. It is brown and white. It is in the water. ___

F. It is green and it flies in the air. ___

Hint (*pista*): None of them are the tractor, the plane nor the truck (*ninguno es el tractor, el avión ni el camión*).

These applications of the focus on meaning contrast with the participants' reflections, demonstrating awareness of this principle and its importance for language learning. In her report, Lorena mentioned: "I understand how important it is to give students contexts that they can relate to the knowledge they already have," thus acknowledging the need to add contexts to her lessons. She also emphasized focusing on context rather than just vocabulary or grammatical forms. She continued: "It is really important not to give them isolated words or vocabulary or only grammar because that wouldn't work as efficiently as we can do them work."

These tasks' descriptions revealed that most participants were aware of the focus-on-meaning principle and tried to include it in their lessons through

multimodal texts. However, as they acknowledged in their reflections, remote teaching was challenging. For example, Juliana, Jose, and Ernesto mentioned in their reflection reports that dealing with variables such as student resources, the requirements made by the school tutors, and the remoteness of teaching may have influenced their task design which drew heavily on focus on form. We will review these contextual factors' impact in the discussion section.

Communicative Outcome

One of the guiding principles of task design is completing a communicative outcome, which may help assess students' performance (Ellis, 2009). In this study, the principle was often used in both teaching modalities: Seven participants used it during in-person teaching, and nine included it in their task design for remote teaching. Most participants' outcomes draw on Willis and Willis' taxonomy of tasks (2001), which the preservice teachers had studied during their methods courses. Common communicative outcomes included producing a list, ranking items, completing a chart, producing a survey, composing a Facebook post, or designing a brochure. We describe how four participants used different task outcomes during in-person and remote teaching and the challenges involved.

In one of the lesson plans for in-person teaching, Jose indicated the students' ranking of their habits from the least to the healthiest as the outcome his students should achieve by the end of the lesson. He introduced the lesson topic with a pre-task in which students classified flashcards describing teachers' habits as healthy and unhealthy. Then, he asked student pairs to classify a list of habits into healthy and unhealthy and rank their habits from the least to the healthiest.

In remote teaching, Jose's task outcomes included creating a list of healthy habits students had in common with the individuals described in three multimodal texts. Each text described a person from one of three groups (Sardinians, Adventists, and Okinawans). Jose designed several task steps to allow students to comprehend the texts and grasp each character's habits. By doing so, he demonstrated how the outcome guided his lesson planning. Additionally, these steps facilitated focusing on meaning, as students demonstrated an understanding of the texts to list the habits (outcome) they deemed interesting and would like to try in their lives.

Milena also included outcomes consistently within her planning. For one of the in-person lessons, Milena planned a task outcome requiring students to illustrate a person with specific characteristics (e.g., hardworking, passionate) and associate them with a family member who may resemble them. In a subsequent lesson plan, students were asked to rank the habits of effective people they had watched in a video. Milena included several steps to scaffold students' comprehension of the video; for instance, as a whole class, the students and the teacher brainstormed, listed, and agreed on the five most important habits. This outcome allowed students to demonstrate comprehension of a previously given input in these lessons.

In both lesson plans for remote teaching, Milena included problem-solving and listing tasks that facilitated a communicative outcome. For the first one, Milena included a video that featured teenagers, like her eighth-graders, talking about their dreams. After watching the video, students ordered the traits that would allow these teenagers to achieve their future dreams or goals. Finally, the task outcome included deciding the most crucial factor in achieving future goals.

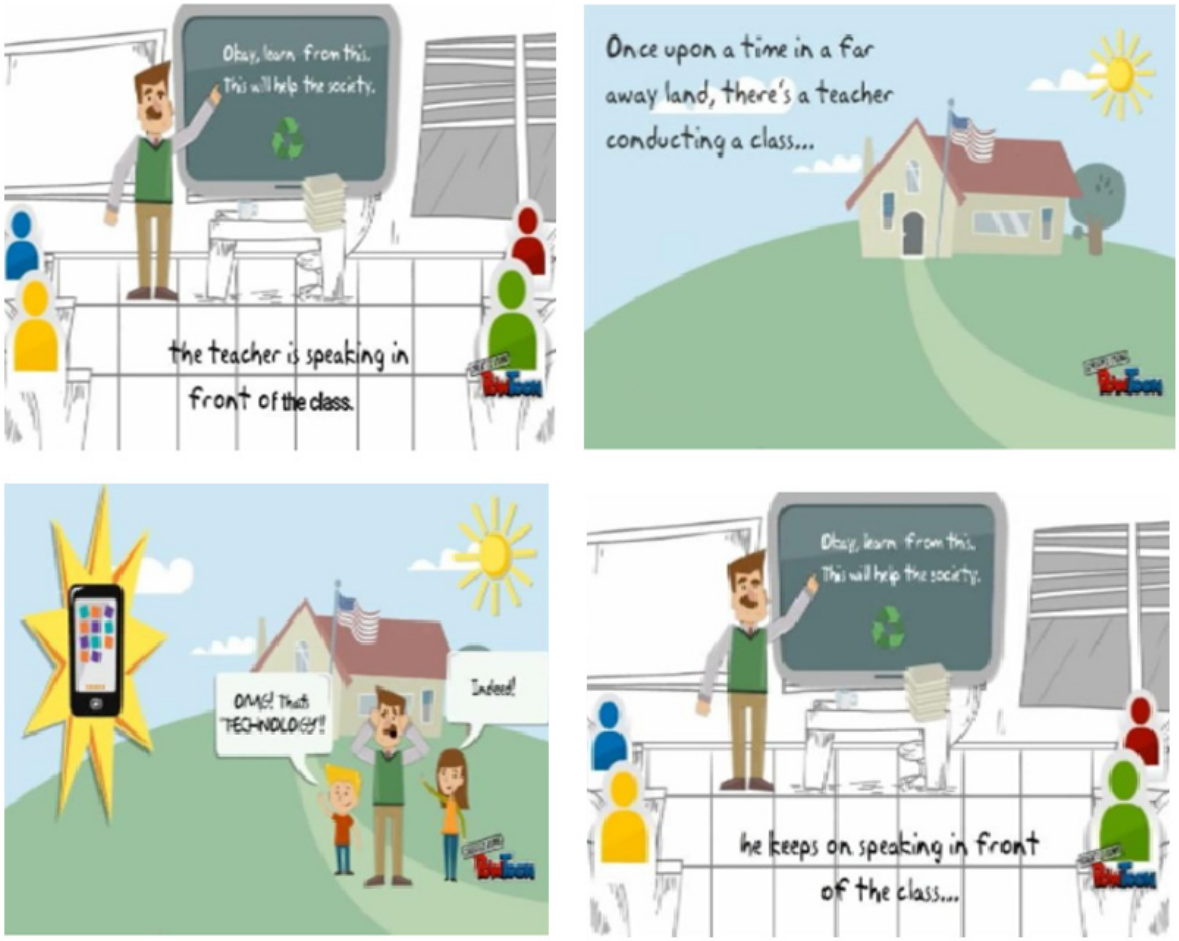
Jose's and Milena's communicative outcomes revealed an interest in meaning-making, especially in getting messages across from the multimodal texts in their lesson plans. Conversely, for other participants, including an outcome in their remote teaching tasks was not as straightforward, thus revealing challenges and contradictions. In the case of Ernesto and Juliana, their explicit focus on form obscured their inclusion of the outcome principle. The following lesson plans evidence the participants' interest in developing a focus on form

Figure 4. Ernesto's Explanation of the Present Continuous in His Lesson Plan

Teacher will explain: We form the present continuous tense with the verb "to be" and an active verb with an "-ing" ending. (Write on the board: "Present continuous tense: be + -ing"). The present continuous tense tells what is happening right now. Show sentences from the Introduction as examples. Consequently, teacher will show some pictures related to the implementation of technology in education and will ask what it is about.
T: What is the teacher doing?
S: he is using a tablet…

Figure 5. Ernesto's Task Communicative Outcome

Activity 1: Order the following pictures that are related to the story narrated in the video. Number each picture (1–9) in the corresponding order.



during their lessons. For instance, Ernesto's second in-person lesson objectives included recognizing and using the present continuous (Figure 4).

In his planning, Ernesto focused on using technology in school and presented flashcards and multimodal texts that described teachers' using technological devices in the classroom. He used these texts mainly to explain the uses of the present continuous form, as observed in the type of questions he prepared to ask the class (Figure 4). Only after focusing on the target forms did Ernesto's lesson include a task with a communicative outcome. He presented students with a video and asked them to sequence pictures (Figure 5).

At first sight, this task's outcome entailed focusing on meaning by relying on the comprehension of the story sequences. However, the focus on meaning was blurred by the overt inclusion of text exemplifying the present continuous structure (e.g., the teacher is speaking in front of the class). Ernesto's lesson tasks revealed his struggle to balance focus on meaning and form in his task outcomes, which guided his lesson design during remote teaching. Similar difficulties were observed in other participants' lessons during remote instruction.

In Juliana's case, the shift to remote instruction and the lack of opportunities to meet her class synchronically online seemed to have inhibited the inclusion of communicative outcomes. Juliana's resolution to the abrupt shift in instruction seems to have developed into a more explicit focus on form. The following examples describe Juliana's use of outcomes before and after the school's lockdown in March 2020. During in-person teaching, Juliana included task outcomes in her planning, which included matching and telling personal narratives. Through these outcomes, Juliana could balance a focus on form (e.g., second conditional structure) and meaning (e.g., understanding the complications in a narrative; see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Juliana's Outcome With a Focus on Meaning and Form

Core activities

Students are going to read a story from a magazine where a lady called Emma Wyatt talks about a very bad day, in which they will have to answer a series of questions related to the reading and mark if the sentences are "false or true", then Ss will have to create sentences using the third conditional about everything that went wrong in Emma's day.

Conversely, Juliana's focus on form dominated her planning during remote teaching. Juliana did not focus on achieving a communicative outcome for most of her remote lessons. Instead, she relied heavily on solving grammar-focused activities. For example, Juliana's task in Figure 7 resembled a grammatical exercise to practice prepositions of place. Interestingly, she tried to include a focus on meaning by adding pictures that illustrated prepositions of place, thus trying to move beyond a grammatical exercise.

This strikingly different use of task outcomes in Juliana's planning seems to have been influenced by the changes in the delivery of instruction and her decision-maker roles in lesson planning. In her reflection, Juliana expressed that "the crisis that arises in the world affected the successful development of this practicum," implying that the shift to remote instruction prevented her from continuing her practicum as she had initially done. Juliana also reported she had to "plan units and lessons for our formative supervisor to continue

Figure 7. Juliana's Task With a Focus on Prepositions

Fill in the blank

Directions: fill in the blank with the correct prepositions from the box below.

on between under in front of over
with in on top of toward

The store is located _____ corner.

The dog is jumping _____ the fence.

The elephant is sitting _____ the water.

The girls are _____ two buildings.

teaching students through workshops as well as platforms, taking into account set learning outcomes, instructional goals, availability of time and resources, and teaching methodology." According to Juliana's reflection, planning for remote instruction implied moving away from an autonomous teaching role to

following her formative supervisors' requests regarding topics, outcomes, and instruction.

These four participants' examples demonstrate different levels of awareness and challenges in using the *outcome principle*; for Milena and Jose, including a communicative outcome seemed to be directly connected to meaning-making. They achieved this by developing task outcomes such as listing, matching, and decision-making tied to comprehending multimodal texts. For Juliana and Ernesto, including a communicative outcome, was more difficult as they tried to balance meaning-making and a focus on form. For Ernesto, including a communicative outcome was a constant struggle in in-person and remote teaching. In Juliana's case, this struggle seemed to have arisen from the constraints of remote instruction.

Use of Students' Linguistic Resources

Engaging learners' linguistic resources in task completion without focusing too much on the preplanned language structures is a TBLT principle that has been typically challenging for practitioners (Erlam, 2016). Our analysis revealed that most preservice teachers' attempts to use students' linguistic resources in their lessons varied when transitioning from in-person to remote teaching. Five participants designed lessons engaging students' linguistic resources during remote teaching, and only two used this principle during both teaching modalities. Juliana and Lorena included lesson plans which drew on students' linguistic resources as part of their tasks during in-person and remote teaching.

In one of her in-person lessons, Juliana included an activity for students to create a narrative based on a bad day they had had in the past. Similarly, she introduced a task in a remotely taught lesson by asking students about their favorite trip. She provided a video with instructions to create a postcard with information about the trip. In these lessons, Juliana motivated students to draw on previous experiences to elicit students' linguistic resources.

During in-person teaching, Lorena (working with Pamela and Naty) designed two tasks, one in which students described their toys and another in which they described their classrooms. Lorena also designed two lessons for learners to draw from their experiences to describe their context in remote teaching. The tasks encouraged learners to extend their use of the language past the lesson's focus and include linguistic resources that either came from the input (e.g., a video) or their creative handling of the language.

These two participants' reflections suggest that preservice teachers applied this principle to include learners' experiences and context in their lessons. In designing these tasks, the participants seemed to focus on students' limited resources, which were reported in the reflections as challenges during in-person and remote teaching. For instance, Juliana noted that she designed lessons with students' available time and resources while following the instructional goals. Similarly, Lorena stated that providing a context through which students can use their previous experiences was central to her lesson design; thus, she aimed to provide learners with opportunities to tap into their knowledge of the world when learning a language. This concern for promoting connections between new concepts, previous knowledge, and individual experiences might have influenced the participants' decision to rely on learners' linguistic resources in their lessons.

Miguel, Jose, and Sara also included the principle in remote teaching but did not do so during in-person teaching. Miguel designed a remote lesson that showed travel descriptions for students to analyze and create their own. Jose's task instructions required students' mother tongue and previously studied information questions to connect to students' personal information. Sara designed a remote lesson delivered through a Facebook group, which involved learners' resources to make sense of the input (see Figure 8). Learners were presented with infographics from which to infer

Figure 8. Sara's Task Drawing on Students' Linguistic Resources

Por medio de la red social Facebook nuevamente, se usarán tres infografías que esta vez contarán rutinas diferentes que se encuentran relacionadas con otros países y ocupaciones. [Using Facebook again, select three infographics about various routines related to other countries or occupations.]

Observe atentamente las infografías y, teniendo en cuenta su perspectiva, responda las siguientes preguntas por medio de un comentario en cada una de las imágenes. [Carefully observe these infographics and, from your point of view, answer the following questions by adding a comment to each image.]

- Where do you think this person is from?
- What occupation do you think he/she has?
- Do you think it is a young or an old person? How is he/she?
- What of these activities do/don't you know?
- What activities are similar to your daily routine?

information. Sara provided comprehension questions to guide learners through the content and to compare the infographics to their context.

These tasks required learners to use available language forms to comprehend and respond to the input according to their needs. Such planning decision was mentioned in the participants' reflections. Miguel said, "I had to stop assuming that they know things because they don't, and, for the activities, I always had a problem with guidance. I realized that I needed to do better instructions for them." In saying this, Miguel acknowledged that he needed to modify his instructions to better account for the various students' needs and previous knowledge. Similarly, Jose mentioned he had to create meaningful instructional material adjusted to the limited school resources and his supervisory teacher's requirements. Sara emphasized that teaching methods needed to allow students to "find new knowledge and ways of learning." The different ways of drawing on this principle during in-person and remote teaching seemed

to be related to the constraint inherent to each modality and the preservice teachers' ability to address learners' needs while monitoring their input comprehension.

Information Gap

The document analysis indicated that this principle was the least used by the preservice teachers in both teaching modalities. Five participants utilized this principle to design in-person lessons, adjusting the complexity of the interaction to the task purpose. For example, Kelly asked students to recreate gestures in front of the class for their classmates to guess the meaning of the gesture, which created an information gap during the interaction that one party had to fill.

Other participants created more elaborate tasks that required multiple steps to fill the gap. For example, Andrea created an information-gap task where students would guess a person's name based on their features. In Ana's task, the gap was implemented through a "guess who" game in which pairs of students took turns asking questions and guessing different characters shown by the teacher. Pamela, Lorena, and Naty also created two in-person lesson plans, which required learners to fill a communication gap to complete the task. In one lesson, students were asked to draw on the board or in their notebooks as they listened to a classroom description. In the second lesson, students were grouped and given a written description of the toys in a child's bedroom from a different country and a chart with missing information they needed to complete by asking about other groups' written descriptions. Similarly, Jose designed a task in which students asked each other questions to figure out classmates' eating habits, decided whether these habits were healthy, and then created tailored lifestyle suggestions for their partners. The outcome of these lessons hinged on students' bridging a gap to obtain, evaluate, and make conclusions based on missing information, thus moving from bridging a gap to negotiating information in a more realistic context.

Conversely, none of the participants included information-gap activities in their lesson plans during remote instruction. In the reports, the participants did not demonstrate awareness of the principle, which suggests it is not yet incorporated into their teaching repertoire. However, because some lesson plans included negotiation of missing information, we argue that the preservice teachers had started including a gap to promote communication. Perhaps, the limited interaction opportunities during remote instruction prevented the participants from relying on learners to obtain missing information from either the teacher or other peers. Thus, learners' interaction, which promotes information discovery, was limited.

Discussion

This study explored preservice teachers' adaptations of TBLT principles during in-person teaching and transitioning to remote teaching. The analysis of the lesson plans revealed that the preservice teachers implemented the principles differently during the two teaching modalities. Interestingly, the use of the principles varied and sometimes contrasted with what the participants reported in their reflections. Such contrast between novice teachers' intentions and their implementation of tasks resembles the findings reported by Chan (2012) and Erlam (2016).

The most commonly implemented principle was focus on meaning, followed by including a communicative outcome while tapping into learners' linguistic resources and including an information gap were the least evidenced principles. Preservice teachers' lesson plans showed varying approaches for implementing each principle. First, the participants used text modalities such as images, charts, and videos to focus on meaning. Additionally, those who included a communicative outcome in their lessons resorted to specific task types such as item lists, rankings, and classifications.

The analysis suggests that the participants relied on learners' linguistic resources by providing a rich context to develop their tasks. The communication gap was also included in some in-person lessons, with slight variations in the complexity of the interaction required to fill the gap. Findings highlighted a marked preference for input-based tasks (mainly written/visual texts), teacher-generated tasks, and the return to grammar-focused exercises.

These findings align with previous TBLT research with novice teachers (East, 2017, 2021; Van den Branden, 2016) by underscoring continuous reflections when using task principles. These preservice teachers had been acquainted with TBLT and task principles for around two years. During their methods courses, they designed tasks and lessons, including task principles, implemented them in microteaching, and supervised co-teaching opportunities in primary schools. Despite this robust training support, there seems to be a great distance between their supervised teaching and their field practice, where several decisions had to be made while facing additional challenges, such as the transition to remote teaching.

The observed focus on forms evidenced in some of the preservice teachers' lessons might have been related to their perceived role change with the transition to remote teaching. In their reflections, the participants expressed more autonomy in lesson plan design during remote teaching. However, the demands from classroom teachers and the schools required them to comply with teaching the forms suggested in the class syllabus. As reported in their reflections, they also looked up to the teachers for advice in the transition. Even though they had more flexibility in their planning, they had to follow topics and language focus previously decided by their supervisor.

Contradictions between teachers' awareness of these principles and their application in their classrooms, as noted in Lorena's and Juliana's lesson plans, confirm that teachers' understanding of TBLT needs to be negotiated with their contexts and school requirements (East, 2017). Implementing TBLT requires teachers' will, awareness, understanding, and agreement with the schools' curriculum and expectations. As Juliana mentioned, her practicum was constrained by her supervisor's request to include a focus on form, as stated in the syllabus. During in-person teaching, Juliana tried to balance such focus. Still, as remote instruction became the dominant approach, she found more limitations to achieving such balance, reflected in task outcomes more aligned with grammatical exercises.

Similarly, we described the preservice teachers' challenges to balance focusing on meaning and grammar through our findings. At first sight, these challenges may support previous claims about the teachers' inability to distinguish between tasks focused on meaning and exercises focused on form (Ellis, 2009; Ellis et al., 2019; Erlam, 2016). Conversely, our analysis of preservice teachers' lesson plans and reflections showed that most participants understood the difference between tasks and exercises, as did Milena's, Jose's, and Juliana's tasks, which emphasized meaning.

Other participants could adapt the focus-on-meaning principle to motivate their learners at the beginning of their lesson plans and balance their school requests to focus on grammatical forms, as we described in the case of Ernesto, Lorena, and Juliana. Furthermore, most participants included a communicative outcome in their plans, and their reflections showed awareness of this principle, an essential distinguishing trait between tasks and exercises. Although our findings described the participants' contradictions regarding the focus on meaning and focus on form, these may not indicate a lack of understanding of what constitutes a task, as previously claimed in TBLT research (Ellis et al., 2019; Van den Branden, 2016).

Additionally, our findings underscore the need to understand principles better, such as using learners'

linguistic resources and including an information gap as a practice in learners' local circumstances. This may require teacher educators to afford opportunities for preservice teachers to discuss and explore ways to adapt methods like TBLT to their specific contexts. One possible way to expand this principle is by understanding language as a local practice (Pennycook, 2010). Exploring, identifying, and valuing learners' language practices in their communities and local contexts may provide teachers with vital knowledge to build tasks relatable to the learners' language experiences. Our findings suggest reconciling the methodological (e.g., task principles and characteristics) and contextual elements (syllabi, learners' needs, language practices, and in-service teachers' expectations) in lesson planning. Fostering awareness of such a relationship may reflect on the preservice teachers adapting their knowledge of teaching methodologies and pedagogies to provide meaningful and pertinent language instruction. Thus, we underscore the need to integrate field practice and continuous reflection on learning and adapting TBLT.

Conclusion

The present study examined how preservice teachers adapt the principles of TBLT to their emerging teaching practices during the transition to remote teaching amidst the COVID-19 lockdown. The conflicting challenges between teachers' understanding of TBLT principles and their application in their lessons reveal the need for more practice-based teaching experiences. We showed through our findings that by implementing TBLT in their teaching, the participants in this study could gauge their knowledge of TBLT with classroom practices while dealing with institutional and contextual challenges.

This study described the manifold ways the preservice teachers adapted TBLT to the demands of their teaching contexts. Because of the popularity of methods such as TBLT in EFL research and practice, critiques that warn about top-down methods ignoring local pedagogical practices and leading to ineffective teaching practices deserve attention. Thus, we call for teacher-education research and practice emphasizing reflection and responsiveness to contextual factors so preservice teachers can take ownership of and apply teaching methods and principles meaningfully.

We invite teacher educators and EFL researchers to wonder what is needed to enact TBLT or other teaching methods in EFL contexts effectively. Similarly, the discussion needs to address the suitability of TBLT principles, like the information-gap principle, which may be at odds with teachers' and learners' local language practices. A chief concern in TBLT and teacher-education research includes exploring how these principles can be better integrated into lesson planning and task design. Addressing such concerns is pivotal to adapting TBLT to teachers' and students' language practices in their local contexts and modes of teaching.

Although the preservice teachers referred to their previous language learning experiences in shaping their beliefs about what good teaching means, such exploration was out of the scope of the aims of the present study. We acknowledge that this is a study limitation and an area that deserves further exploration. Thus, we invite further research to explore preservice teachers' previous learning experiences, their beliefs about teaching, and how these influence their uptake of EFL methods like TBLT and their enactment in the classrooms.

References

Bygate, M. (2020). Some directions for the possible survival of TBLT as a real world project. *Language Teaching*, *53*(3), 275–288. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444820000014

Chan, S. P. (2012). Qualitative differences in novice teachers' enactment of task-based language teaching in Hong Kong primary classrooms. In A. Shehadeh & C. Coombe (Eds.), *Task-based language teaching in foreign language*

contexts: Research and implementation (pp. 187–214). John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/tblt.4.13cha

Corrales, K. A., & Rey-Paba, L. (2021). Transforming from off-liners to on-liners: Voices from foreign language professors in Colombia. In J. Chen (Ed.), *Emergency remote teaching and beyond: Voices from world language teachers and researchers* (pp. 91–110). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-84067-9_5

East, M. (2014). Mediating pedagogical innovation via reflective practice: A comparison of pre-service and in-service teachers' experiences. *Reflective Practice*, *15*(5), 686–699. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2014.944128

East, M. (2017). Research into practice: The task-based approach to instructed second language acquisition. *Language Teaching*, *50*(3), 412–424. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026144481700009X

East, M. (2021). What do beginning teachers make of task-based language teaching? A comparative re-production of East (2014). *Language Teaching*, *54*(4), 552–566. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026144481900048X

Ellis, R. (2009). Task-based language teaching: Sorting out the misunderstandings. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *19*(3), 221–246. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2009.00231.x

Ellis, R. (2017). Position paper: Moving task-based language teaching forward. *Language Teaching*, *50*(4), 507–526. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444817000179

Ellis, R., Skehan, P., Li, S., Shintani, N., & Lambert, C. (2019). *Task-based language teaching: Theory and practice*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108643689

Erlam, R. (2016). 'I'm still not sure what a task is': Teachers designing language tasks. *Language Teaching Research*, *20*(3), 279–299. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168814566087

Fořtová, N., Sedláčková, J., & Tůma, F. (2021). "And my screen wouldn't share": Student-teachers' perceptions of ICT in online teaching practice and online teaching. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *26*(3), 513–529. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.v26n3a03

García Botero, J., García Botero, G., & Botero Restrepo, M. A. (2021). FL pre-service teachers' psychosocial aspects and educational conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *26*(3), 553–569. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.v26n3a05

García-Montes, P., Martínez, J. S., & Romero, A. (2022). Contradictions in learning to teach digital literacy practices in an EFL public setting: An activity theory analysis. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *27*(1), 105–124. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.v27n1a06

Glisan, E. W., & Donato, R. (2017). *Enacting the work of language instruction: High-leverage teaching practices*. ACTFL.

Hu, G., & McKay, S. L. (2012). English language education in East Asia: Some recent developments. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *33*(4), 345–362. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2012.661434

Johnson, K. E. (1994). The emerging beliefs and instructional practices of preservice English as a second language teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *10*(4), 439–452. https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051x(94)90024-8

Lai, C. (2015). Task-based language teaching in the Asian context: Where are we now and where are we going? In M. Thomas & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Contemporary task-based language teaching in Asia* (pp. 12–29). Bloomsbury.

Lapan, S. D., Quartaroli, M. T., & Riemer, F. J. (Eds.). (2012). *Qualitative research: An introduction to methods and designs*. Jossey-Bass/Wiley.

Li, J., & Zou, W. (2022). A study of pre-service teachers' perceptions of task-based language teaching via metaphor analysis in a Chinese context. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, *48*(5), 508–520. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2021.1989287

Littlewood, B. (2016). Task-based learning in language teacher education. *English Language Teacher Education and Development*, *19*, 9–13.

Long, M. H. (2016). In defense of tasks and TBLT: Nonissues and real issues. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *36*, 5–33. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190515000057

Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study* (1st ed.). University of Chicago Press.

Madianou, M. (2020). A second-order disaster? Digital technologies during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Social Media + Society*, *6*(3), 1–5. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120948168

O'Connor, C., & Joffe, H. (2020). Intercoder reliability in qualitative research: Debates and practical guidelines. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *19*, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919899220

Ogilvie, G., & Dunn, W. (2010). Taking teacher education to task: Exploring the role of teacher education in promoting the utilization of task-based language teaching. *Language Teaching Research*, *14*(2), 161–181. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168809353875

Pennycook, A. (2010). *Language as a local practice*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203846223

Plews, J. L., & Zhao, K. (2010). Tinkering with tasks knows no bounds: ESL Teachers' adaptations of task-based language-teaching. *TESL Canada Journal*, *28*(1), 41. https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v28i1.1059

Sagre, A., Herazo, J. D., & Davin, K. J. (2022). Contradictions in teachers' classroom dynamic assessment implementation: An activity system analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, *56*(1), 154–177. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3046

Swan, M. (2005). Legislation by hypothesis: The case of task-based instruction. *Applied Linguistics*, *26*(3), 376–401. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ami013

Van den Branden, K. (2016). The role of teachers in task-based language education. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *36*, 164–181. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190515000070

Van den Branden, K., Bygate, M., & Norris, J. M. (Eds.). (2009). *Task-based language teaching: A reader*. John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/tblt.1

Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2001). Task-based language learning. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 173–179). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667206.026

About the Authors

Tatiana Becerra-Posada is a PhD candidate in Educational Studies & Language Acquisition at McGill University (Canada). She holds an MA in Applied Linguistics from Universidad de Jaen (Spain) and has been an EFL teacher educator at Universidad de Córdoba (Colombia) for over ten years.

Diana Cristina Arroyo is a PhD candidate in Second Language Studies at Indiana University (USA). She holds an MA in TESOL/Applied Linguistics from Indiana University. She is a university professor with over 15 years of experience. She is currently an associate instructor at Universidad del Norte (Colombia).

Acknowledgments

We want to thank the preservice teachers for their generosity sharing their teaching materials and reflections in the practicum course, our friend and colleague Anamaria Sagre for her reading and feedback on early versions of this manuscript, and the reviewers, whose insightful comments helped us to improve this piece.

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.102959

Teaching Practicums During the Pandemic in an Initial English Teacher Education Program: The Preservice Teachers' Perspective

Práctica pedagógica durante la pandemia en un programa de formación de profesores de inglés: la perspectiva de profesoras y profesores en formación

Verónica Ormeño
Minerva Rosas
Universidad de Los Lagos, Osorno, Chile

In an initial English teacher education program at a Chilean institution, early and professional practicums were re-invented during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the continuity of this process. This study analyzed the context and conditions under which these practicums unfolded and how the process influenced participants' pedagogical and professional knowledge development. Forty-two preservice English language teachers undergoing early and professional practicums online throughout 2020–2021 answered an online questionnaire which was analyzed through descriptive statistics and content analysis. Findings revealed preservice teachers' problems, strengths, weaknesses, and challenges while interacting with pupils, cooperating teachers, and supervisors, as well as the development of some pedagogical and professional knowledge. The findings may serve to make adaptations to increasingly challenging teaching contexts.

Keywords: English language teaching, online remote teaching, practicum, preservice teachers

Las prácticas tempranas y profesionales de un programa de formación inicial de profesores de inglés en una universidad chilena fueron reinventadas durante la pandemia de COVID-19 para dar continuidad al proceso de formación. Este estudio buscó analizar el contexto y las condiciones en que dichas prácticas se desarrollaron y cómo influyeron en el conocimiento pedagógico y profesional de los profesores de inglés en formación. Para ello, 42 participantes que realizaron su práctica pedagógica en el periodo 2020–2021 respondieron una encuesta en línea cuyos datos se analizaron mediante estadística descriptiva y análisis de contenido. Los resultados permitieron identificar problemas, fortalezas, debilidades y desafíos en la interacción de los participantes con estudiantes, profesores colaboradores y supervisores, y el desarrollo parcial de un conocimiento pedagógico y profesional. Los resultados pueden orientar adaptaciones a contextos educativos cada vez más desafiantes.

Palabras clave: enseñanza del inglés, enseñanza remota, práctica pedagógica, profesores en formación

Verónica Ormeño https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7129-7142 · Email: vormeno@ulagos.cl
Minerva Rosas https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4904-7112 · Email: mrosas@ulagos.cl

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Ormeño, V., & Rosas, M. (2023). Teaching practicums during the pandemic in an initial English teacher education program: The preservice teachers' perspective. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 49–64. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.102959

This article was received on May 31, 2022 and accepted on March 13, 2023.

Introduction

Due to global health concerns, the coronavirus pandemic has forced people to "stay at home," disrupting all social activities, including education. Although this has been beneficial in diminishing the pandemic, it is also costly for countries (Kidd & Murray, 2020). Many countries were unprepared to face such unforeseen circumstances, and, in the area of education, institutions had to quickly resort to distance education to maintain their services (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020).

According to UNESCO (2020), some of the most harmful effects of school closures due to coronavirus include:

a) Interrupted learning because schools provide essential learning, and when they are closed, students are deprived of opportunities for growth and development;
b) unequal access to digital learning platforms, resulting in some students lacking access to technology or good internet connectivity for continued learning during school closures; and
c) social isolation, since educational institutions promote social activity and human interactions, school closures can deprive youth and children of some social communications and socialization that are essential to learning, development, and creativity.

In this context, teachers had to teach online, and students had to adjust to remote learning. Given that "being a language teacher triggers its own unique challenges resulting from the specificity and the emotional character of foreign-language teaching" (MacIntyre et al., 2020, p. 2), teaching a foreign language is already complex. The transition has posed additional challenges to teachers and learners in countries with no relevant infrastructure to facilitate online education. This digital divide was a big issue, particularly for learners in rural areas, as they often lack the needed facilities and expertise to implement remote teaching and learning. Then, technology emerged as a resource to bridge the educational gaps derived from the unscheduled closure of schools during the pandemic, even though many teachers and students lacked the digital skills to implement online education. All of this added to the usual stressors that have been identified in the work of language teachers (i.e., self-doubt about their language abilities, "coping with the emotional anxiety of learners, heterogeneous proficiency in learner groups, threats to a sense of self and identity, energy-intense teaching methodologies, intercultural components to teaching, and precarious working conditions" (MacIntyre et al., 2020, p. 3).

Because technology has become an intrinsic component of these processes, the rapid move to online teaching imposed by the pandemic has also had an impact on teacher education at universities, particularly on the teaching practicums (Fořtová et al., 2021; Vancell, 2021). The earliest research on initial teacher education has disregarded how virtual teaching practicums can provide opportunities and challenges for preservice teachers to learn how to teach (Clarke, 2013; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020). In this article, we analyze the effect of online practicums on a group of preservice teachers from a southern university in Chile. These preservice teachers have six sequential teaching practicums with particular aims, providing them with long and rigorous processes of training and qualification (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) and allowing them to engage in reflective practice (Schön, 1987) within their specific contexts (see Table 1).

The practicum fostered by the university program analyzed in this article encourages a reflective approach, as shown in Table 1 (Rosas et al., 2020). Practicum supervision provides guidance and advice on school placement and lesson planning, evaluates preservice teachers' performance in action, and includes feedback that fosters the development of teacher identity and autonomy (Lara-Diaz, 2019). In the current pandemic, the study's preservice

Table 1. Progressive Teaching Practicums

Semester [a]	Practicum mode	Duration	Focus and aims
4 [b]	Observation	One week	Observation of the school and educational context to know the different kinds of schools (public, subsidized, and private)
5	Workshop development	Four weeks	Interdisciplinary workshop in extra-curricular activities (e.g., music, arts, chess). To implement activities according to the needs diagnosed in schools
6	Assistantship	16 weeks	Helping teachers with the preparation of class materials or acting as monitors coaching the pupils during one term. To learn about teachers' duties and tasks
7	Assistantship and sheltered teaching	16 weeks	Assistantship and sheltered teaching. To teach small segments of lessons helping cooperating teachers and making ethnographic notes about their lessons
8	Teaching and research	16 weeks	Teaching a unit, planning an innovation project according to ethnographic notes, and detecting pupils' needs. To design and pilot the instruments used in their innovation projects (pre-test & questionnaires)
9	Implementation of the innovation project	16 weeks	Student-teachers are entirely in charge of a class to implement innovation projects. Analysis and interpretation of data gathered. Reflection about results. Writing of final reports.

[a] Duration of a semester: approximately 16 weeks. [b] Semesters 4, 5, and 6 correspond to early teaching practicums, while Semesters 8 and 9 correspond to professional practicums.

teachers had to adapt to the new remote teaching modality during the practicum process yet develop similar actions to those shown in Table 1. The practicum supervision by university agents also had to be adapted to the new modality. It imposed additional challenges to an already challenging task: coordinating times and access for online visits and feedback sessions afterward, defining the observation focus, and being attentive to the various needs of the preservice teachers as the process unfolded. The participants' family contexts and conditions and the virtualization process impacted their pedagogical and professional knowledge development, giving evidence of various issues emerging from the experience. Given this context, this study sought to identify the conditions and contexts in which early teaching practicum and professional practicum developed to determine the characteristics of the process of virtualization of these practicums in the development of pedagogical and professional knowledge for a group of English preservice teachers and to identify the main strengths, weaknesses, and challenges emerged in the practicums carried out in 2020–2021.

Theoretical Framework

Practicum in Pandemic

Since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced teachers to adapt to online teaching, imposing unprecedented challenges on teachers, students, and the whole teaching and learning process. Until then, most preservice teachers in Chile attended their school placements according to their timetables and fulfilled their teaching responsibilities for early teaching and professional practicum, as required in their program regulations. Then, COVID-19 emerged, schools closed, and lockdowns became the norm, adding stressors to the already stress-loaded task of teachers. To avoid interrupting the developmental process involved, university teacher education programs in Chile rapidly devised ways to move on. In the case of the English teaching program analyzed in this study, these alternative ways involved preservice teachers in online practicum, and they strived to adapt themselves to the new conditions. To help them move forward, they were instructed in the use of various applications freely available at the time (e.g., Peardeck, Nearpod, Mentimeter, Kahoot, and Quizzes) to implement new approaches to teaching and learning English as a foreign language in the school system, fulfill practicum aims, and succeed in supervision visits.

Practicum Supervision

Practicum supervision involves ongoing development taking place in real-time in a real-world setting (Baird & Mollen, 2019). Supervision is considered both important and valuable; thus, in the context of the pandemic, most university teaching programs in Chile reframed their practicum to give continuity to the whole preservice program and were done online throughout 2020–2021. Given this situation, preservice teachers were supervised online too, which made the process more challenging, particularly in terms of the relationship between supervisors and preservice teachers, as it ended up being more emotionally detached.

Qualities associated with effective supervisors include encouraging preservice teachers' autonomy, being receptive to their ideas, and providing positive and constructive feedback. Supervisors facilitate various learning opportunities, reviewing preservice teachers' work and assessing and evaluating their professional development and performance (Baird & Mollen, 2019), depending on the supervision model adopted. Traditionally, there have been three models: the *nominal model*, which aims to make it evident that supervision is provided; the *prescriptive model*, which views the supervisor as the authority who unveils weaknesses and suggests ways to perform correctly; and the *reflective model*, which sees the supervisor as an activator of reflection *on* actions and *about* actions in the preservice teacher's performance to develop expertise (Bailey, 2006). The first and the second are probably the most traditional models used until the last century. At the same time, the third one is fostered by current constructivist trends in education and is adopted in the program analyzed in this article.

Based on Freeman (1989), Bailey (2006) identifies three options for observing and giving feedback to language teachers: *supervisory*, *non-directive*, and *alternatives*. The first refers to the role of the prescriptive expert, while the second is the non-judgmental guide. Additionally, in the alternatives option, the supervisor's responsibility consists of helping teachers reflect and explain their teaching choices and discuss alternative ways of doing things. While many preservice teachers have positive experiences in supervision, findings suggest that inadequate, ineffective, and even harmful supervisory experiences are relatively common (Ellis et al., 2014; Ladany et al., 2013), as "the practicum continues to be a difficult and unsatisfactory learning experience for many prospective teachers" (Talvitie et al., 2000, p. 87). When asking supervisees to identify qualities

associated with effective supervisors, research has found that the best supervisors encourage autonomy, strengthen the supervisory relationship, and facilitate open discussion, while the most ineffective disregard supervision (Ladany et al., 2013). This is consistent with research in which preservice teachers reported positive as well as negative experiences in their relationship with supervisors (Rosas et al., 2020) and highlighted the quality of the dialogue unfolded as well as its capacity to provoke reflection as major factors during the practicum (Talvitie et al., 2000) and how much it provokes reflection. On the other hand, there is little time for reflection in some programs, which the preservice teachers perceive as a loss (Barahona, 2014).

As stated above, due to the problematic situation faced by all initial teaching education programs in Chile, it was necessary to change in-person classes to online teaching; this modality has been defined as emergency remote teaching by some authors.

Emergency Remote Teaching

According to Díaz-Maggioli (2021), what teachers have been doing during the pandemic is not distance learning, blended learning, or hybrid learning; it is simply emergency remote teaching (ERT), a view shared by various researchers in the field of education (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Hodges et al., 2020; Özüdoğru, 2021; Stephens & Curwood, 2022). This is an abrupt and transitory change in teaching delivery due to unforeseen circumstances. In a way, ERT is a quick-fix solution to a problem; it is not an attempt to reconstruct an entire "ecosystem but rather to provide temporary access to teaching and instructional support in a manner that is quick to set up and immediately available during an emergency crisis" (Hodges et al., 2020, p. 6). This is a way to sustain education in almost all countries (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020).

ERT has significantly impacted instructors and pupils, regardless of its long-term viability. Existing literature has identified major difficulties in its use, such as poor online teaching infrastructure, teachers' technological inexperience and knowledge, and the complexity of home working (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). Initially, student engagement in school was often sporadic and superficial in these types of sessions. Embarrassed turn-taking on video conferences and artificial use of the chat function for queries initially replaced interactive classroom practice in smaller groups. However, initiatives for increasing student participation in all online communities arose over time. Some of them included expectations for timed student interactions, which had to be communicated; opportunities for sense-making (individually and in groups); extensive and improved scaffolding of learning; and collaborative on and off-line video tasks (Kidd & Murray, 2020).

Even though all official practicum environments were withdrawn, removed, or postponed (Morrison & Sepulveda-Escobar, 2021; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020), as in the context of this study, new types of practicums were developed. This entailed (re)locating and (re)framing learning spaces and practicums to fit the online mode once teacher education programs were relaunched after institutions, teacher educators, and preservice teachers made sense of the situation and confronted it by supporting their students' professional learning.

While various studies suggest the benefits of incorporating a virtual learning platform as an additional or supportive resource for teaching and learning, few have considered them a primary pedagogical device. With the transition to online learning models, these platforms adopted new features to facilitate communication, education, and learning practices. The new centrality of technology has meant that established practices had to evolve, and teachers had to choose or were instructed to take advantage of a combination of synchronous and asynchronous strategies (Stephens & Curwood, 2022). These included using several applications for teaching and learning online; however,

these applications quickly become outdated; hence the problem is not about technology. It is about *pedagogy*. In these circumstances, the key is to mediate learning through technology, not to teach by technology, and keep an excellent pedagogical mindset.

Some studies have recently investigated the effects of ERT and learning processes unfolded from the start of the pandemic in initial teacher education (Díaz-Maggioli, 2021; Özüdoğru, 2021; Pérez-López et al., 2021; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020) and in-service teaching (MacIntyre et al., 2020). Some have focused on identifying the multiple challenges arising from school and university shutdowns, while others have examined in-service and preservice teachers' stress and coping strategies. For example, Fořtová et al. (2021) found that preservice teachers were disappointed when numerous programs, online documents, and procedures did not perform as expected due to technological challenges or knowledge gaps that caused malfunctioning (incorrect sharing settings, not saving the most recent version and others). Problems of this type became a source of annoyance for some participants, especially as they felt powerless to change the situation. Good planning was crucial for swiftly avoiding or resolving many situations, even though such planning necessitates expertise and thoroughness. When reflecting on their technology-related teaching experiences, preservice teachers were often aware of the need to plan the technical portion of the lesson better or have an alternative option prepared in case the design initially would not work.

Pedagogical and Professional Knowledge

Pedagogical knowledge is explained below according to two different views about the types of knowledge required for teaching, and professional knowledge is described concerning what it means to be a professional.

Types of Knowledge in Teaching

It is widely recognized that teaching is very demanding and challenging and that teachers must develop and acquire extensive knowledge, expertise, and practice to become professionals. Shulman (1987) identifies seven critical types of knowledge for teachers:

1. *Content knowledge* is the teacher's knowledge of the subject, English, in the case of the program analyzed. This considers the teachers' need to develop their proficiency in English as a foreign language, including mastery of English syntax, phonology, semantics, culture, and others.
2. *General content knowledge* refers to those broad standards and methodologies of classroom administration and organization that go beyond the subject matter.
3. *Curriculum knowledge* considers the full extent of programs designed for teaching the subject, a set of instructional materials for specific circumstances, and curricular options for instruction.
4. *Pedagogical-content knowledge*, that is, the "methodology" used by teachers, includes their knowledge of theories of how languages are learned, approaches, methods, and techniques used in language programs.
5. *Knowledge of learners and their characteristics* addresses different learning styles and strategies, emphasizes learners' central role, and makes teachers aware of the influence of their behavior on their students' learning.
6. *Knowledge of educational contexts* shows how sociocultural and institutional contexts influence learning and teaching: What is acceptable or appropriate in an educational system may not be so in a different educational system, and this is especially true when teachers work in educational contexts different from their own.
7. *Knowledge of educational ends, purposes, values, and philosophical and historical issues*. This is generally not considered necessary in language

> teacher preparation programs and is often limited to the historical study of English language teaching methods. However, studying the sociology, philosophy, and history of education should be a significant component of initial teacher education programs generally held in university settings.

Besides the above, Malderez and Wedell (2007) summarize teacher knowledge into three dimensions: knowing about (declarative knowledge), knowing how (procedural knowledge), and knowing to (intuitive knowledge). *Knowing about* is the kind of knowledge that can be verbalized or clarified; it incorporates

> knowledge of the subject to be taught; the way learners are supposed to learn the subject; the positioning of the subject within the wider curriculum and the educational institution, with its culture and rules; the students' backgrounds and needs; and knowledge of strategies for teaching practicum managing one's continuous professional development. (Rosas et al., 2020, p. 71)

Knowing how is composed of abilities or behaviors that instructors must master to be effective within the classroom and the school, including strategies to support the learning of all pupils. *Knowing to* points to the expertise created over time by good teachers that permits them to naturally and instantaneously utilize what they know at the right moment and adequately support their students' learning (Malderez & Wedell, 2007).

Professional Knowledge

The distinction between *being professional* and being *a professional* is highlighted by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012). The former is concerned with upholding high standards of behavior and performance, whereas the latter is concerned with how a person is seen and how this affects their self-esteem. Some definitions of what makes a professional include:

- Specialized knowledge, expertise, and professional language
- Shared standards of practice
- Long and rigorous processes of training and qualification . . .
- Autonomy to make informed discretionary judgments
- Working together with other professionals to solve complex cases
- Commitment to continuous learning and professional upgrading

(Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 80)

These definitions stress the need to simultaneously be professional and a professional, that is, "to have status and autonomy and be trusted and able to make informed judgments effectively" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 81). It is generally acknowledged that teaching involves a combination of art, craft, and science (Johnson, 2017), characterizing teaching expertise as knowing what to teach, how to teach it, and what methods to use to teach specific topics, with particular types of students in specific contexts; all of these combine to form the teacher's knowledge base and skills (Shulman, 1986). In order to equip preservice teachers to teach effectively in the classroom, teacher education programs work to strengthen their knowledge, abilities, and personal qualities. Practical fieldwork through the practicum is crucial to accomplish this objective, yet the current context of the pandemic has constrained and added challenges to the development of this professional.

Method

This was a descriptive case study with a mixed-methods design. The study's general objective was to determine the impact of online practicum processes in developing pedagogical and professional knowledge for a group of preservice teachers of English. Given this objective, three research questions were formulated:

1. What were the conditions and contexts in which early teaching and professional practicum developed for a group of English preservice teachers?

2. What characterizes the virtualization process of early and professional teaching practicum in developing pedagogical and professional knowledge for a group of English preservice teachers?
3. What were the main strengths, weaknesses, and challenges identified during the pedagogical practices carried out during the pandemic?

Data Collection

The participants were asked to answer a questionnaire through an online Google Form to collect data. This was specially designed for the research and consisted of two sections. The first section used a Likert scale and included questions to contextualize the survey and focused on the context and conditions of the practicum, the virtualization of the teaching-learning process during the practicum in pandemics, and the development of the participants' professional and pedagogical knowledge. The second part of the questionnaire included three open-ended questions aimed at preservice teachers expanding on some of the ideas in the closed questions and adding information on the interactions through the process with all the intervening agents: cooperating teachers, pupils, and university supervisors. This instrument was validated using experts' judgment before its application. The analysis of the first part of the questionnaire was performed through descriptive statistics aided by SPSS statistical software. The second part was analyzed through content analysis, aided by the qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti v.7.5.4.

Participants

A convenience sampling procedure was used to select the participants in this study. Except for one group of subjects who graduated at the end of 2020, all other participants, aged 21 to 25, were still undergoing online progressive practicum experiences at different levels and attending courses simultaneously. For example, 10 participants completed their professional practicum online during the second semester in 2020; 19 were undergoing their professional practicum; and 12 completed their fourth early teaching practicum during the first semester in 2021, totaling 42 participants. Participants were informed about the research aims, agreed to participate voluntarily, and expressed their written consent in a Google Form before answering the questionnaire. Their anonymity was protected by assigning them identification numbers based on practicum level; additionally, all names of schools and educational institutions in which they were placed for the practicum were anonymized. Finally, the questionnaire was available online for three weeks.

Results and Discussion

Conditions and Contexts of the Development of Early Teaching Practicum and Professional Practicum of English Preservice Teachers

Data to answer the first research question were obtained from the first and second parts of the questionnaire. The early teaching and professional practicums developed by the participants took place online in subsidized schools (47.6%), public schools (33.3%), private schools (7.1%), and other institutions (11.9%). The conditions experienced during the pandemic forced most preservice teachers to take up more than one class to fulfill the time required for each practicum, with 50% taking up 2 or 3 classes and 33.3% teaching only one class. They also had to devote more time to lessons than usual, even though lessons were sometimes shorter.

Regarding the contexts and conditions under which the practicum was developed, 57.2% felt that *coping with curricular disturbances due to different social issues and learning difficulties increased their self-confidence*. This relates to the diverse issues Chilean students and citizens have faced since 2019, including

student strikes, social outbursts, and the coronavirus pandemic. These problems caused significant social and political instability, especially the social outburst that created severe disruption at all levels of education and life due to various strikes and riots that interrupted university and school schedules. This meant that the practicum experiences planned for some university levels were shortened or postponed for later, causing great uncertainty among preservice teachers. Nevertheless, 52% of informants felt that their practicum planning was easier despite the complex situations they faced during their university studies because they had more time available.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education issued a plan of subject prioritization for all Chilean schools, which consisted of giving more importance to certain subjects over others during the pandemic. English was maintained in the curriculum, but the lessons were shortened to one hour and sometimes just half an hour in certain schools. Some students from subsidized and public schools had serious difficulties connecting to the internet. On the other hand, private schools seemed not to have connection problems.

Characteristics of Virtualization of Early and Professional Teaching Practicums in the Development of Pedagogical and Professional Knowledge

Data from the third section of the questionnaire helped determine the practicum virtualization's characteristics. According to the participants' responses, 71.4% *had easy internet access*, although some had to ask the university for help to continue teaching online. In response, they were provided with modems, tablets, and laptops through the Students' Support Unit. Throughout the process, these preservice teachers realized that *virtualization does not replicate what is done in person* (90.4%), and thus had to adapt their teaching materials (worksheets, assessment tasks, video capsules) to the virtual platforms and applications available (Peardeck, Nearpod, Mentimeter). Despite this, 85.7% of the participants answered that virtualization helped develop a collaborative relationship with the cooperating teachers during the virtual meetings because they had to discuss planning and materials and receive feedback.

Concerning the development of pedagogical knowledge, *the virtual programs allowed participants to develop their digital skills in such a way that they improved their use of ICTs, and they were able to select the best ones for their effectiveness in learning* (90.4%). Moreover, they assessed the process positively, with 76.2% expressing that *it was gratifying to note that the planning of their practicum easily "translated" the objectives and class contents into efficient virtual activities for their students, according to the objectives expected in English*.

On the other hand, 83.3% of the participants asserted that *the pandemic made them witness a great educational disruption, understood as social distancing, almost zero inter-student communication, and difficult communication with their students and some cooperating teachers.* Consequently, most agreed that *the pandemic seriously affected their students' interest and performance* (88%). This is consistent with views about the major disadvantages of online education, which include the loss of empathy, contact, emotion, and quality (Cassany, 2021). Although learning online can be very effective, Cassany (2021) claims that learning increases significantly in face-to-face scenarios. Furthermore, 81% noticed that for pupils, *there was unequal access to the internet and virtual learning platforms, which seriously affected their learning achievements.* As a result, 64.2% thought *it was difficult to develop a reliable virtual evaluation system in their practicum*, and it was difficult *to emphasize some activities (e.g., cooperative learning, guided discussion) during the practicum* (80.9%).

Concerning the professional aspects, 88.1% of the participants felt that their practicum performance during 2020–2021 served to demonstrate *the commitment with which they developed their pedagogical duties*, and 88% felt that they were *able to verify that they had developed the necessary attributes to perform or to achieve their set objectives* throughout the program. Finally, they were satisfied with their practicum since *their skills and qualities allowed them to attain achievements and created confidence in their performance* (76.1%).

The results above make it clear that the leap from in-person to online teaching also imposed challenges on these preservice teachers, who could be regarded as digital natives or, in the words of Cassany (2021), "digital residents"; that is, those who have learned online and have internet integrated into their daily lives, mostly in asynchronous ways. This is a characteristic of distance learning to which teachers appear not to be fully accustomed, yet all educators should benefit from updating their knowledge of technology to connect more naturally to the current educational community.

Main Practicum Strengths, Weaknesses, and Challenges During the Pandemic

To identify the main strengths, weaknesses, and challenges faced by these future teachers of English in their practicum during the pandemic, we analyzed the answers to three open-ended questions. We categorized them considering their interactions with cooperating teachers, pupils, and supervisors. The frequency of appearance of each analysis dimension is summarized in Table 2.

We can observe from Table 2 that, in general, the number of weaknesses and challenges was quite similar in terms of frequencies, while the number of strengths appeared slightly higher. The 7th and 9th-semester groups seemed to have more issues relating to the students they taught during the practicum. In the

Table 2. Occurrence of Dimensions Assessed

	7th semester	9th semester	Graduates (2020)	Total	Total dimensions
Weaknesses relating to cooperating teachers	8	14	7	29	74
Weaknesses relating to their students	16	11	9	36	
Weaknesses relating to the supervisors	4	3	2	9	
Social/psychological challenges	3	8	8	19	73
Structural-technological challenges	6	16	7	29	
Pedagogical challenges	5	15	5	25	
Strengths relating to cooperating teachers	4	14	7	25	85
Strengths relating to students	4	14	7	25	
Strengths relating to supervisors	8	13	7	28	

case of those who graduated in 2020, relating to their students at school was not reported as a prevalent issue, possibly because the experience gained throughout the early and progressive practicum contributed positively to that aspect. Comments related to weaknesses with their cooperating teachers were higher among the 9th-semester group, who were undergoing the professional practicum, the last and most comprehensive one, as this involves being totally in charge of teaching the lessons. This group also identified more challenges in the process, particularly regarding structural-technological and pedagogical areas, consistent with exerting more autonomy and control over the whole teaching and learning process. The same group highlighted more strengths in their interactions with all cooperating teachers, students, and supervisors.

In terms of weaknesses, a closer look at the answers given by the participwants allowed us to categorize these, as shown in Table 3.

Concerning the relationships with their cooperating teachers, most preservice teachers complained about the lack of time to communicate and receive feedback. Much of this can be explained by the ERT and learning processes (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020) that, in most cases, forced cooperating teachers to duplicate lessons and add additional time to their workload, leaving them with very tight agendas (Cassany, 2021) to fit in feedback sessions for their preservice teachers. Similarly, the preservice teachers from the study also had tight agendas, as the practicum was done amid a series of other courses which ran in parallel with their curriculum. Concerning weaknesses related to their students, the main ones point to the lack of interaction caused by irregular and unstable Internet access, which prevented them from using their cameras and microphones, significantly reducing preservice teachers' interactions with their students (König et al., 2020). Regarding weaknesses with supervisors, they mostly related to time constraints that reduced meeting possibilities and online support, which preservice teachers felt was a significant source of anxiety in some cases. This is because supervision is both essential and valuable (Baird & Mollen, 2019). When supervised online, preservice teachers reported a strong feeling of uncertainty concerning the focus and manner of the supervision, suggesting a preference for more directive supervision (Bailey, 2006).

Table 3. Weaknesses in Interactions With Different Agents of the Practicum

Weaknesses related to their cooperating teachers	Weaknesses related to students	Weaknesses related to supervisors
1. Lack of time and coordination to communicate and give feedback	1. Lack of interaction with students (due to little or no use of camera and microphone)	1. Lack of time to interact and give timely feedback
2. The workload for preservice teachers	2. Students' difficulty connecting to online sessions	2. Lack of timely correction of lesson plans
3. Difficulty using applications or platforms for online teaching for both cooperating teachers and preservice teachers	3. Class interaction patterns limited by online teaching	3. Difficulty in coordinating supervision
	4. Disinterest and lack of student motivation	4. Insufficient practicum meetings to solve doubts
		5. Supervisors are not aware of the different practicum contexts

On the other hand, challenges identified by the preservice teachers in the practicum were categorized into *socio-psychological challenges*, *technological-structural challenges*, and *pedagogical challenges* (see Table 4). The first relates to issues involving personality and social relationships and preservice teachers' pressures concerning them. The second relates to the challenges their degree of expertise imposes when

Table 4. Challenges Identified in the Practicum

Socio-psychological challenges	Technological structural challenges	Pedagogical challenges
1. Ability to adapt to online mode	1. Adapting to online teaching and learning	1. Designing significant quantities of pedagogical/virtual material
2. Flexibility to change	2. Adapting materials to specific schools' formats (e.g., compressing files)	2. Diversifying the use of applications to maintain the students' interest
3. Tolerance to frustration	3. Creating video tutorials	3. Planning activities for online teaching
4. Overcoming the fear of the unknown (Practicum V)	4. Creating materials for online learning	4. Effectively managing class time
5. Controlling emotions to perform well	5. Using technological tools in general	5. Developing the national curriculum learning outcomes for the English subject
6. Becoming aware that students may have emotional problems affecting their performance	6. Motivating students to learn through ICT	6. Prioritizing content for online teaching
7. Working as a team with the cooperating teacher, supervisor, and peers in a virtual mode	7. Learning to use new tools/ applications for learning	7. Assessing online learning
8. Effectively using time in meetings with supervisors and coordinator	8. Being attentive to messages to correct lesson plans (stay permanently connected)	8. Learning to use applications for online teaching
9. Maintaining a pleasant and cordial relationship with the students		9. Developing autonomous work in online learning
10. Maintaining a cordial relationship with the cooperating teachers		10. Developing English language skills, especially oral production
		11. Using a variety of language learning strategies
		12. Adapting English use to students' language level.
		13. Adapting teaching materials to online time (60 minutes)
		14. Creating material and activities to encourage students' participation
		15. Meeting practicum and academic demands

using technological tools for teaching and learning. The last category relates to issues concerning the various types of knowledge to be developed by teachers, as described by Shulman (1987).

Regarding the socio-psychological challenges identified, the pandemic added significant stress among the participating preservice teachers (MacIntyre et al., 2020). In this case, the challenges are mostly related to controlling emotions to perform well and maintain a cordial relationship with their learners, the cooperating teachers, and the support they might give the former and receive from the latter. As for technological structural challenges, these highlight the need to learn how to use new applications for teaching and learning and creating materials for the process. Together with this, motivating the learners to learn through technology might appear as a paradox, as these generations are supposed to have grown up surrounded by technology. Perhaps the explanation may be that they use technology primarily for playing or relating to others through social media but not for educational purposes.

Consistently with their capacity as preservice teachers, the category with the highest number of challenges relates to pedagogical issues. Within these, the online modality appeared to permeate at least five challenges related to planning, teaching, and assessing learning. Additionally, adapting the target language (English) to match the circumstances and needs of their students appeared as a significant challenge.

Besides the weaknesses and challenges discussed above, the research participants also identified several strengths in their interactions with their cooperating teachers, students, and university supervisors. These are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Strengths in Interactions With Different Agents of the Practicum

Strengths with cooperating teachers	Strengths with students	Strengths with supervisors
1. Support and guidance in the design of didactic material during early practices	1. Availability of class recordings for students who did not attend lessons or for those in need of reinforcement	1. Training in educational applications to improve online teaching during the practicum
2. Support and guidance in the selection of topics for their students	2. Monitoring student participation and learning through applications (Nearpod, Pear Deck)	2. Existence of standard criteria between supervisors and the practicum coordinator
3. Cooperating teachers valuing the use of applications for online teaching	3. Permanent participation through the microphone and chat between the preservice teacher and students willing to learn	3. Quick and effective communication with supervisors and coordinators
4. Effective communication and interaction through email, video calls, and WhatsApp	4. Good disposition, enthusiasm, and motivation on the part of some students	4. Timely feedback for lesson planning and practicum supervision
5. Fast and effective online feedback	5. Personalized feedback through ICT	5. Advice on ideas and lesson activities

Strengths regarding the interactions with cooperating teachers relate to the support these provided preservice teachers with, especially concerning guidance and support in choosing topics and material design for lessons. In this sense, cooperating teachers valued using applications for teaching and learning, which were mainly new. Strengths relating to the participants' students highlighted the availability of lesson recordings and monitoring possibilities provided by technology and the excellent disposition and participation of some pupils who were always willing to learn. Finally, regarding their supervisors, these preservice teachers valued training in using applications they did not know previously and standard criteria used in supervision. They also valued the advice received to improve online lessons and activities. These findings highlight their preference for the directive supervision option (Bailey, 2006) and their still-developing capacity for autonomous work.

Conclusion

This study sought to analyze the impact of online practicum in developing pedagogical and professional knowledge for a group of English preservice teachers of English in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The virtualization process made these preservice teachers fully aware that what is done in person cannot be fully replicated in a virtual environment, as there was little interaction with students, reduced time for online lessons, lower academic requirements, and difficulties in assessing students' learning. Thus, they had to adapt their teaching and teaching material to use several virtual applications to succeed. In this way, virtualization supported their interactions in the practicum process.

Regarding the contexts and conditions in which the practicum happened, respondents felt that successfully managing curricular disturbances caused by various social issues and learning difficulties boosted their self-confidence. The pandemic has demonstrated that the educational community's conditions of uncertainty (Vancell, 2021) and resource scarcity might affect a teacher's professional competence in the cognitive and affective domains, in their pedagogical choices, and those of other critical actors in the process (Carrillo & Flores, 2020; Fořtová et al., 2021).

Regarding pedagogical knowledge development, responses from these preservice teachers indicate the development of at least four kinds of pedagogical knowledge from Shulman's model (1987): general pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, educational context knowledge, and knowledge about students and their characteristics. The discourse in the participants' answers to the open questions showed an incipient development of professional knowledge, as Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) described, since they used specialized language and appeared to become aware of their capacity and the development of the necessary skills for their future performance.

Three points worth highlighting include that, first, virtuality does not replace face-to-face work. Secondly, it should be clear that this is an instance of ERT, a modality temporarily adopted to cope with the circumstances brought about by the pandemic, but which will not replace in-person education (Acción Educar, 2020; Cassany, 2021; Díaz-Maggioli, 2021). Finally, virtuality opens the way to complement in-person education by offering the possibility of facing an emergency, making third-party knowledge available to us in the cloud, and implementing new teaching-learning methodologies. This has implications for institutions and teacher education programs. One is the need to produce and circulate official documents that acknowledge the possibility of doing the preservice teaching practicum online or in hybrid modalities and provide specific guidelines and suggestions derived from the experience.

This study is limited as it analyzed the preservice teachers' perspective about online practicums in one English teacher education program from a public, regional university in Chile. More research about online replacements for face-to-face practicum in other initial

teacher education programs, especially in the context of ERT and learning, is needed to assess their effectiveness, full potential, and drawbacks. Future research should also consider the perspectives of the other participants in the process (i.e., pupils, cooperating teachers, and supervisors).

References

Acción Educar. (2020, April). *La importancia de las clases presenciales*. https://bit.ly/3BobqWf

Bailey, K. M. (2006). *Language teacher supervision: A case-based approach*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667329

Baird, B., & Mollen, D. (2019). *The internship, practicum and field placement handbook. A guide for the helping professions* (8th ed.). Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351067850

Barahona, M. (2014). Exploring the curriculum of second language teacher education (SLTE) in Chile: A case study. *Perspectiva Educacional: Formación de Profesores*, *53*(2), 45–67. https://doi.org/10.4151/07189729-Vol.53-Iss.2-Art.261

Bozkurt, A., & Sharma, R. C. (2020). Emergency remote teaching in a time of global crisis due to coronavirus pandemic. *Asian Journal of Distance Education*, 15(1), i–vi.

Carrillo, C., & Flores, M. A. (2020). COVID-19 and teacher education: A literature review of online teaching and learning practices. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *43*(4), 466–487. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821184

Cassany, D. (2021). *Todos los docentes estamos agotados del número de horas que pasamos pegados a la pantalla* [Interview]. Web del Maestro, WMCMF. https://bit.ly/3QBbmrw

Clarke, L. (2013). Virtual learning environments in teacher education: A journal, a journey. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, *22*(1), 121–131. https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939X.2012.731632

Díaz-Maggioli, G. [Programa de inglés PUCV]. (2021, August 2). *Webinar "Digital learning and teaching: Promoting students' autonomous learning"* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saIToqUMMXM&t=3332s

Ellis, M. V., Berger, L., Hanus, A. E., Ayala, E. E., Swords, B. A., & Siembor, M. (2014). Inadequate and harmful clinical supervision: Testing a revised framework and assessing occurrence. *The Counseling Psychologist*, *42*(4), 434–472. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000013508656

Fořtová, N., Sedláčková, J., & Tůma, F. (2021). "And my screen wouldn't share": EFL student-teachers' perceptions of ICT in online teaching practice and online teaching. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *26*(3), 513–529. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.v26n3a03

Freeman, D. (1989). Teacher training, development and decision making: A model of teaching and related strategies for language teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly*, *23*(1), 27–45. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587506

Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (2012). *Professional capital: Transforming teaching in every school*. Teachers College Press.

Hodges, C., Moore, S., Lockee, B., Trust, T., & Bond, A. (2020, March 27). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning. *Educause Review*. https://bit.ly/3TWye7E

Johnson, A. P. (2017). *Teaching strategies for all teachers: Enhancing the most significant variable*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Kidd, W., & Murray, J. (2020). The Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on teacher education in England: How teacher educators moved practicum learning online. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *43*(4), 542–558. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1820480

König, J., Jäger-Biela, D., & Glutsck, N. (2020). Adapting to online teaching during COVID-19 school closure: Teacher education and teacher competence effects among early career teachers in Germany. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *43*(4), 608–622. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1809650

Ladany, N., Mori, Y., & Mehr, K. E. (2013). Effective and ineffective supervision. *The Counseling Psychologist*, *41*(1), 28–47. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000012442648

Lara-Diaz, M. A. (2019). A TESOL practicum in Chile. In A. Cirocki, I. Madyarov, & L. Baecher (Eds.), *Current perspectives on the TESOL practicum. Educational linguistics* (vol. 40, pp. 67–86). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-28756-6_4

MacIntyre, P. D., Gregersen, T., & Mercer, S. (2020). Language teachers' coping strategies during the Covid-19 conversion to online teaching: Correlations with stress, wellbeing and negative emotions. *System*, *94*, 102352. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102352

Malderez, A., & Wedell, M. (2007). *Teaching teachers: Processes and practices.* Continuum.

Morrison, A., & Sepulveda-Escobar, P. (2021). The role of technology during the COVID-19 pandemic: The case of EFL online teaching placements. *English as a Foreign Language International Journal*, *25*(5), 47–63. https://doi.org/10.56498/69122021

Özüdoğru, F. (2021). Turkish preservice teachers' experiences with emergency remote teaching: A phenomenological study. *Issues in Educational Research*, *31*(1), 166–187.

Pérez-López, E., Vázquez-Atochero, A., & Cambero-Rivero, S. (2021). Educación a distancia en tiempos de COVID-19: Análisis desde la perspectiva de los estudiantes universitarios. *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación a Distancia*, *24*(1), 331–350. https://doi.org/10.5944/ried.24.1.27855

Rosas, M., Ormeño, V., & Ruiz-Aguilar, C. (2020). Teaching practicum and the development of professional and pedagogical knowledge. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Professional Practice*, *15*(1), 67–90. https://doi.org/10.1558/jalpp.35061

Schön, D. A. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner: Toward a new design for teaching and learning in the professions*. Jossey-Bass.

Sepulveda-Escobar, P., & Morrison, A. (2020). Online teaching placement during the COVID-19 pandemic in Chile: Challenges and opportunities. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *43*(4), 587–607. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1820981

Shulman, L. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, *15*(2), 4–14. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x015002004

Shulman, L. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, *57*(1), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.57.1.j463w79r56455411

Stephens, E. C., & Curwood, J. S. (2022). Teacher education in times of disruption: Lessons learned from teaching and learning in Australian universities during the COVID-19 pandemic. In R. Y. Chan, K. Bista, & R. M. Allen (Eds.), *Online teaching and learning during Covid-19.* Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003125921-19

Talvitie, U., Peltokallio, L., & Mannisto, P. (2000). Student teachers' views about their relationships with university supervisors, cooperating teachers and peer student teachers. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, *44*(1), 79–88. https://doi.org/10.1080/713696662

UNESCO. (2020, August). *La educación en tiempos de la pandemia de COVID-19* (Informe Covid-19 CEPAL-UNESCO). https://bit.ly/3Qr1z01

Vancell, J. (2021). *The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the preservice teacher practicum: A literature review* [Paper presentation]. 11th International Conference: The Future of Education. https://bit.ly/3qxsTGl

About the Authors

Verónica Ormeño holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Birmingham, UK, and an English language teaching degree from Universidad Austral de Chile. She is an associate professor and teacher educator at Universidad de Los Lagos, Chile. Her research interests include initial teacher education, teacher cognition, applied linguistics, and discourse analysis.

Minerva Rosas received her PhD in Linguistics from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile. She is an associate professor and teacher educator at Universidad de Los Lagos, Chile. Her research interests include teacher cognition and initial teacher education, applied linguistics, reading comprehension in L2, and academic writing in L2.

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.95969

Shaping Better Futures: Inside-Out Colombian English Language Teachers' Gaps and Practices

Trazando mejores futuros: una mirada de adentro hacia afuera de las necesidades y prácticas de los docentes de inglés en Colombia

Ingrit Juliana Díaz
Universidad del Cauca, Popayán, Colombia
Catalina Ipia Salinas
Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca, Popayán, Colombia
Liliana Cuesta Medina
Universidad de La Sabana, Chía, Colombia

This exploratory qualitative study reports gaps in the preservice teacher education and professional development of 15 English language teachers in a Colombian public university regarding their teaching knowledge and practice. Grounded theory was used to examine the data collected via focus groups and questionnaires, which were validated and triangulated. Findings reveal several teacher deficiencies, classified into three axes: language proficiency, teaching awareness, and teacher challenges. These tensions unveil imbalances between theory and practice, inefficient mentoring during the practicum stage, lack of classroom management skills for efficient teaching, and the need to revitalize and endorse information and communications technology education and use in the new classroom era. The article also offers a discussion on reconceptualizing teacher education.

Keywords: English language teaching, professional development, teacher awareness, teacher education

Este estudio cualitativo-exploratorio reporta los hallazgos sobre las brechas existentes en la formación docente y el desarrollo profesional de quince profesores de inglés en una universidad pública colombiana. Se usó la teoría fundamentada para analizar, triangular y validar los datos recolectados mediante un grupo focal y un cuestionario. Los resultados muestran marcadas deficiencias docentes, clasificadas en tres ejes: dominio del idioma, conciencia docente y desafíos docentes. Estas tensiones revelan desequilibrios entre teoría y práctica, ineficiente mentoría durante la práctica docente, la falta de habilidades de manejo del aula, y una necesidad de la revitalización y apropiación de las tecnologías de la información y las comunicaciones en el aula de clase contemporánea. Se ofrece además una discusión para reconceptualizar la formación docente.

Palabras clave: conciencia docente, desarrollo profesional, enseñanza del inglés, formación docente

Ingrit Juliana Díaz https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4772-751X · Email: ingritjuliana@unicauca.edu.co
Catalina Ipia Salinas https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9201-229X · Email: catalinaipia@unimayor.edu.co
Liliana Cuesta Medina https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8296-6225 · Email: liliana.cuesta@unisabana.edu.co

This article is based on the master's thesis completed by Díaz and Ipia Salinas (2020). Professor Cuesta Medina was the thesis advisor.

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Díaz, I. J., Ipia Salinas, C., & Cuesta Medina, L. (2023). Shaping better futures: Inside-out Colombian English language teachers' gaps and practices. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 65–79. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.95969

This article was received on May 21, 2022 and accepted on April 8, 2023.

Introduction

English teaching institutions often struggle to ensure their students' expected English proficiency levels when they complete their degree programs. Literature reveals that factors such as social contexts, language, and culture—among others—are closely associated with this situation. It is widely known that English programs and higher education institutions instill diverse roles in English language teachers, such as facilitators, managers, and evaluators (Archana & Rani, 2017), to cope with the barriers that negatively influence students' learning process. Therefore, it is paramount that institutions prepare competent teachers who have the training, knowledge, and expertise required to teach the target language. This cannot be successfully attained if preservice English language teachers do not receive solid pedagogical foundations during their teaching education phase. The teaching practicum is especially relevant for them to be exposed to controlled and guided teaching practices. After graduation, teachers face an additional hurdle: a lack of opportunities for continuing professional development to keep up to date with educational trends and to meet the current challenges of a globalized society (Wong & Dubey-Jhaveri, 2015).

This manuscript summarizes the findings of a large-scale qualitative study that explored the perceptions of English language teachers who belonged to an English program in a Colombian public university regarding their teaching knowledge and practice and the appropriate use of the technological resources at their disposal. We hypothesize that the displayed teaching gaps are associated with a faulty preservice teacher education that hinders the enactment of the participants' teaching persona and, therefore, their own students' learning processes. The study aims to broaden the scope of studies that explore phenomena associated with the fosterage of strategic teaching and learning practices in the English language classroom, guided by the research question: What challenges hinder efficient language teaching practices in a group of Colombian English language teachers?

Theoretical Considerations

Teacher Education

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (n.d.), teacher education refers to the formal training provided to pre- or in-service teachers designed to equip them with the knowledge, attitude, behavior, and skills required for teaching at a specific level. Very often, the concept of teacher education is used interchangeably with that of professional development. For the OECD (2009), effective professional development is continuing; includes training, practice, and feedback; and provides adequate time and follow-up support. Professional development facilitates how teachers share their expertise and experience more systematically. However, it is necessary to point out that while teacher education implies formal learning (e.g., pursuing undergraduate or postgraduate studies), professional development is not restricted to formal endeavors, it includes individual or autonomous efforts (e.g., attending seminars, reading books, and researching).

Although teacher education has been technically classified into different models, it addresses specific components. These comprise subject knowledge (which includes cultural knowledge); pedagogical knowledge (e.g., knowledge about classroom management and language methods); and contextual knowledge, which refers to students' academic needs (Karakaş & Yavuz, 2018). Nonetheless, learning how to teach is not just absorbing theory. It is a process that links *thought* with *activity* in a given context by mapping out actions to be exercised under specific circumstances. Therefore, teacher education is most effective when teachers can collaborate with peers, experiment with teaching, know the students' learning expectations, make decisions and

take risks, and even reflect on the content they have to teach (Jiménez Raya, 2009).

Conversely, as Yates and Muchisky (2003) argue, the lack of accompaniment during their learning process prevents future teachers from becoming fully competent professionals. Omaggio and Shinall (1987) also contend that, although most teacher qualification programs must comply with language policies, it is paramount for those in charge of educating teachers to raise their awareness about the future challenges that could be experienced in school contexts.

On another note, Farrell (2019) brings into consideration two "inconvenient truths" (as he calls them) in teacher education. The first one illustrates the disjuncture between what teachers learn in a course and what they experience in a classroom. He indicates that this occurs because the teacher education courses are based on tradition rather than on the needs of future teachers. The second inconvenient truth corresponds to the nonexistent guidance to newly qualified teachers. Farrell mentions that some novice teachers experience great difficulties when, on their first day of work, they face the same challenges as their experienced coworkers. This usually leaves them helpless and brings severe classroom management limitations to the fore. Furthermore, Farrell highlights the limited contact between teacher education programs and their graduate students. In other words, during the first years of work, most novice teachers do not feel prepared to deal with real classroom situations, increasing hours of unpaid work, school trips, marking, large-size classes, and so on, a common situation in schools and universities worldwide.

In Colombia, Cabeza et al. (2018) draw attention to the teaching education circumstances in the country. They mention that most teacher education programs do not place an emphasis either on teaching practice or on pedagogical research. As a result, most elementary and high school teachers lack the practical and theoretical foundations to become professionally competent. In that sense, improving educational standards is crucial; well-qualified teachers imply optimal student progress.

In a similar view, Viáfara González (2007) points out the importance of providing powerful tools that enrich the pedagogical and professional competences of preservice teachers. One such tool is reflection, which allows preservice teachers to make informed decisions about their practice.

Delving Into Teachers' Knowledge

Although the concept of teacher knowledge has been long studied, proposals like Shulman's (1987) are somehow restrictive. His typology includes seven types of teacher knowledge: content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge; curriculum knowledge; pedagogical content knowledge; knowledge of learners; knowledge of educational contexts; and knowledge of educational aims, purposes, and values. However, we believe it is time to recognize that teachers should not be seen as individuals who merely possess pedagogical, theoretical, and context knowledge. In addition, teachers' diverse backgrounds and copious life experiences should be considered, as these shape their identities and philosophies of teaching. Thus, teachers can better comprehend their teaching as a situated practice within their educational contexts.

In language learning, progress has been made over the last decades as conceptions have moved from a merely instrumental view of language to a focus on sociocultural perspectives that allow for the construction of new knowledge (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Freeman & Richards, 2008). Furthermore, there has been a reconceptualization of the role of the language, the language users, and how teachers' agency leads to professional confidence to produce positive outcomes (Freeman, 2018). No longer should ELT teachers' classroom performance be measured in terms of their mastery of specific language or teaching skills; instead, the outcomes in English language teacher

education can be depicted in terms of the teachers' confidence to use those language/skills in practice.

Our perspective to conceive a knowledge base in language teacher education aligns well with Freeman (2018) and also incorporates Blömeke and Delaney's (2012) view, fusing the twofold nature of teachers' professional competence (cognitive abilities and affective-motivational characteristics). We agree with such a transformative way of knowledge-base generation, which can be achieved "through changes in the field of knowledge and through the changes driven by the work that knowledge supports" (Freeman, 2018, p. 5). We also advocate for acknowledging the teachers' teaching identities and paths, highlighting the value of pedagogical knowledge in teacher education. Two definitions will be used in the context of this study:

1. Pedagogical knowledge alludes to the knowledge of theories of learning, general principles and approaches to instruction and assessment, as well as planning aspects such as lesson structure, classroom organization and management, student motivation, and other knowledge of learners (e.g., Shulman, 1987; Grossman & Richert, 1988).
2. Pedagogical content knowledge embodies the knowledge of teaching and learning specific to a topic and grade level (Gess-Newsome, 2015).

In light of these considerations, we believe that for the context of English language educators, the concept of teacher education has to go beyond knowledge, strategies, and tactics to embody a well-rounded construct that addresses the fusion of pedagogical knowledge (with a dual focus on the teacher and the learner dimensions), pedagogical content knowledge (including the specificities of second and foreign language learning), and the intersections with the teaching context and culture. Teacher education shall surpass the normative nature that has long ruled its action and should allow for the strengthening of teachers' capacities to learn and fuse personal, academic, and professional knowledge. It is essential to understand that teacher education is a context-dependent construct that evolves with geopolitical and social transformations and with the needs of the target communities of learners and teachers.

Method

This study followed an exploratory qualitative methodology framed upon an interpretative paradigm. The participants in this study were 15 English language teachers from a public university in Colombia. Their ages range from 23 to 50 years old. They all hold bachelor's degrees in Modern Languages, and two have postgraduate studies. Fourteen participants graduated from the same university and bachelor's program. Furthermore, the significant variation, according to age and professional teaching experience, gave us a broader perspective on teaching concepts and stances.

The study revolves around the University's English extension program, which consists of eight levels, each with 80 hours of face-to-face instruction. Each level is addressed to a particular population: children (Levels 1–2) to adults (Levels 6–8). By the end of the program, students are expected to acquire a B1 English level of proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001).

Due to unfavorable results in the English-level achievement of the graduate students, the coordination of the program decided to take further action. As a result, class observations and follow-up sessions were held with some of the teachers in the program. In the findings of this pilot phase, it was possible to diagnose some existing difficulties for these teachers. Consequently, it seemed reasonable to inquire about why students do not reach the English level they are supposed to and determine any possible correlations among the teachers' identified difficulties.

Data Collection and Analysis

Two instruments were used for data collection: a questionnaire and a focus group. The questionnaire had five sections that inquired about the participants' professional development and the methodologies in language education, mainly regarding the use of 21st-century skills. The focus group was developed to obtain in-depth responses. The grounded theory approach was used to perform a comparative analysis of collected data and the construction of a theory based on those data. We triangulated the data and implemented face and content validity measures.

Findings and Discussion

Inside Out: Personal and Context-Based Hurdles for Teachers

The central inquiry leading this study lies in teachers' difficulties regarding the lack of language proficiency, practice-based challenges, and teacher awareness. Table 1 summarizes the categories and subcategories that we identified.

Language Proficiency

Bearing in mind that the common denominator among the participating teachers is their profession as English language teachers, it was found that one feature of their performance that seems to worry everyone is language proficiency. In agreement with Murdoch (1994), the most valued aspect of a non-native English speaker teacher is high *proficiency in the target language*. Hence, based on the results found, we argue that this area demands further development not only because proficiency is associated with the command and mastery of the language but also because it relates to the teachers' "pedagogical and methodological preparation, experience, philosophy of teaching

Table 1. Categories and Subcategories of the Study

Core category	Categories	Subcategories
Inside out: Personal and context-based hurdles for teachers	Language proficiency	Proficiency in the target language
	Practice-based challenges	The gap between theory and practice
		Inefficient mentoring experiences
		Classroom management
		Technology-assisted learning scenarios: A road not paved yet
	Language teacher awareness	Language learning: A call to teach
		Language teachers' cultural awareness
		Teachers' role in promoting learners' self-awareness

and social commitment" (Cárdenas Ramos & Chaves Varón, 2013, p. 329).

When asked about their perceived proficiency in teaching English, the participants acknowledged diverse sources to support their answer, including assessing their proficiency through international exams (TOEFL, IELTS) and their experience and practice speaking English. Nonetheless, it is not just a matter of having language skills since most reported difficulties are associated with language use and endorsement of academic language. his language command is also connected to the teachers' confidence in the classroom and the learners. In other words, an inefficient command of the language, be it English in this case, "can affect the self-esteem and professional status of the teacher and interfere with simple teaching procedures. It can keep the teacher from fulfilling the pedagogical requirements of a more communicative approach to language teaching" (Ghasemboland & Hashim, 2013, p. 891).

During the focus group, the participating teachers mentioned that nowadays, there are colleagues who are still not language proficient, and even so, they manage to graduate from their bachelor's programs and get a job. Their inquisitorial claim suggests the imbalances between successful development in the classroom and poor language proficiency. Similarly, Cuesta Medina et al. (2019) report that it is pivotal for teachers to be aware of the pitfalls in the language. They can use appropriate learning strategies to monitor language learning or other professional development opportunities.

The participants of this study visualize the strengthening of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) as a professional obligation because it empowers teachers and learners to access knowledge in numerous scenarios (Teng Fatt, 1991). Thus, it is essential to pinpoint how some strategies teachers implement might be favorable when they consistently work to improve their language skills. For instance, it is recommended to spend some time in an English-speaking country, establish more straightforward plans such as always using English (Cárdenas Ramos & Chaves Varón, 2013), and utilize diverse sources of input in the form of mass media, music, video, podcasting, and movie streaming services.

Based on the previous assertions, we argue that teachers cannot focus only on achieving their target language level performance but "what the act of language teaching entails" (Cuesta Medina et al., 2019, p. 46). Furthermore, their mission is to find strategies that help them tackle their difficulties. They have a myriad of options ahead to overcome their language pitfalls and understand the dynamic nature of the English language by taking advantage of the opportunities that are made available through publishing companies, private and governmental organizations, and local Secretaries and Ministries of Education while being able to make decisions to accommodate both formal and informal learning scenarios.

Practice-Based Challenges

Gap Between Theory and Practice. The gap between theory and practice was identified when teachers experienced a vast difference between the knowledge they acquired during their university teacher education and the reality they faced in the classroom. They talked about the teaching pedagogies they received as learners since those were not as simple to implement as they seemed. When they started their teaching practicum, some teachers felt that the teaching knowledge imparted at university was inappropriate for facing real-life classroom challenges. Findings revealed that most participants experienced frustration during their practicum experience because they faced two significant challenges: teaching and learning to teach, a trend documented by Hudson et al. (2008).

The world the participants had built around effective teaching and learning practices conflicted

with the teaching reality they were exposed to. Hence, our findings match previous studies (Anderson, 2004) in that the participants, during their practicum, were not prepared. During the teaching practicum, teachers experimented with different challenges, like classroom management issues, and they realized they required more than applying learned theories to take control of the class and construct compelling teaching experiences. In this sense, it is paramount to consider that observing sessions and reading about teaching is not enough for preservice teachers; they should be allowed to practice the theory they learn before entering the practicum stage (Calderhead, 1988).

In like manner, Fajardo Castañeda and Miranda Montenegro (2015) imply that during the teaching practicum, the knowledge that preservice teachers gain when faced with the complexities of actual classroom practices lets them reinforce and enhance their positive attitudes, motivation, and engagement toward the teaching profession. Finally, a noticeable gap shown by teachers was related to the traditional methodologies used by their mentors, which they echoed in their classrooms. At the beginning of their teaching practice, their classes emphasized learning grammatical structures and isolated vocabulary lists. At times, this focus lasted long until they realized the emphasis should be on communication. However, they recognized that it was a long route of discoveries dictated by the whole teaching experience rather than by the learning they had formerly acquired. Findings in Liu's (2005) study reveal that novice teachers tend to adopt and follow their teachers' strategies and methods when they were school and university learners.

Inefficient Mentoring Experiences. Mentoring, viewed as a reciprocal learning exchange between a mentor and a mentee, fosters self-development and helps mentees build on their autonomy and agency, alleviating self-doubt and feelings of anxiety about meeting teaching expectations, especially in situations where mentees are new to the teaching profession (Cuesta Medina, 2022). Hence, mentoring suggests the existence of a scaffolded partnership environment.

When examining the participants' past mentoring experiences, more issues associated with their practicum (during undergraduate education) were considered. At that time, each participant's experience was shaped by the particularities of their practicum: the school context in which they had to teach; the assigned practicum supervisor; and the monitoring, support, and encouragement received by their mentors (i.e., the head teachers at the schools). The one common point was that all the participants had high school teachers as mentors during their practicum.

For instance, Teacher 3 argued that his mentor was conscious of his needs and helped him to handle and surpass specific situations that occurred in the classroom. This is precisely what Wang and Odell (2007) emphasize about the role of mentors. They are in charge of helping mentees to succeed in the possible pitfalls that can overshadow their skills and overall performance. Mentors also help build attitudes toward the teaching world, reinforcing the teachers' identity as educators.

Unfortunately, not all participants' experiences were as satisfactory as that of Teacher 3. Most teachers complained about the poor feedback they received from their mentors. For example, Teacher 11 said he just received one short observation about his performance in the classroom, which, consequently, was not enough to answer his teaching concerns.

On the other hand, Teacher 14 mentioned that her mentor sporadically visited the school to observe her classes. She indicated that the classroom head teacher was the one who supported her in some specific instances. In Colombian practicum scenarios, mentors are generally assigned by the universities/programs where students pursue their degrees; however, in some instances, schools (or institutions) where students attend their practicum also assign their mentors, establishing a dual formative mentorship scheme.

A more critical case was exposed by Teacher 4, who expressed her impotence in handling discipline issues in the group under her charge. She notes: "I couldn't tolerate this situation anymore; [I felt that] I was wrong about choosing my career." Reflecting upon this, she alluded that this frustrating experience was mainly due to her mentor's lack of guidance and neglect. Hence, we assert that going through the practicum without proper scaffolding from a committed, effective, and competent mentor can significantly affect preservice teachers' perceptions and attitudes, leading them toward negative perceptions and judgments of their professional lives (Maphalala, 2013).

Teachers generally wished to have mentors who helped them improve and reflect on their teaching practices. They also would have liked to receive sufficient training concerning the possible populations and contexts assigned to them in their practicum. Accordingly, they recommended that teaching programs be more selective and careful when choosing mentors for preservice teachers since, as they consider, this role cannot be assumed just by a good teacher but by a capable professional with the training required to teach, guide, monitor, and encourage their mentees' teaching experiences (Orland, 2001).

Classroom Management. Classroom management has been "a pebble in teachers' shoes," as it represents a constant and significant challenge for teachers (Sánchez Solarte, 2019). The participants in our study are no exception; they have also experienced classroom management difficulties as one of the significant challenges in their careers.

Therefore, it is vital to understand what classroom management implies. Several authors agree that classroom management skills represent an effective learning environment (Çakmak, 2019; Marashi & Assgar, 2019; Şanlı, 2019). Through classroom management, teachers tailor the space and conditions in the classroom, monitoring the students' behavior and encouraging them to get involved in the classroom activities (Baş, 2019), as well as negotiating classroom rules with the students (Şanlı, 2019).

In addition to the existing gaps between theory and practice and our participants' inefficient mentoring practices, findings revealed other issues that affected their classroom management skills during their practicum. These were classroom size, poor teaching experience in classroom management skills, lesson planning, and teacher's additional roles.

The participants started having difficulties when they were aware of the large class sizes. As Teacher 4 said, "I wondered how I was going to manage such large groups: They included 40 to 45 children." This evidences that large classroom sizes represent, from the start, one of the most common struggles for novice teachers (Sánchez Solarte, 2019) in their new teaching context. This situation, however, seems to contradict what Teacher 11 asserted: "[Prior to the practicum] we did exercises based on possible situations we could face in the classroom." However, it is worth noting that no participant mentioned receiving explicit instruction on handling class size from their mentors.

Notably, the previous situation validates the notion that Simonsen et al. (2019) predicted regarding how unlikely it is for teachers to enter the teaching field with suitable classroom management preparation, eventually leading preservice teachers to frustration. Teaching skills improve with time and experience, so novice teachers should be given all the assistance they need before starting their careers. They are expected to be fully prepared to face classroom realities once they start formal teaching. For instance, Teacher 4 endorsed this idea concerning the lack of preparation, which symbolized her teaching experience. In her opinion, she would have liked to have more time in the practicum to do some research and to receive more guidance about all possible situations within the classroom; thus, she would have been better prepared to address difficult situations more successfully.

Additionally, participants mentioned the poor feedback from their teacher mentors regarding their classroom management skills; thus, they remained unsure if they were doing the right thing. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to recognize that the lack of knowledge about multifaceted aspects of classroom management (Baş, 2019) hinders the teacher's performance. In other words, we believe mentors are responsible for advising preservice teachers during the practicum, clearly indicating the multiple roles they are expected to perform within the classroom so that a lack of awareness in certain classroom matters does not hamper their work. In this sense, mentors also must instruct future teachers on handling the most common classroom situations.

Sánchez Solarte (2019) considers planning as one of classroom management's three principal dimensions. She explains that overpreparing is strongly suggested for novice and in-service teachers. This planning should include a clear goal meeting students' needs, specific roles, materials, equipment, how learners will interact, and which routines will be established (Collier-Meek et al., 2019). Following these routines avoids chaotic classrooms and thus creates a safe environment for learners, with effective time management. Furthermore, Sánchez Solarte (2019) suggests not to overreact or take things personally in situations like the one mentioned by Teacher 8: "My lesson plan never turned out the way I expected." This perfectly illustrates the sense of frustration that teachers might experiment when things turn out to be the opposite of what they had planned in the first place. However, it is necessary to understand that such things might happen, and it is okay as this allows teachers to improve their skills. The point here is not to overreact, take it personally, or lose sight of what came out correctly.

The last issue the teachers addressed was the teacher's additional roles in the classroom. The main concern was about parenting. Teacher 9 said:

> Honestly, I was never explained about parent management. I think it is essential to be taught how to deal with parents, how to set boundaries, because, sometimes, as they might look older, they think they can treat you with no respect.

In this regard, Ming-tak (2008) underlines parents' important role in the student's educational process. She sees the need to create good relationships with parents and invites teachers to give in, work with parents concerning similar goals, and share the responsibility for their children's learning. In the teaching practicum or the core curriculum, attention is rarely placed on parenting management.

Technology-Assisted Learning Scenarios: A Road Not Paved Yet. In the 21st century, the role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in second/foreign language teaching and learning scenarios is becoming crucial to grow and develop (Alkamel & Chouthaiwale, 2018), and everyday new and more robust technologies are built. Such fast technological emergence suggests a proper alignment to educational needs and contexts is nurtured. As some participants argued, the lack of knowledge and training regarding the use of ICT in the classroom is locking the path towards a broader vision of new tendencies in language education. To illustrate, the context in which the participating teachers work is equipped with several resources to implement ICT in the classroom. Besides the regular board, the teachers have a permanent internet connection, a projector, and a speaker in the classroom. There are also computer rooms, among other digital resources. However, all these technological resources are useless, considering that some teachers do not know how to take maximum advantage of these technological aids. So, they continue using traditional teaching methods where learning experiences for students may not be compelling (Arias Soto et al., 2011).

One of the questionnaire items referred to using ICT as a tool for teaching English. In this regard, some teachers argued their use of technology, referring to

the mandatory educational platform that enables them to share content and assess students. Conversely, many classes are based on the textbook assigned according to students' English level. When asked about using other educative webpages or technological resources for learning languages, most teachers limited their answers to some webpages to play games to learn vocabulary and others to listen to music. One participant (pursuing a master's degree in ICT) gave comprehensive, appropriate, and relevant information about ICT use in the classroom. Reflecting on this issue, teachers showed they were aware of the meaningfulness and usefulness of ICT for learning languages. Although they are doing their best to learn how to include ICT in their teaching scenarios, its application remains a source of tension for them (Bouziane, 2013). Notwithstanding, teachers report inadequacies in having vast knowledge about platforms for the educational delivery of courses and lessons, and many reported a lack of instructional design of activities for online/blended environments and content curation of tools and other sources.

Language Teacher Awareness

Drawing on the seminal work of Wright and Bolitho (1993), we argue that language awareness is an essential component of teacher education, as this allows teachers to gradually find a natural connection between their knowledge of the language and their teaching practices. This enables teachers to broaden their comprehension of language phenomena and the dimensions through which they will be studied, learned, and taught.

Most of the interviewed teachers coincided in their assumptions about their own experiences as learners and teachers. They reflected upon the vital role they play in students' learning and upon their own personal and professional growth. The discussion around this category allowed us to identify some concerns mentioned below.

Language Learning: A Call to Teach. When discussing the reasons to be an English language teacher, participants mentioned language learning as one of their most significant personal interests and the idea of becoming teachers to help others by sharing and transmitting their knowledge about the language. Some participants mentioned that their call to teach originated from their experience as language learners. Some others referred their call to teach to their family's teaching background, to which they were exposed since childhood. Notwithstanding the reasons behind the teachers' calling, this involves, as Palmer (1983) argues, the teachers' ability to identify and to be aware of their weaknesses and strengths framed within the more general understanding of who they are as persons, what they value, and their perceived place in the world. This consideration emphasizes the teachers' abilities to self-monitor and understand their inner world regarding thoughts, emotions, behavior, and personality.

Hence, we assert that participants know their role as teachers since they were committed to achieving effective student learning results. With this in mind, it is fundamental to identify one's calling to teach and be aware of the inner self (Kung, 2013). Said otherwise, participants acknowledge the role they play in their specific work environment. In this sense, they are led by the internal conscious identity that links their love for teaching with their personal and professional values, beliefs, goals, and motivations.

Language Teachers' Cultural Awareness. When asked about the reason for pursuing a career in language teaching, some teachers argued that their initial interest in studying languages was to learn about culture, education, and society; and, from a more psychological point of view, to understand people's perceptions about the world. Indeed, culture is critical in learning languages; they both are intricately connected and lose their significance if separated: "A language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of language" (Brown, 1981, p. 171). Consequently, when a

learner acquires a new language, they also acquire the culture of that language.

In the same line of thought, when referring to the development of 21st-century skills, teachers mentioned their commitment to teaching some cultural concerns. For instance, critical thinking skills are promoted in their classrooms when the lesson focuses on analyzing and comparing students' cultural backgrounds and those in which English is the official language. However, the need to continuously and systematically frame the lessons to align these goals to the expected competences and actions remains on the ground since the journey to embrace cross-cultural connections that lead to more solid policies and pedagogies towards multiculturalism is still under development.

Teachers' Role to Promote Learners' Self-Awareness. To approach this idea, teachers were asked to reflect upon the ideal profile for an English language teacher. Among their thoughts and the characteristics mentioned, they emphasized the importance of fostering learners' self-awareness in the classroom. They also alluded to the integration and promotion of meaningful learning among students, mainly when linking the class content with their personal lives (background, feelings, experiences, and memories). "One shall trust in students' own capacities and be able to learn about their realities" (Teacher 3). Through their reflection, it was possible to note that these teachers' thoughts revolved around the importance of helping learners become aware of their learning styles and preferences, as well as their weaknesses and strengths regarding language learning.

Conclusion

Our findings can serve as a departure point for tertiary-level institutions and faculty to endorse responsibilities for the growth of the teachers taking their programs and for teachers to transform and build new learning and teaching experiences based on their paths and the context in which they are immersed. In this study, we value how teachers' former learning experiences affect their practice. We believe that, although there is a constant urge for some teachers to improve their practice, not everyone recognizes the gaps to fill, be they due to their lack of experience and systematicity in self- and co-assessment processes, to insufficient exposure to such strategies (or systems) in their institutions, or to the discrepancy between theory and practice in real teaching contexts. The more aware and engaged teaching staff are of the importance of these inside-out practices, the more likely they will be to design compelling learning experiences. Nevertheless, the growth and effectiveness of teacher education programs depend on the long-lasting investment and actions of teacher educators and the educational systems granting their support. These must be well-defined and monitored and endure over time to ensure sustainability.

In addition, this study unveiled a common instrumentalization of language teacher education that focuses on language issues rather than on an integrative way of understanding, using, teaching, and learning the language. Therefore, the study also calls for quality assurance plans that enact change through assessment, monitoring, and support systems that promote strategic plans to overcome difficulties.

Literacy skills shall be a constant among teacher education programs. Hence, teachers and learners develop the confidence to create different communication forms and build specific learning scenarios that let them grow personally and professionally. At the same time, they engage in new modes of meaning-making, collaborating, and learning *with* and *from* others. Co-constructing with peers and mentors implies demystifying existing mentoring structures that exert unidirectional power actions that have mainly relied on the instructors, and instead, bridge existing gaps and trace connections with others around the globe and with new sources and ways to use and represent knowledge, especially when changes in the field of

language education have taken place due to the world geopolitics transitions. Policy-making shall support the endorsement of mentoring schemes in educational institutions, highlighting teachers' impact and gradual scaffolding as they learn to develop their confidence and agency in their personal and professional domains. Inter-institutional synergies can also be generated, building support ecosystems that help communities embrace collegial work and growth.

All in all, this signifies a fundamental action in the present times, in which the confinement caused by COVID-19 posed many challenges but also helped open many doors for optimizing remote teaching, learning, and the combination of blended and online systems. We should be aware of new, enhanced, unconventional learning scenarios where teachers and learners co-exist and co-design, calling for more accessible, more equitable ways to access education.

Further Research

Having identified the purpose of this study, we recommend concentrating on finding the existing correlations between the factors that hinder and boost efficient language teaching. In that sense, it would be enriching to turn this research study into a longitudinal one since the generalizability of the results would be limited. This change of direction could provide a closer approach to teachers' performance in managing and overcoming their difficulties. Another line of research could inquire about the differences between teachers working in public or private educational settings. Having information in this regard could illustrate the possible performance gaps that might exist among public and private university teachers (if any) and shed light on the curriculum reforms to be made in the teacher education programs, with a particular focus on the design and delivery of practicum courses and other core formative spaces across the curriculum. Lastly, further research should consider inquiring a bigger group of teachers nationwide (or globally) about the aspects they wish to be included in their teacher education programs so that there is an extended baseline to determine and follow up on the factors that boost efficient teaching (and therefore learning), as well as to help redefine teacher education practices.

References

Alkamel, M. A. A., & Chouthaiwale, S. S. (2018). The use of ICT tools in English language teaching and learning: A literature review. *Veda's Journal of English Language and Literature*, *5*(2), 29–33.

Anderson, J. W. (2004). *A study of preservice teacher exposure to technology in the college classroom and field experience* (Publication No. 3157887) [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Alabama at Birmingham]. ProQuest.

Archana, S., & Rani, K. U. (2017). Role of a teacher in English language teaching (ELT). *International Journal of Educational Science and Research*, *7*(1), 1–4.

Arias Soto, L. D., Buitrago Escobar, Z. R., & Pineda Báez, C. (2011). ICT in the professional development of EFL teachers: Perceptions and challenges. *Revista Folios*, (33), 25–42. https://doi.org/10.17227/01234870.33folios25.42

Baş, K. (2019). The relationship between classroom management skills and self-confidence of social studies teachers. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, *7*(4), 62. https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.7n.4p.62

Blömeke, S., & Delaney, S. (2012). Assessment of teacher knowledge across countries: A review of the state of research. *ZDM Mathematics Education*, *44*(3), 223–247. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11858-012-0429-7

Bouziane, A. (2013). ICT integration in language teaching: Some challenges. *The Tunisian English Language Teaching Forum*, *7*, 13–27.

Brown, H. D. (1981). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (1st ed.). Prentice Hall.

Cabeza, L., Zapata, Á., & Lombana, J. (2018). Crisis de la profesión docente en Colombia: percepciones de aspirantes a otras profesiones. *Educación y Educadores*, *21*(1), 51–72. https://doi.org/10.5294/edu.2018.21.1.3

Çakmak, F. (2019). The relationship between teaching experience level and the classroom management orientations of English language teachers. *Balıkesir Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, *22*(41), 75–88. https://doi.org/10.31795/baunsobed.581904

Calderhead, J. (1988). Learning from introductory school experience. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, *14*(1), 75–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/0260747880140106

Cárdenas Ramos, R., & Chaves Varón, O. (2013). English teaching in Cali: Teachers' proficiency level described. *Lenguaje*, *41*(2), 325–352. https://doi.org/10.25100/lenguaje.v41i2.4971

Collier-Meek, M. A., Johnson, A. H., Sanetti, L. H., & Minami, T. (2019). Identifying critical components of classroom management implementation. *School Psychology Review*, *48*(4), 348–361. https://doi.org/10.17105/SPR-2018-0026.V48-4

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge University Press.

Cuesta Medina, L. (2022). Mentoring teachers to research their classrooms: A practical handbook. *TESOL Journal*, *13*(2), 1–3. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.630

Cuesta Medina, L., Álvarez Ayure, C. P., Cadena Aguilar, A., Jiménez Bonilla, M. S., Maldonado Chacón, P. P., & Morales Pulido, V. (2019). Beyond the endorsement of reflection in language teaching and learning. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *21*(1), 42–63. https://doi.org/10.14483/22487085.13307

Díaz, I. J., & Ipia Salinas, C. (2020). *Overcoming teaching development barriers in English language teaching contexts* [Master's thesis, Universidad de La Sabana]. Intellectum Repositorio Universidad de La Sabana. http://hdl.handle.net/10818/43380

Fajardo Castañeda, J. A., & Miranda Montenegro, I. R. (2015). The paradox of the practicum: Affinity to and resistance towards teaching. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *20*(3), 329–341. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.v20n3a04

Farrell, T. S. C. (2019). 'My training has failed me': Inconvenient truths about second language teacher education (SLTE). *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, *22*(4), 1–16.

Freeman, D. (2018). Arguing for a knowledge-base in language teacher education, then (1998) and now (2018). *Language Teaching Research*, 24(1), 5–16. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818777534

Freeman, D., & Johnson, K. E. (1998). Reconceptualizing the knowledge-base of language education. *TESOL Quarterly*, *32*(3), 397–417. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588114

Freeman, D., & Richards, J. C. (Eds.). (2008). *Teacher learning in language teaching.* Cambridge University Press.

Gess-Newsome, J. (2015). A model of teacher professional knowledge and skill including PCK: Results of the thinking from the PCK Summit. In A. Berry, P. Friedrichsen, & J. Loughran (Eds.), *Re-examining pedagogical content knowledge in science education* (pp. 28–42). Routledge.

Ghasemboland, F., & Hashim, F. B. (2013). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their English language proficiency: A study of non-native EFL teachers in selected language centers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *103*, 890–899. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.411

Grossman, P. L., & Richert, A. E. (1988). Unacknowledged knowledge growth: A re-examination of the effects of teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *4*(1), 53–62. https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X(88)90024-8

Hudson, P. B., Nguyen, T. M. H., & Hudson, S. (2008). *Challenges for preservice EFL teachers entering practicum*. QUT Digital Repository. https://eprints.qut.edu.au/14517/1/14517.pdf

Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics: Selected readings* (pp. 269–293). Penguin.

Jiménez Raya, M. (2009). Teacher education for learner autonomy: An analysis of the EuroPAL contribution to a knowledge base. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, *3*(3), 221–238. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501220903404459

Karakaş, A., & Yavuz, E. (2018). A comparative analysis of English language teacher education programs in

Turkey and Malaysia. *Cumhuriyet International Journal of Education*, *7*(3), 287–306. https://doi.org/10.30703/cije.446313

Kung, S. (2013). The teacher's calling: A window to the teacher's motivation to teach. *Te Iti Kahurangi: School of Education e-Journal*, *1*, 20–29.

Liu, M.-H. (2005). *EFL student teachers in Taiwan: Exploring their learning to teach in a junior high school context*. ResearchGate. https://bit.ly/3FnlAtp

Maphalala, M. C. (2013). Understanding the role of mentor teachers during teaching practice session. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, *5*(2), 123–130. https://doi.org/10.1080/09751122.2013.11890069

Marashi, H., & Assgar, F. (2019). EFL teachers' effective classroom management and learners' anxiety and learning strategies. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, *7*(2), 65–82.

Ming-tak, H. (2008). Working with parents to create a positive classroom environment. In H. Ming-tak & L. Wai-shing (Eds.), *Classroom management: Creating a positive learning environment* (pp. 165–181). Hong Kong University Press. https://doi.org/10.5790/hongkong/9789622098886.003.0009

Murdoch, G. (1994). Language development provision in teacher training curricula. *ELT Journal*, *48*(3), 253–265. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/48.3.253

OECD. (2009). *Creating effective teaching and learning environments: First results from TALIS*. https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264068780-en

Omaggio, A. C., & Shinall, S. L. (1987). Foreign language teacher education: Current practices and an assessment of needs. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *490*(1), 147–162. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716287490001011

Orland, L. (2001). Reading a mentoring situation: One aspect of learning to mentor. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *17*(1), 75–88. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(00)00039-1

Palmer, P. J. (1983). *To know as we are known: Education as a spiritual journey*. Harper Collins.

Sánchez Solarte, A. C. (2019). Classroom management and novice language teachers: Friend or foe? *How Journal*, *26*(1), 177–199. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.26.1.463

Şanlı, Ö. (2019). An evaluation of the teachers classroom management problems. *Educational Research and Reviews*, *14*(8), 282–292. https://doi.org/10.5897/err2019.3712

Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, *57*(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.57.1.j463w79r56455411

Simonsen, B., Freeman, J., Myers, D., Dooley, K., Maddock, E., Kern, L., & Byun, S. (2019). The effects of targeted professional development on teachers' use of empirically supported classroom management practices. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, *22*(1), 3–14. https://doi.org/10.1177/1098300719859615

Teng Fatt, J. P. (1991). Achieving communicative competence: The role of higher education. *Higher Education*, *22*, 43–62. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02351199

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (n.d.). Teacher education. In *UNESCO Institute for Statistics glossary*. http://uis.unesco.org/node/3079669

Viáfara González, J. J. (2007). Student teachers' learning: The role of reflection in their development of pedagogical knowledge. *Cuadernos de Lingüística Hispánica*, (9), 225–242.

Wang, J., & Odell, S. J. (2007). An alternative conception of mentor–novice relationships: Learning to teach in reform-minded ways as a context. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *23*(4), 473–489. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.12.010

Wong, L. T., & Dubey-Jhaveri, A. (2015). *English language education in a global world: Practices, issues and challenges*. Nova Science Publishers. https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.4479.1129

Wright, T., & Bolitho, R. (1993). Language awareness: A missing link in language teacher education? *ELT Journal*, *47*(4), 292–304. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/47.4.292

Yates, R., & Muchisky, D. (2003). On reconceptualizing teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly*, *37*(1), 135–147. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588468

About the Authors

Ingrit Juliana Díaz is an English teacher at Universidad del Cauca (Colombia). She holds an MA in English Language Teaching from Universidad de La Sabana (Colombia). Her research interests include teacher education, curriculum design, online education, and professional development for English language teachers.

Catalina Ipia Salinas works as an English teacher at Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca (Colombia). She holds an MA in English Language Teaching from Universidad de La Sabana (Colombia). Her research interests include teacher education, professional development, online education, and curriculum design.

Liliana Cuesta Medina is an Associate Professor, Director of the master's programs in English Language Teaching at the School of Education, and Director of Outreach and Engagement at the School of Communication at Universidad de La Sabana (Colombia). She holds a PhD in English Philology from UNED, Spain. Her main research areas include teacher education, computer-assisted language learning, CLIL, international education, collaborative online international learning, and self-regulation.

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.101608

A Preservice Teacher's Experiences Teaching English Abroad: From ESL to EFL

Experiencias de una profesora en formación con la enseñanza del inglés en el extranjero: cambio de contextos

M. Martha Lengeling
Universidad de Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico
Melanie L. Schneider
University of Wisconsin, Whitewater, USA

Although an international teaching practicum is assumed to broaden teacher candidates' cultural, linguistic, and pedagogical knowledge, the nature of this growth and its relation to teacher education practices have yet to be fully explored. Using a sociocultural perspective and drawing on the concepts of teacher socialization and a growth mindset, this qualitative case study investigates the experiences of a U.S. preservice teacher teaching English in a Mexican primary school. Analysis of teaching observations, the participant's reflections, and an interview revealed the teacher's growing sensitivity to the teaching context. She gradually recognized the differences between teaching English in the two countries, prompting a shift in pedagogy to one more compatible with teaching English as a foreign language. The importance of teaching context on teacher socialization is also examined.

Keywords: growth mindset, international preservice teacher, sociocultural perspective, teacher socialization

Aunque se supone que la práctica profesional de enseñanza de estudiantes internacionales amplía el conocimiento cultural, lingüístico y pedagógico de los docentes en formación, la naturaleza de este crecimiento y su relación con las prácticas de formación docente no se han explorado completamente. Desde una perspectiva sociocultural basada en la socialización docente y la mentalidad de crecimiento, este estudio de caso investiga las experiencias de una maestra estadounidense en formación que enseña inglés en una escuela en México. El análisis de datos reveló la creciente sensibilidad de la maestra hacia el contexto educativo y su reconocimiento gradual de las diferencias en la enseñanza del inglés entre dos países, lo que representa un cambio de su postura pedagógica. Se discute la importancia del contexto en la socialización docente.

Palabras clave: maestro en prácticas internacionales, mentalidad de crecimiento, perspectiva sociocultural, socialización docente

M. Martha Lengeling https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2570-5002 · Email: lengelin@ugto.mx
Melanie L. Schneider https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6497-2157 · Email: schneidm@uww.edu

This has been reviewed and approved by an authorized representative of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB), Protocol Number: IRB-FY2020-2021-99. In addition, written informed consent for the publication of her details was obtained from the study participant.

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Lengeling, M. M., & Schneider, M. L. (2023). A preservice teacher's experiences teaching English abroad: From ESL to EFL. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 81–94. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.101608

This article was received on March 13, 2022 and accepted on March 8, 2023.

Introduction

Opportunities for study abroad are often limited for foreign language teacher candidates[1] in the US and Latin America, who typically have a prescribed course of study with little room for out-of-country travel and study. International teaching practicum can offer teacher candidates the dual benefits of living and teaching abroad while meeting at least partial requirements for teacher licensure at their home universities. It is often assumed that an international teaching practicum broadens teacher candidates' cultural, linguistic, and pedagogical knowledge. However, this growth and its connection to teacher education practices must be fully understood. Using a combination of survey research and qualitative methods, multiple studies have examined the impact of international field experiences on student teachers' personal growth as teachers and on their subsequent teaching (e.g., Egeland, 2016; Shiveley & Misco, 2015; Stachowski & Sparks, 2007). Several other studies describe study abroad or teaching experiences in a Latin American context by U.S. preservice teachers, primarily in Mexico (Marx & Pray, 2011; Santamaría et al., 2009; Sharma et al., 2013; Wessels et al., 2011) or in the US (Viáfara-González & Ariza-Ariza, 2015), where Colombian student teachers were working and teaching abroad. These studies used qualitative approaches to data analysis.

This case study also uses a qualitative paradigm to investigate the experiences of a U.S. student teacher teaching English as a foreign language (EFL)[2] in a primary school in central Mexico. A unique aspect of this study is that it draws on the concepts of teacher socialization (M. C. Bronson & Watson-Gegeo, 2008; Zeichner & Gore, 1990) and a growth mindset (P. Bronson & Merryman, 2009; Dweck, 2007, 2017) from a sociocultural perspective (Moll, 2014; Ohta, 2017) to explore this student teacher's experience. In the following sections, we summarize the rationale for using a sociocultural approach and then outline the two theoretical concepts that guided the study. Next, we present our findings after describing the methodology and framework for analyzing the data. Finally, we discuss these results and consider the implications for understanding the impact of international teaching practicums and teacher socialization on educators and preservice teachers.

Review of Literature

This study takes a sociocultural approach to study one preservice teacher's learning-to-teach experience in central Mexico. After outlining the major tenets of a sociocultural perspective, we examine two constructs that guided our study: teacher socialization and a growth mindset.

A Sociocultural Approach

Within ESL/EFL teaching, there is a rich tradition of research on teacher education that has evolved from the transmission of skills and techniques (e.g., Celce-Murcia, 1991) to a sociocultural perspective that emphasizes how the context of language teaching influences teacher thought and behavior (Freeman, 2016; Freeman & Johnson, 2004; Freeman & Richards, 1996; Johnson & Golombek, 2016). This approach is grounded in the belief that knowledge is constructed socially (Moll, 2014; Vygotsky, 1986) through dialogue and interaction with the help of others or through tools such as journals or reflection. Socially constructed interactions affect how we see and understand the world within the situated contexts in which they occur (Vygotsky, 1986). For student teachers, common sources of socially constructed interactions occur with

1 In this article, we will use the terms "preservice teacher," "student teacher," and "teacher candidate" interchangeably to refer to teachers who are beginning to teach.

2 EFL refers to English teaching in a context where the dominant language is not English—such as Spanish in Mexico—while English as a second language (ESL) describes English language teaching in a context where English is the dominant language, such as in the United States.

cooperating teachers, university supervisors who observe the student teacher, and other student teachers. Reflective tools and interactions between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher and between the student teacher and other observers provided rich language data sources in this study.

Teacher Socialization

Teacher socialization is an ongoing process that starts with exposure to teaching in pre-student teaching field experiences, continues throughout the teaching practicum and one's teaching career, and ends when practicing teachers retire. It describes how preservice teachers become participating members of a group of teachers and learn classroom practices and shared norms of behavior (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Through teacher socialization, career-entry teachers learn valuable lessons on "how to teach and all the demands associated with teaching" (Farrell, 2001, p. 49) about the specifics of teaching contexts, norms of interaction, classroom routines, and other daily practices. Staton (2008) characterizes teacher socialization as "a complex, communicative process by which individuals selectively acquire the values, attitudes, norms, knowledge, skills, and behaviors of the teaching profession and of the particular school or educational culture in which they seek to work" (p. 4990). This process begins with field experiences as part of their coursework for preservice teachers in Mexico and the US. It culminates in the teaching practicum leading to certification as a teacher. Additionally, as part of teacher socialization, preservice teachers of language must learn the pedagogy of language teaching and language use, or when and how to use the target language.

Mesa-Villa (2017) notes that teacher socialization has consequences if the process of socialization is incomplete or not accepted: "[It] involves a critical transition in which teachers may reject, accept, or adapt to the school culture, and its outcomes permeate teachers' feelings and determine their decision of staying in an organization or in the profession" (p. 85). When preservice teachers ignore or are unaware of the accepted norms of behavior, the potential consequences can be severe. This critical transition is also relevant to international student teaching programs outside the student teacher's familiar teaching contexts. International student teachers need to be aware of differences between their home and host countries in school culture and norms of behavior, which contribute to teacher socialization. To summarize, learning how to teach and understanding school culture are tasks shared by all beginning teachers, but learning and using the target language is also part of the socialization process for language teachers.

A Growth Mindset

The effects of growth vs. fixed mindsets on learning were introduced by psychologist Carol Dweck (2007, 2017; Yeager & Dweck, 2012) and popularized in psychology and education by Dweck and others (e.g., Bronson & Merryman, 2009; Romero, 2015). A growth mindset is characterized by the belief that intelligence is not static and can be developed through personal effort, practical strategies, or help from others when necessary (Romero, 2015). It is not the same as believing that effort alone, especially doing more of the same, is enough. It also requires a willingness to make changes and discern strategies that are likely to be effective. In contrast, a fixed mindset is the belief that intelligence is inborn and unchangeable (you are either smart or not). In schools, the importance of a growth mindset lies in its consequences for how students experience school and respond to adverse conditions and unexpected setbacks. As Romero (2015) reports,

> Researchers have found that one way to help students develop a growth mindset is by teaching them about neuroscience evidence that shows the brain is malleable. In these programs, students learn that the brain is like a muscle—when you challenge it, it gets stronger.

> Importantly, students also learn that sheer effort is not enough. The right strategies and advice from others are equally important for strengthening the brain. (p. 3)

A positive consequence of a growth mindset is that students are more likely to be resilient when faced with challenges. Resilience overlaps with a growth mindset and has been widely studied by teachers. It can be defined generally as "the work teachers do to positively adapt to adverse situations" (Clarà, 2017, p. 83). A growth mindset, however, goes beyond productive adaptation to viewing intelligence as dynamic and malleable. Because teacher candidates who teach abroad frequently encounter expected and unexpected challenges, both constructs—growth mindset and resilience—are relevant, but our focus here is on a growth mindset. Student teachers may respond differently when confronted with teaching challenges abroad, exhibiting a growth mindset in some challenges but not in others.

Method

In this qualitative case study, we explore the experiences of a student teacher, "Elena," in two contexts: the US, where she completed her teacher education program, and Mexico, where she taught EFL as a student teacher for eight weeks. As noted by Richards (2003), two tenets of qualitative research are to "study human actors in natural settings, in the context of their ordinary, everyday world" and to "seek to understand the meanings and significance of these actions from the perspective of those involved" (p. 10). We aimed to understand Elena's development as a preservice teacher in Mexico, including her challenges and responses to them.

Three techniques provided the data for the case study: (a) weekly reflections, (b) teacher observations, and (c) a semi-structured post-teaching practicum interview. These sources triangulated the data (O'Donoghue & Punch, 2003). Elena's eight weekly reflections, which were part of her assignments during her stay in Mexico, consisted of a general description of her EFL teaching context (Week 1), a narrative of highs and lows for that week (Weeks 2–3, 5–7), a mid-point reflection (Week 4), and an end-of-teaching-abroad reflection (Week 8). The weekly reflections were emailed to the U.S. university supervisor, who responded with comments and questions. Three teacher observations were completed in Mexico, two by the in-country program director in Mexico and one by the university supervisor while on a professional visit there. The university supervisor conducted the semi-structured interview in early December (audiotaped and later transcribed) after Elena had returned to the US to finish her teaching abroad (see Appendix for the interview questions).

Participant

At the start of the study, Elena was an Elementary/Middle Education and ESL undergraduate at a medium-sized U.S. university in the upper Midwest. Elena's mother is from Hungary, and her father is from Argentina. Elena grew up in the US, speaking Hungarian, English, and Spanish. Her multilingual and multicultural background differed from most students at the university, who are predominantly white monolingual English speakers. However, she attended schools in English and considered herself to be English-dominant. In the fall, Elena spent the first nine weeks of the semester in Mexico, where she taught EFL for eight weeks. After teaching abroad, she returned to the US for the remaining nine weeks of her teaching practicum in an ESL context, completing the practicum in January of the following year.

Teaching Context

Elena's school placement was at a public primary school in a medium-sized city in central Mexico, where she taught EFL in 50-minute periods in Grades 5 and 6. She worked closely with an experienced cooperating teacher in EFL, "Carlos." In contrast with educational settings in the US—where classrooms usually have all the materials at the teacher's disposal—EFL teachers in this state of Mexico travel from classroom to classroom, carrying their materials with them. Thus, they must carefully consider the time when setting up the classroom.

Data Analysis

After collecting the data at the end of the teaching practicum, we followed Clarke and Braun's (2013) thematic approach for analysis. This flexible approach consists of six steps: (a) familiarization with the data, (b) coding, (c) searching for themes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining and naming themes, and (f) writing up (Clarke & Braun, 2013, p. 121). We read through the three data sources various times to understand the data. Next, we coded the data and we came up with relevant patterns. Then, we conferred to discuss and compare themes and identify any patterns before defining the final themes for the write-up. Three global themes were identified: (a) the beginning of teaching abroad, (b) lessons learned while teaching abroad, and (c) the recognition of contextual differences in teaching. Using the same thematic approach discussed above, several subthemes within the themes of "lessons learned" and "contextual differences" were also identified and discussed in the next section.

Having established these themes, we recognized that they suggest a chronological order, with examples illustrating the first theme, "beginning to teach," occurring before the two other themes. However, examples of "lessons learned" did not always occur chronologically before the third theme, "contextual differences." For the sake of convenience, however, they are presented in this order in the following sections: (a) the beginning of teaching abroad, (b) lessons learned while teaching abroad, and (c) the recognition of contextual differences in teaching.

Results and Discussion

The three themes mentioned above helped organize the reporting of results and frame our discussion of the key findings. Because we looked at growth mindset and teacher socialization in one student teacher over time, it logically follows to report the results chronologically, even though the three themes do not consistently follow this order. Limitations of the study are considered at the end of this section.

The Beginning of Teaching Abroad

As a second-year student at her university, Elena first heard about international preservice teaching options in a class that was part of her ESL licensure program. It captured her interest and remained an ongoing goal throughout her undergraduate program. As she shared, "when I was a sophomore, someone brought it up…and I remember hearing [about] it and thinking, 'I have to do that; I *have* to do it'" (Interview).

Once in Mexico, Elena started her teaching abroad experience in the first week of September by observing EFL classes taught by her cooperating teacher, Carlos. From the start, she noticed the small size of the classrooms and the large number of students: "There is not a lot of extra space, sometimes barely enough for the teacher to squeeze past the students to get to the other end of the room" (Weekly reflections, Week 1). She also noted the minimal classroom materials. In her words,

> The students are required to have a notebook specifically for English lessons, an English-Spanish dictionary, and a "desire to learn." . . . This I see as a positive challenge, one that will make me think outside of the box when it comes to lessons and assignments. (Weekly reflections, Week 1)

In the excerpt above, Elena shows early evidence of a growth mindset (Dweck, 2007, 2017; Yeager & Dweck, 2012) in embracing classroom challenges and openness to creative solutions. Most classrooms Elena and Carlos taught were overcrowded, making movement and group work difficult. Classrooms were equipped with limited materials, such as textbooks and whiteboards. Interactive whiteboards were sometimes present but often not functional. In the EFL context, Elena was flexible and worked hard to find alternatives.

During her first week, Elena observed classes and began to help out with teaching. Then, she experienced a critical incident, which influenced

her teaching from that point on. Widely used in research on teaching, critical incident narratives are stories that are accessible and instructive, often related to what happens when expectations go awry and preconceived notions no longer hold (Farrell & Baecher, 2017; Tripp, 1993). Although critical incidents in teaching can lead to self-questioning and discomfort in individuals, they can also promote critical learning and paradigm shifts that spur new ways of thinking and behaving.

Knowing that her 5th and 6th graders had taken EFL classes since Grade 1, Elena assumed that their English level would be above a basic level and talked to them at a higher level. She soon realized that this expectation did not hold:

> The first week I was handed the classes. I was very unaware of how low the students' English level was. I had observed it, but I didn't think it would impact my teaching so much. And I got up in front of the classes thinking, if I spoke just slower, they would understand. And it was a big mistake on my part. (Interview)

Elena was caught off-guard and then questioned her assumption that students would understand her instruction in English if she only spoke more slowly. Realizing her misconception, she soon used some additional strategies to remedy the situation: speaking more straightforwardly and using cognates, gestures, and repetition. By the third week, she had incorporated the strategies of gesture and mime into her teaching, as evidenced in the first teacher observation of her classes. In subsequent observations, her teaching included using more straightforward terms, cognates, and repetition. This critical incident and Elena's subsequent adjustments show that she was able to identify and implement more effective strategies to promote student understanding, another indicator of a growth mindset. In the next section, we explore the lessons that Elena learned.

Lessons Learned While Teaching Abroad

In Week 8, Elena was asked to reflect on her teaching abroad experience and identify lessons that struck her as valuable. The theme of "lessons learned" arose partially from her responses to this final weekly reflection but also includes other "lessons" that she recounted earlier in her weekly reflections and later in the interview. Within "lessons learned," we identified three subthemes: adapting to teaching in Mexico, putting a spin on teaching, and less is more.

Adapting to Teaching in Mexico

During her eight weeks of teaching abroad, Elena gradually moved from a U.S.-based ESL pedagogy to a foreign language pedagogy (EFL) grounded in the local public-school context. This shift was partly due to adapting to the teaching conditions in an EFL context: large class sizes, small classrooms, and limited technology. Her adaptations were evident in her weekly teaching reflections and post-teaching practicum interview. We focus on the practices of "signing off" and "making do" to illustrate Elena's shifts in pedagogy.

In the second week, Elena signed students' notebooks to indicate they had completed the homework. Signing off was done to "credit" students for completing the homework without necessarily evaluating it, a practice born out of necessity. EFL teachers in this Mexican school and other public schools often teach five classes of 35–45 students, or at least 175 students, until mid-day, and then, in some cases, teach at a second school in the afternoon where they have a similar load. As Elena shared: "This week I checked the homework assigned from the previous week, which was to complete the sentence 'I should be patient when...', and then had the students, if they wanted to, share their sentences aloud to their classmates" (Weekly reflections, Week 2). Signing off was a practice Elena continued to use throughout her teaching, as evidenced in the second and third teacher observations.

Another practice that Elena adopted, again out of necessity, was "making do." As an example, the EFL teaching materials had not yet arrived well into the second month of the school year, which is not uncommon in Mexico (Ramírez-Romero & Sayer, 2016). Elena's response, not surprisingly, was one of tempered frustration.

> I will continue to prompt the students in English and begin working alongside Teacher Carlos more in the upcoming week, focusing on lessons and themes in their workbooks (which have not arrived yet). If the books still have not arrived by next week, Carlos and I will work through his book and do examples and practice on the board, in their English notebooks, and verbally as a whole group, in smaller groups, in pairs, and individually. Basically, we will work with what we have to keep the students learning and practicing . . . a challenge I continue to find to be a test of educational creativity and patience, true to the month's very value. (Weekly reflections, Week 2)

This excerpt shows Elena trying to put the best construction on a pedagogical challenge: teaching without books. Later, when reflecting on her teaching abroad experience, Elena would positively view these bare-bones teaching conditions. Both the practices of signing off and making do illustrate how the Mexican teaching context affected Elena's socialization as a teacher; she began to adopt local practices into her teaching. Although some of these practices were rooted in necessity, adopting local practices in the first few weeks of preservice teaching provided early evidence of Elena's gradual pedagogical shift from ESL to EFL, an important outcome of her teaching in Mexico.

Putting a Spin on Teaching

While adapting some of her teaching practices to a Mexican context, Elena remained committed to using her approaches and ideas. An early example of putting her spin or stamp on teaching was choosing to teach almost entirely in English. As she shared in her Week 2 reflection,

> My goal is to teach an entire lesson solely in English and have the students responding in English as well. I do not think it is too much to aim for, but it will be a challenge to get the students comfortable enough with the language to do so on their own.

However, at times, teaching only in English proved to be a struggle. Her students were accustomed to using Spanish and producing only a minimum of English in their English classes. As she noted in her Week 3 reflections,

> I know, however, that it is difficult to adjust to working . . . solely in a new language, but it still surprises me how many of the students understand and answer in Spanish but will refuse to use English. I think they have become accustomed to my cooperating teacher reverting to Spanish when he sees that the students are not understanding or putting in the effort to try to use their English during the lesson. I fear that if I use my Spanish the way my [cooperating teacher] uses his, that the students will stop attempting to use English all together since they will think that I know enough Spanish to use that instead.

After reading this reflection, the university supervisor encouraged Elena and offered ways to support her decision to use mostly English in her classes. Later in her Week 3 reflections, Elena acknowledged that she sometimes reverted to Spanish "in times of real need," which shows how she revised her pedagogical goal to teach in English only so that students could understand instructions. Elena clearly articulated this modification in teaching in her Week 5 reflections:

> I wanted them to feel as comfortable as possible using whatever English they did know, and whatever Spanish I knew. This worked well, and with each week, the students opened up more and more, offering answers and

> translations to one another and to me. They successfully language brokered the classes so that everyone could understand and participate.

Elena found a middle ground where she and the students sometimes used Spanish to maximize comprehension and class participation, showing Elena's flexibility.

A second example of putting her spin on teaching occurred in Week 7 when Elena incorporated student/student dialogues and teacher modeling with Carlos into her teaching.

> The students, in all sessions, completed a partner activity involving a sample dialogue as well as a self-created dialogue that they shared with their partner(s). . . . Students were able to ask and answer simple questions about each other's families by using their family terms, pronouns, and family trees throughout their conversations with each other. These conversations happened after Carlos, and I modeled the dialogue I had written on the board for the students to be able to follow along with. (Weekly reflections, Week 7)

From this reflection, it was evident that Elena was learning to use paired dialogues with students and to use her cooperating teacher to model oral language together. Previously, these were not standard practices in the EFL classes at the school.

By Week 3, Elena was ready to go beyond what her cooperating teacher was modeling and put her personal stamp on teaching. At the same time, however, she was mindful not to deviate too far from her cooperating teacher's style.

> I do not want to stray too far from my cooperating teacher's teaching style since he will be left with the class for the rest of the year once I leave for [the US], but I do want to try some things out [on] my own to see how they do. . . . The plan is to follow Carlos' activity and lesson guide and the text chosen by the government while incorporating my own spin on how to present the information and assignments to the students, and I can't wait to see how it goes. (Weekly reflections, Week 3)

Elena knows that her teaching time in Mexico is limited. However, she still wants to explore her practice and experiment, showing her sensitivity to the teaching context and her cooperating teacher.

Less is More

The belief that "less is more" refers to Elena's reliance more on her "self" than on teaching resources, which became a guiding principle in her teaching. In the interview, she revealed:

> I feel like I would be able to teach without being given anything, any supports. I liked that you had to feel like you were free-falling a little bit as a teacher [in Mexico]. I feel like there is a lot of support [from others], which is really helpful, but I *like* that I feel more empowered now. I feel like I would be able to teach without being given anything, any supports.

The supports, or resources she refers to above, include those commonly used in her university education courses and U.S.-based field experiences: textbooks, supplemental materials, manipulatives, technology, and videos, as well as other colleagues. Later in the interview, she acknowledged that adjusting to her "self" as the primary support system in teaching, that is working "out of your brain," was at least partly due to limited resources available to EFL teachers in the school:

> There's a lot that's given to us [in the US]. And in Mexico, there's a lot of adjustment to working just out of your brain and maybe a book that they give you, *one book*, and a whiteboard, or a chalkboard. (Interview)

In this last excerpt, Elena seemed to understand that she had to approach her teaching from a "less is more" standpoint instead of what she was used to in the US. She also realized that this reliance on "self"

occurs over time, requires personal effort and resilience (Romero, 2015), and must be experienced to learn. Over time, the challenges of adjusting to teaching in the EFL context of Mexico, although creating temporary setbacks, strengthened her self-efficacy as a teacher and helped hone her teaching skills.

Recognition of Contextual Differences in Teaching

The last theme that we identified, the recognition of contextual differences in teaching, is divided into two topics: (a) differences in teaching in Mexico and the US and (b) the role of technology in teaching.

Differences in Teaching in Mexico and the US

After returning to the US, Elena identified several ways that teaching differed in Mexico and the US, singling out the structure of classes and classroom discipline as two main differences. Elena described EFL classes in a public school in Mexico as structured by the curriculum and the textbook and, more importantly, limited by the heavy workload of many EFL teachers.

> I think Carlos worked at three different schools, so let's say 120 students per school, three schools…that's a *lot* of students, a lot of work to grade, to take home, to look at. So, I think the English teachers realize that it's easiest if they just follow their curriculum that's given to them. And do just the minimum amount of work to get them through their jobs, which also then reflects onto the students because the students then see they can get away with not doing their work. (Interview)

Elena understood how the challenging teaching context in Mexican public schools affected pedagogical decisions. In such a teaching environment, the textbook becomes the syllabus for a class, and the heavy workload of EFL teachers in public primary schools drives what can realistically be taught, assigned, and graded.

In addition to workload, the issue of English as a non-graded subject in primary schools also emerged. This impacted how students viewed English as a school subject area and their motivation to complete assigned homework in her Grade 5–6 classes. As Elena noted,

> I think the expectation of completing homework on time is not set in place, especially with English. To finish homework in an English classroom really yields no positive or negative consequence for the students, grade-wise…because a lot of the times, if there is a homework assigned, which it rarely is…they will just get a check even if the homework is right or wrong. (Interview)

The above two excerpts underscored Elena's awareness of the problematic effects of English as a non-graded subject and teachers' heavy workload on teachers and students. For teachers, these effects include constraints on their ability to teach the established curriculum and to assign and grade homework, and for students, the motivation or incentive to complete it.

In another area, classroom management, Elena saw stark differences between Mexican and U.S. classrooms. She was able to reflect on these differences after returning to the US to complete her preservice teaching.

> In Mexico, they don't give the students a chance to act out. And if the students do act out, then the teachers are very quick to point out the student who is creating the disturbance. They'll make it very uncomfortable for that student and the students around them. I think it's one way of getting the students to stop. Here [in the US] I have found that classroom management techniques are kind of whole-class scale, so it's not really pointing the finger, but it's just kind of letting the whole class know that someone is creating a disturbance, but I'm not going to say who, because you don't want to make them feel uncomfortable…the disciplinary issues in Mexico are very teacher-oriented, like it's their discretion how they use their classroom management, whereas in the States I think it's very controlled by the school, by the system. (Interview)

This excerpt points to perceived cultural differences in responding to disruptive classroom behaviors. It is important to note that these are Elena's perceptions; cultural differences between the two countries are more complex. As a young preservice teacher in Mexico, Elena necessarily based her perceptions on her teaching experiences there, without the more nuanced understandings that come with a more extended stay. In Mexico, Elena saw that the misbehaving student is often called out and that the teacher calls on the collective good will of students to curb the problem behavior. She observed that calling out a student in the US is not sanctioned. Instead, a more systematic approach is emphasized through school- or district-wide classroom management programs or by incentivizing good behavior. This is another example of how teacher socialization and norms of classroom behavior change in different teaching contexts.

Elena related these differences in how teachers react to disruptive behaviors in Mexico and the US to her perceived differences in the level of respect ascribed to teachers in the two countries. As she stated,

> The level of respect for teachers in the United States is horrendously low compared to what I saw in Mexico. Kids might talk in Mexico, they might goof around, they might be funny because they're kids, and—if the teacher commands their attention—they will listen. They'll listen again; they're easy to regroup. The issue is the number, the quantity of students. (Interview)

This comment again speaks to Elena's perceived cultural differences between the two countries. We see a student teacher grappling with the intersections between teacher workload, homework and grading policies, cultural and individual differences in classroom management, respect for teachers, and their impact on student learning. By the end of her teaching practicum, she is no longer thinking of it only in glowing terms and has acquired more nuanced views of teaching in Mexico and the US.

The Role of Technology in Teaching

The role of technology and access to it varies widely in schools across the globe. This is also the case in Mexican as well as U.S. schools. During her stay in Mexico, Elena was immersed in classrooms with limited technology access (e.g., "one book and a whiteboard"). At the end of the interview, she shares her view on the role of technology in teaching:

> I think that technology, if used correctly, can be very, very helpful within a classroom. But not even having access to it, and still teaching…effectively, that, I think, is the true test to see if you would be ready to teach at all.

Elena's view is unexpected and surprising as part of the "plugged-in" generation. Far from being committed to technology in the classroom and its importance as a teaching tool, as many of her peers would be, she assigns it a secondary, almost peripheral role. For Elena, teaching is primary. We see this in her brief description of "non-Chromebook days" when teaching back in the US.

> I feel now that, with the preservice teaching that I'm doing, every student has a Chromebook, and I feel more comfortable teaching the days without the Chromebook at all. . . . Because when they have their computers, I see that the students get distracted, they're not doing what they need to do, they're not on task, they're not focused, they're not following the lesson plan we created. (Interview)

This is the voice of a student teacher who has learned not to rely on technology for teaching but to focus on the realities of the EFL context. It is also a comment on the distraction and potential limits of learning with electronic devices, mainly if not used optimally.

How did Elena arrive at this rather unconventional attitude towards technology in education, especially for a young teacher? We can only speculate, but we believe it is partly related to her limited access to technology during her teaching in Mexico. She learned by necessity to do without, so she used this to hone her teaching skills. She considered learning how to teach independently, a

strength no one could take away. This shows a confident, willing-to-work, and resilient beginning teacher in the early stages of teacher socialization, where she becomes aware of classroom practices (Zeichner & Gore, 1990).

Limitations of the Study

In this case study, we have sought to portray Elena in a richly detailed manner through the twin lenses of (a) her voice in the weekly reflections and the post-student teaching interview and (b) our descriptions and perceptions in the teaching observations. In several ways, however, Elena is not a typical student teacher from a regional U.S. university in the Midwest and may not represent her predominantly white, monolingual student-teacher peers. She is multilingual (in varying degrees) in English, Hungarian, and Spanish; she is an experienced international traveler; and she possesses a degree of personal confidence unusual in preservice teachers that enabled her to meet substantial teaching challenges with resilience.

Because this research is a single case study, the findings cannot be generalized to other student teachers. However, Elena's challenges as a student teacher are typical of public schools in Mexico and other similar countries: small classrooms, large class sizes, and limited access to materials and technology. Her responses to these challenges show the range of possibilities that student teachers can experience in an EFL context in public schools in Mexico. Further research could expand the number of student teachers studied in Mexico or other countries, contributing to its generalizability.

Conclusions and Implications

Using a sociocultural perspective, this article explored the experiences of a US student teacher carrying out her teaching practicum in Mexico and how she adapted to the challenges of teaching abroad in an EFL context. A sociocultural approach emphasizes how a locally situated context influences thought and behavior, in this case, the thought and behavior of a beginning student teacher in a public primary school in Mexico. In the data, we found a complex evolution of a beginning teacher educated in the US but began the teacher socialization process in an EFL context in Mexico (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). She became aware of the daily timetable and teaching routines, which included moving from classroom to classroom. She was challenged by the different teaching contexts (overcrowded classrooms, limited materials, and the low English level of her students). She changed her teaching practices to meet her students' needs, reflecting her ability to adapt to the changing teaching context and a growth mindset (Dweck, 2007, 2017).

Realizing the need to go beyond her university coursework and resources, Elena shifted her pedagogical stance from one rooted in ESL to one more compatible with the EFL setting. Two critical shifts in belief were that students should be exposed to and expected to use more English and that in classrooms with limited access to materials and technology, "less is more." These changes prompted Elena to reflect on her knowledge and belief system from an ESL perspective and take on a more proactive role as a teacher. She adjusted her teaching to an EFL context, starting from an ESL pedagogical base. Through self-reflection on her knowledge and belief system and her cooperating teacher's help, she adapted her teaching practices in many ways, including signing off, making do, and using cognates, gestures, and games. In addition, Elena developed her decision-making abilities, reflectivity, and confidence in teaching, as well as a greater awareness of her students' home culture and learning preferences. From these experiences and lessons learned, she became a much stronger teacher with a solid teaching and reflective skills repertoire, demonstrating her developing growth mindset and ability to navigate entry into the teaching profession in an EFL context.

Although the lessons Elena learned in this case study are not generalizable, understanding the context of her teaching in a Mexican public-school setting is relevant to other student teachers, teacher educators, and teacher supervisors at home and abroad. For student teachers, this study provides valuable insights into teaching in a

country from which the most significant proportion of English learners in the US come. Of crucial importance is teachers' awareness of their students' home cultures and preferred learning contexts and how both can affect learners' classroom behaviors, such as the willingness to interact with others. As part of the teacher socialization process, teacher educators and teacher supervisors can encourage teacher candidates to learn about their future students' home cultures, norms of behavior, and school settings to understand how immigrant students' experiences at school in their home country can affect their learning and expectations in the adopted country. Another possibility is to explore in-depth the differences and similarities between EFL and ESL during conversations of teacher education and even come up with possible solutions for challenging scenarios.

Because opportunities for international teaching are increasing, we encourage teacher educators and supervisors to host discussions of ESL vs. EFL teaching contexts so that teacher candidates better grasp the complexities between the two. Understanding the differences between these two contexts will help prepare beginning teachers to develop the necessary teaching skills, decision-making tools, reflectivity, and resilience to meet the challenges of teaching.

References

Bronson, M. C., & Watson-Gegeo, K. A. (2008). The critical moment: Language socialization and the (re)visioning of first and second language learning. In N. H. Hornberger (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of language and education* (2nd ed., pp. 2621–2633). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-30424-3_196

Bronson, P., & Merryman, A. (2009). *NurtureShock: New thinking about children*. Twelve (Hachette Book Group).

Celce-Murcia, M. (Ed.). (1991). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (2nd ed.). Heinle & Heinle.

Clarà, M. (2017). Teacher resilience and meaning transformation: How teachers reappraise situations of adversity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *63*, 82–91. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.12.010

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, *26*(2), 120–123. https://bit.ly/3ApGpjU

Dweck, C. S. (2007). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Ballantine Books.

Dweck, C. S. (2017). *Mindset: Changing the way you think to fulfil your potential* (Updated edition). Little Brown Book Group.

Egeland, P. C. (2016). How does international student teaching shape the participants? Professional and personal perspectives and decisions. *The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*, *15*(2), 23–37.

Farrell, T. S. C. (2001). English language teacher socialisation during the practicum. *Prospect*, *16*(1), 49–62.

Farrell, T. S. C., & Baecher, L. (2017). *Reflecting on critical incidents in language education: 40 dilemmas for novice TESOL professionals*. Bloomsbury.

Freeman, D. (2016). *Educating second language teachers*. Oxford University Press.

Freeman, D., & Johnson, K. E. (2004). Comments on Robert Yates and Dennis Muchisky's "On reconceptualizing teacher education." Reader react . . .Common misconceptions about the quiet revolution. *TESOL Quarterly*, *38*(1), 119–127. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588261

Freeman, D., & Richards, J. C. (Eds.). (1996). *Teacher learning in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (2016). *Mindful L2 teacher education: A sociocultural perspective on cultivating teachers' professional development*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315641447

Marx, S., & Pray, L. (2011). Living and learning in Mexico: Developing empathy for English language learners through study abroad. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *14*(4), 507–535. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2011.558894

Mesa-Villa, C. P. (2017). The socialization of a novice teacher of English: Becoming an agent of change. *How Journal*, *24*(1), 83–100. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.24.1.318

Moll, L. C. (2014). *L.S. Vygotsky and education*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203156773

O'Donoghue, T., & Punch, K. (Eds.). (2003). *Qualitative educational research in action: Doing and reflecting*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203506301

Ohta, A. S. (2017). Sociocultural theory and second/foreign language education. In N. Van Deusen-Scholl & S. May (Eds.), *Second and foreign language education* (3rd ed., pp. 57–68). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02246-8_6

Ramírez-Romero, J. L., & Sayer, P. (2016). The teaching of English in public primary schools in Mexico: More heat than light? *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *24*(84), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.24.2502

Richards, K. (2003). *Qualitative inquiry in TESOL*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230505056

Romero, C. (2015, July). *What we know about growth mindset from scientific research*. Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University. https://bit.ly/3CtHwlh

Santamaría, L. J., Santamaría, C. C., & Fletcher, T. V. (2009). Journeys in cultural competency: Pre-service U.S. teachers in Mexico study-abroad programs. *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, *3*(1), 32–51. https://doi.org/10.1080/15595690802584166

Sharma, S., Rahatzad, J., & Phillion, J. (2013). How preservice teachers engage in the process of (de)colonization: Findings from an international field experience in Honduras. *Interchange*, *43*(4), 363–377. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10780-013-9182-2

Shiveley, J., & Misco, T. (2015). Long-term impacts of short-term study abroad: Teacher perceptions of preservice study abroad experiences. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, *26*(1), 107–120. https://doi.org/10.36366/frontiers.v26i1.361

Stachowski, L. L., & Sparks, T. (2007). Thirty years and 2,000 student teachers later: An overseas student teaching project that is popular, successful, and replicable. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, *34*(1), 115–132.

Staton, A. Q. (2008). Teacher socialization. In W. Donsbach (Ed.), *The international encylopedia of communication* (pp. 4990–4994). Wiley-Blackwell and the International Communication Association (ICA). https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405186407.wbiect016

Tripp, D. (1993). *Critical incidents in teaching: Developing professional judgement*. Routledge.

Viáfara-González, J. J., & Ariza-Ariza, J. A. (2015). From awareness to cultural agency: EFL Colombian student teachers' travelling abroad experiences. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *17*(1), 123–141. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v17n1.39499

Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). *Thought and language* (E. Hanfmann & G. Vakar, Trans.). MIT Press.

Wessels, S., Holmes, M., & Herrera, S. (2011). The role of preservice teachers' meaning perspectives and schemes in a study abroad experience. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, *6*(2). https://doi.org/10.2202/2161-2412.1089

Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, *47*(4), 302–314. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2012.722805

Zeichner, K., & Gore, J. (1990). Teacher socialization. In W. R. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: A project of the Association of Teacher Educators* (pp. 329–348). Macmillan.

About the Authors

M. Martha Lengeling holds an MA in TESOL (West Virginia University, USA) and a PhD in Language Studies (Kent University, UK). She teaches at the Universidad de Guanajuato and is a member of the National System of Researchers (*Sistema Nacional de Investigadores*).

Melanie L. Schneider is an Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin - Whitewater (USA), where she coordinates the ESL/Bilingual Education Licensure Program and advises the Student Teaching in Mexico Program. She is interested in collaborations between institutions of higher education and school districts and teacher identity development in new and practicing teachers.

Appendix: Post-Teaching Practicum Interview

1. Reflect back on the pros and cons of the practicum in Mexico. What were the pros and cons?
2. Think of the process of being observed by two supervisors, working with your cooperating teacher in an international context, and preparing materials for the edTPA [an evaluation instrument for preservice teachers published by Pearson]. How did that go for you?
3. Were there any critical incidents that pushed you to make changes in your teaching practice? If so, explain.
4. What are 2–3 things you learned about yourself or about your teaching in Mexico?
5. What kinds of knowledge are needed to teach EFL successfully to upper elementary students in a Mexican school?
6. How do these types of knowledge compare to the U.S. context for teaching ESL in elementary or middle schools?
7. How do expectations for behavior and classroom management practices in the Mexican school compare to those of U.S. elementary or middle schools?
8. Do you have any recommendations for future teachers who would be placed in a similar school in Mexico?

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.103003

The Enactment of the Colombian National Bilingual Program: Equal Access to Language Capital?

La implementación del Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo en Colombia: ¿acceso igualitario a capital lingüístico?

Diego Cardona-Escobar
Institución Educativa Académico, Cartago, Colombia
Melissa Barnes
La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia
Marc Pruyn
Monash University, Melbourne, Australia

Drawing upon Bourdieu's concept of *capital*, this article examines the enactment of the *Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo* (National Bilingual Program), a policy that aims to provide Colombian students equal opportunities to learn English. In this exploratory, sequential mixed-methods study, data were collected from teachers and students from three Grade 5 classrooms of public schools in Colombia. The findings revealed that the plan's differentiated enactment generates unequal access to opportunities to build language capital and unequal levels of academic language achievement among the three schools. We argue that the enactment of the plan to equalize opportunities and achievement and therefore build the language capital of Colombian students is obstructed by existing funding structures.

Keywords: Colombia, educational equality, English as a foreign language, language capital, language policy, policy enactment

Basándose en el concepto de *capital* de Bourdieu, este artículo de investigación exploratoria, secuencial y mixta examina la implementación del *Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo*, una política que tiene como objetivo brindar a los estudiantes colombianos oportunidades igualitarias para aprender inglés. Los datos se recolectaron en tres aulas de grado quinto de tres escuelas públicas colombianas. Los hallazgos revelaron que la implementación diferenciada del programa implica un acceso desigual a oportunidades de construir capital lingüístico y niveles desiguales de logros académicos entre las tres escuelas. La implementación del programa para proveer igualdad de oportunidades y logros para construir el capital lingüístico de los estudiantes colombianos se ve obstaculizada por las estructuras de financiamiento actuales.

Palabras clave: capital lingüístico, Colombia, igualdad educativa, inglés como lengua extranjera, política lingüística, promulgación de políticas

Diego Cardona-Escobar https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9166-5128 · Email: diego.cardonaescobar@ieacademico.edu.co
Melissa Barnes https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3090-2585 · Email: melissa.barnes@latrobe.edu.au
Marc Pruyn https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5965-4303 · Email: marc.pruyn@monash.edu

This article is based on the dissertation completed by Cardona-Escobar (2022). Professors Barnes and Pruyn were the dissertation supervisors.

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Cardona-Escobar, E., Barnes, M., & Pruyn, M. (2023). The enactment of the Colombian National Bilingual Program: Equal access to language capital? *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 95–110. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.103003

This article was received on June 3, 2022 and accepted on April 16, 2023.

Introduction

While not ubiquitous, some language policies are increasingly being introduced globally to address educational concerns surrounding equality and equity (Cardona-Escobar et al., 2021; Murray, 2020). While both state and national governments create macro-level policy frameworks, these are operationalized by local actors who turn these macro-policies into practices that align with their context's needs (Vanbuel & Van den Branden, 2021). Research suggests that teachers interpret, contextualize, or enact language policies (Ball et al., 2012) based on their experiences, ideologies, and agency (Hornberger & Johnson, 2011; Zuniga et al., 2018). Many national language policies in countries where English is primarily taught as a foreign language aim to reform English learning by providing increased opportunities to learn English in primary school classrooms (Cardona-Escobar et al., 2021; Nguyen, 2011; Qi, 2016). It is argued that creating opportunities for learning English or developing language capital equips young people for the 21st century (Ministerio de Educación Nacional [MEN], 2016; Murray, 2020).

In Colombia, most of the objectives and goals of English language policies have been defined concerning English language proficiency for both students and teachers. These policies have been primarily designed to graduate high school students with a B1 proficiency level in English (according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, CEFRL) and high school teachers achieving a B2 proficiency level alongside the appropriate knowledge to teach the language. However, these goals have remained elusive. This has served as a justification for designing *new* language policies (Bastidas, 2017; Cadavid Múnera et al., 2004; McNulty Ferri & Usma Wilches, 2005; Usma, 2009a).

Another common thread of Colombian language policies is the homogenization of school curricula, teachers' methodologies, and assessment practices, which not only challenges schools' and teachers' autonomy but also produces technologies of accountability. As some of the language policies have been driven by different political agendas rather than by a needs analysis of the English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) community (Gómez Sará, 2017; Usma, 2009a, 2009b), some reforms of the last decade overlap. Additionally, most decisions have been made with a top-down approach, in which the MEN and international institutions have focused on ideal planning, ignoring the contextualized reality of EFL public instruction.

In Colombia and elsewhere (Barnes, 2021; Cardona-Escobar et al., 2021; Qi, 2016), EFL policies have focused on increasing English learning opportunities for young people. One of the *National Bilingual Program* (PNB, in Spanish) policy texts, Colombia's current English language policy, outlines that one of its goals is to improve:

> the coverage and quality of the educational system . . . so that Colombia gets closer to high international standards and achieves equality of opportunities for all citizens. . . . *The Suggested Curriculum of English for Kindergarten and Primary School* is a concrete element that aims to achieve equality of opportunities. (MEN, 2016, p. 35, emphasis in original, translated from Spanish)

Thus, this paper explores the enactment of the PNB in three public schools, particularly examining how the program aspires for all children to have the same opportunities. To achieve this, we must understand how schools and teachers enact policy, mainly how the English language is employed, understood, and promoted within language classrooms.

Foreign Language Exposure and Use in the Classroom

Scholars have argued that language proficiency is influenced by *exposure* to the language (De Wilde et al., 2020; Fhlannchadha & Hickey, 2019) and students'

active *use* of the language within the classroom (Thomas & Roberts, 2011); students are given increased opportunities to learn the target language if they have increased exposure and opportunities to use it inside the classroom. In a Spanish-English bilingual program in a U.S. school, Ballinger and Lyster (2011) found that while students tended to speak with peers in English, their teacher's language choice shaped their decision to use English or Spanish. Teachers' and students' use of their L1 and L2 in the classroom was influenced by teachers' beliefs about language and language learning (Barnes, 2021; Mellom et al., 2018; Zuniga et al., 2018) and their perceptions of their proficiency in the target language (Van Canh & Renandya, 2017).

Teachers' beliefs and experiences with language learning can impact their views on how L1 and L2 should be considered and used within classrooms. Many scholars argue that teaching and learning can be influenced by the belief that communication is most effective when only one dominant language is employed (Budach, 2013; Vanbuel & Van den Branden, 2021). Such ideologies are often shaped by teachers' monolingual biases (Barnes, 2021; Mellom et al., 2018). While it is widely agreed that L1 should never be excluded from language classrooms, the percentage of language use between L1 and L2 can vary and depends on teachers' perceptions of students' L2 proficiency levels (Budach, 2013). Teachers tend to primarily use students' L1 for instructional and classroom activities if they feel the students have limited L2 proficiency. Further empirical evidence suggests that teachers' L2 proficiency influences their active use of L2, with teachers with less confidence in using L2, utilizing it less for instruction (Van Canh & Renandya, 2017).

Current English Language Policy Landscape in Colombia

The PNB initiative was issued in 2014, and its aims were defined in terms of English language proficiency achievement, which is based on levels (A1–A2 = basic user, B1–B2 = independent user, and C1–C2 = proficient user) established by the CEFRL scale (Council of Europe, 2001). The policy states that students should achieve an A1 proficiency level by the end of primary education. Within the policy, the government committed itself to ensuring that Colombia would be the most educated country in Latin America by 2025. Based on this goal, a study was conducted in 2014 by the Ministry of Education and a U.S. firm to highlight the challenges of English language instruction and learning in Colombia (MEN, 2014). Some of the difficulties that the MEN found included the English language proficiency of teachers and students. According to the report, 54% of high school graduates had the English proficiency level of someone who has never been exposed to the language. A new program was released in 2015 to strengthen the policy of the PNB: the *Programa Nacional de Inglés* (National Program of English; MEN, 2014).

The PNB included a set of comprehensive guidelines that included the *what to teach*, the *how to teach*, and the *why to teach* of EFL public education, from kindergarten to Grade 11. Although the guidelines were labeled as "suggested," it was expected that all public schools would adopt or adapt them in their EFL planning and instruction (MEN, 2016). The policy guidelines highlighted the intricacies in which the documents play a role in how the policy was enacted in different schools.

Researchers and stakeholders have criticized the PNB. For instance, Ayala Zárate and Álvarez (2005) criticized the adoption of the CEFR since "not all Colombian schools have the same physical resources [as in Europe], technology, human resources, and enough governmental economic investment" (p. 15). Sánchez Solarte and Obando Guerrero (2008) also disapproved of standards development without schoolteachers' participation. They indicated that Colombian schools devoted, on average, only two hours of English instruction weekly, in

which students were not all the time exposed to the language, creating unfavorable scenarios for developing English language competences. Finally, teachers' proficiency continued to be a limitation, as MEN found out in a diagnostic test where 63% of English language teachers in Bogota still had a basic proficiency level (A1–A2), and only 14% had an advanced level (C1–C2) (Sánchez Solarte & Obando Guerrero, 2008, p. 191). Researchers even criticized the limited definition of "bilingualism" to the Spanish-English notion (de Zarate, 2007, as cited in Usma, 2009a).

Two objectives of the PNB are of immediate interest to the present study. First, the reform is framed within the general goal of "promoting educational equality and mak[ing] English language teaching and learning seen as a strengthening tool for the education of 21st-century Colombian students" (MEN, 2016, p. 7). Second, they set as one of their purposes to "ensure . . . an *equitable* treatment for all the population exposed to exclusion, poverty, and the effects of inequality" (MEN, 2016, p. 26, emphasis in original).

Although various studies in Colombia have critically reviewed the enactment of the PNB (Benavides, 2021; Bonilla Carvajal & Tejada-Sanchez, 2016; Valencia, 2013), the current research study is, to our knowledge, the first study that focuses explicitly on the equality and equity gaps the policy attempts to address.

Capital Building

This study draws upon Bourdieu's (2006) concept of *capital*, defined as the intertwined connections between an individual's cultural values, social networks, economic resources, and social conditions. *Capital* encompasses the assets individuals possess and value, as shaped by what is valued in the context or *field*. Bourdieu (1992) acknowledges language as a form of *symbolic capital* that provides individuals access to materials and educational opportunities. Individuals enrich other forms of capital by gaining access to resources, education, and employment opportunities through their *language capital*. It is a cycle in which social agents' *symbolic* and *language capital* (English and Spanish bilingualism, in this case) give them access to economic means that individuals use, successively, to invest in their symbolic and language wealth.

The possession of different types of *capital* also contributes to the homogenization of social groups in distinctive classes (Moore, 2008). Framed by this conceptualization, learning English as an international language is recognized socially in Colombia by its cultural and symbolic value and the economic prospects it potentially provides (MEN, 2014). Learning English is socially perceived as a form of *capital* by students and teachers, and how it is built through learning opportunities by the participating schools is of central interest to this study.

Previous scholarly work in Colombia has employed Bourdieu's concept of *capital* to explore the agency and role of teachers (Guerrero-Nieto & Quintero, 2021), the use of symbolic power to institutionalize discourses around policy (Guerrero, 2010), and critically analyze the ideologies behind EFL policies (Valencia, 2013). We build on these previous studies by employing Bourdieu's concepts to problematize students' equal access to *language capital* when enacting the current EFL policy. Acknowledging that policy is translated, interpreted, and contextualized in various ways in schools (Ball et al., 2012), we explore how Colombia's current language policy reform—to bridge the equity gap through English language learning—is enacted in public schools. To achieve this, we are guided by one overarching research question and two sub-questions:

How is the *National Bilingual Program* enacted in three Colombian Grade-5 classrooms?

1. What opportunities are provided to students to build language capital in these schools?
2. What is the students' English language proficiency level in these schools?

Research Design

Context

This exploratory, sequential, and mixed-methods study is framed within Colombia's three approaches to foreign language schooling: non-focalized, focalized, and piloting bilingual. According to MEN (2014), over half of the Colombian public schools (52%) are *non-focalized*, providing one weekly hour of foreign language teaching in primary education and two hours in high school. *Focalized* schools provide more allocated hours to foreign language programs (from three to ten hours of English weekly), usually taught by teachers with academic language qualifications. *Piloting bilingual schools* provide a more rigorous program in which at least 50% of the school curriculum is delivered in English (MEN, 2018). Any school can apply to be either a focalized or a piloting bilingual school, which entitles them to further funding. Nevertheless, political support and leadership of all stakeholders are necessary for successful application.

We selected one non-focalized, one focalized, and one piloting bilingual school purposefully to explore the differences among the schools in terms of (a) the specific policy enactments that occurred across the institutions, (b) the students' and teachers' perceptions and views towards foreign language schooling, (c) the teachers' perceptions towards EFL policies, and (d) the teachers' backgrounds. We employed three criteria to choose the participating schools: (a) they represented the different English language program structures (i.e., non-focalized, focalized, and piloting bilingual); (b) they were public and offered both primary and secondary education; and (c) they belonged to three different education districts. We use pseudonyms to refer to each school: Belgrano, Santander, and Bolivar (located in low-middle-income areas). We focused on Grade 5 (one per school) as this is the last stage before secondary school (halfway through the students' primary schooling).

Belgrano School

Belgrano School is a non-focalized institution located in a municipality with 135,000 inhabitants and has approximately 1,980 students and 75 teachers across two campuses. The school provides two hours of English language classes per week as a non-focalized institution. Thus, Belgrano represents the most traditional public school in Colombia. The institution had access to regular state funding for English language initiatives in their school.

Santander School

Santander School is in the state capital with a population of 481,000 inhabitants and has a student body of approximately 1,550 learners and 60 teachers. It is a focalized institution and receives additional funding and resources from the state government to strengthen its English curriculum. Santander offers three hours of English weekly, has an English conversation club, and allows students to participate in bilingual camps with private institutions.

Bolivar School

Bolivar School is in a town of 35,000 people, enrolls about 1,700 students, and has approximately 85 teachers. At this piloting bilingual school, fifth graders take five hours of English classes a week, plus science, arts, technology, and physical education in English. English language teachers with previous experience working in such disciplines teach these classes.

Data Collection Instruments and Participants

An exploratory, sequential, mixed-methods study design was employed to explore language policy enactment in these three Colombian public schools through the sequential use of qualitative and quantitative data to inform subsequent data-collection phases. First, data were collected through student and teacher questionnaires, which were employed

to inform the design of student focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews with teachers. Data were collected in Spanish, and interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for further analysis. Interviews were translated into English by the first author and then spot-triangulated by two additional native Spanish speakers. Data collection was conducted in the schools between August 2019 and February 2020. Data were collected by the first author (concurrently across the three institutions) and then analyzed by the three researchers.

This study was approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (Project ID: 19751), and informed consent was obtained from all the principals. All names used here are pseudonyms.

Student and Teacher Questionnaire

A questionnaire was distributed to students (10–11 years old) in three Grade 5 classrooms and their English language teachers. While the student questionnaire focused on their access to resources (such as the internet, books in English, and opinions towards English), the teacher questionnaire aimed to unpack their professional and academic backgrounds and identify their years of experience and English proficiency level. Thirty-five students (out of 70) from Belgrano, 30 (out of 32) from Santander, and 14 (out of 27) from Bolivar completed the questionnaire. Three Grade 5 English language teachers participated in this study, one from each school. In addition to teaching 22 hours of classes per week, public primary school teachers also work on the committees that make institutional decisions, lead parent meetings, and provide written reports on students' achievements and behaviour. The participating teachers held permanent positions in their respective institutions: two had graduated from English language undergraduate programs and one from a childhood pedagogy program. Table 1 presents the professional and academic backgrounds of the participating teachers.

Student Focus Group

Twenty-one students from the three participating schools participated in a 45-minute focus group. The semi-structured interview protocol built upon information collected in the survey and focused on students' perceptions of (a) teachers' practices, (b) English language learning, and (c) opportunities to learn English outside the classroom (see Appendix). The headteacher chose students who participated in

Table 1. Teachers' Professional and Academic Background

Teacher	School	Professional background	Professional experience in ELT	Self-reported English language proficiency (CEFRL)
Laura	Belgrano	BA in Pedagogy	Five years	Non-proficient
Camila	Santander	BA in ELT MA in Education	22 years	Independent user (B1)
Gloria	Bolivar	BA in ELT MA in Education PhD in Education (1st year)	14 years	Independent user (B1)

Note. ELT = English language teaching. CEFRL = Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

the focus groups for their willingness to participate and freely share their views and experiences.

Teacher Interview

This study incorporated semi-structured teacher interviews that lasted approximately one hour. The interviews had five areas of inquiry that included questions about teachers' professional and academic background; their views, adoption, adaptation, and resistance towards their school's language policies; the institutional support they perceived; and their perception of student challenges and opportunities.

A1 Proficiency Test

A sample of the Cambridge Young Learners English Test (YLE A1 Movers), a standard A1 proficiency test, was administered to each participating student group. This one-hour paper-based test comprises four sections: listening, writing, reading, and speaking. Although the PNB does not implement the test to assess students, it provided an overview of the student's proficiency for this study. Twenty-eight students from Belgrano, 22 from Santander, and ten from Bolivar completed the test. The tests were marked according to the percentage of correct answers that the students had. The scores calculated were intended to provide a general picture of student achievement on the test.

The sections of listening, reading, and writing were marked twice by a research assistant and the first author of this article. Likewise, the speaking section of the test, administered by the research assistant and the first author, was audio-recorded to be marked a second time. Marks were compared, and whenever there was a difference between the two marks, which was rare, a consensus was reached.

Data Analysis

Given that the questionnaires were collected first, a preliminary analysis provided insights before conducting the student focus groups and individual teacher interviews. Additionally, an initial analysis of the students' interview responses was helpful when addressing particular aspects during the teachers' interviews. Data were collected by the first author of this paper, an English language teacher in a Colombian public school. Although the researcher did not know any of the participants personally, he shared the same profession as the interviewed teachers; that is, the participating teachers may have identified the researcher as a peer.

The interviews were transcribed, coded, and categorized using thematic analysis techniques (Saldaña, 2012). Data were triangulated and contrasted, first in each institution and then across the three schools, revealing patterns and inconsistencies. Some of the themes that were coded among the three schools were, for example, "language use in the classroom," "institutional alliances," "resistance towards guidelines," "compliance with the policy," and "teachers' agency."

Additionally, data were analyzed using a thematic approach incorporating individual and systems-level theories. This analysis was guided by a theoretical framework and informed the development of interview questions. The themes from the data were then identified, coded, and categorized according to this theoretical framework. The approach used was based on the work of Braun and Clark (2006). Some of these themes were "language capital building," "learning opportunity," and "learning environment."

Two rounds of thematic analysis were conducted manually. After each researcher coded the data individually, we compared the themes and categories to reveal consistencies and some inconsistencies in our coding process and worked to improve the intra-reliability and inter-reliability (McAlister et al., 2017) of our data analysis. The first and the second data analysis rounds were conducted within a three-month interval, and although the wording of some of the categories and themes slightly changed, these remained essentially the same.

Findings

The findings revealed that inequalities arose from the three distinctive English language schooling approaches which hamper the PNB's goals that aim to (a) promote equality, (b) make English language teaching and learning the conduit for equipping and developing students for the 21st century, and (c) ensure that the curriculum provides equitable treatment for all student populations (MEN, 2016). The findings of this study further reveal that *equitable access* to English language learning opportunities was not equally enacted among the three schools. This prevents English from becoming a "strengthening tool" (MEN, 2016), regardless of the characteristics of the schools that students attend. As a result of a lack of "equitable treatment" (MEN, 2016, p. 26) across schools, there were unequal levels of achievement—one of the critical problems that the new policy attempts to address (MEN, 2014).

Unequal Access to English Language Learning Opportunities

Unequal access to English language learning opportunities among the three schools became evident mainly in terms of time: the time each school allocated to English language learning and the time spent using the target language in the classroom. We are aware that the number of hours allocated to English, for example, does not necessarily result in students learning more English and that it is ultimately the quality of teaching that creates learning opportunities and positive learning environments (Rixon, 2013). However, to guide our analysis, we identified three indicators for English language practice: the number of hours allocated to English, the amount of English used in the classroom (vs. L1 use), and English-related extracurricular activities. It is important to note that although the policy documents do not specify whether the classes should be conducted entirely in English, the suggested curriculum, the guidelines for implementing the curriculum, and the student's textbooks were all published in English. This indicates that, for those who interpret the policy, it implicitly suggests that English be actively used within the classroom.

Belgrano School

When asked about the language employed in the classroom, Laura, the English language teacher, reported that she used Spanish primarily but incorporated some key English words or phrases for instructional purposes or as part of classroom routines. An explanation for the limited use of English in Laura's classroom—which had been simplified to routine phrases and rarely used for everyday classroom interactions—was due to her lack of confidence in her English proficiency. Laura noted that she preferred to avoid English words to avoid mispronouncing anything. It is worth remembering that although Laura had pedagogical training, this was unrelated to English language teaching.

Laura's lack of confidence in speaking English silenced its active usage, signaling how English language use was positioned and perceived within her classroom. Students were also asked about the language choices made by the teacher for instructional purposes and their perceived opportunities to use English in the classroom. Luisa, for example, said that the teacher spoke English sometimes but mainly used Spanish. Juan added that he had never heard his teacher speak English, whereas Paula said they used English only to say "good morning" or "goodbye," but the rest of the class was in Spanish.

The students' statements corroborated Laura's description of how English was used within the classroom, suggesting that students' exposure to listening to, speaking, or interacting in English was limited in this program, and the teacher and students were aware of this. With the recognition of how English learning and use was positioned within the school, Luisa, one of the students, argued that students' motivation to learn English was severely hampered

by the fact that despite being offered English classes, students did not effectively learn the language and, therefore, could not use it to interact. For Sebastian, another student, learning English was only possible by travelling abroad, showing that the students perceived the opportunities to learn English at Belgrano as too scarce. Luisa, for instance, insisted that no one at Belgrano would be able to learn English, and she questioned the rationale behind learning the language if she could not converse in it with others.

With no one to speak English with, there was a lack of motivation to learn and use the language, influencing and shaping how English language learning was positioned within the classroom. In this regard, Belgrano did not have a learning environment that promoted English learning, and while there was a space to learn it, there were limited opportunities for active English language use and practice. Indeed, Belgrano students perceived that using English and being exposed to it in the classroom was vital for improvement. When asked what they would do differently if they were the English language teacher, one student, Juan, replied that he would give the whole class in English so that the students could learn more. Paula, for instance, answered that she would give a scholarship to students so that they could study English outside their school.

Santander School

Santander allocated three hours of English per week. According to the students and the teacher, English was the primary language used in class. Camila, the English language teacher, reported that all the instructions and commands were in English but that using Spanish was necessary when explaining complex instructions.

When students were asked about the role of Spanish in the class, Leyla commented that the teacher used Spanish to ask for attention, tease, and scold. Likewise, Jeremy expressed that he enjoyed speaking in English with his classmates because it made him look intellectual in his own eyes. These statements suggest that English was commonly used in the classroom, and students not only used it to interact with the teacher and participate in class but also to speak with peers.

In addition to the three regular hours of English, Santander hosted "extended English classes" and an English conversation club. These classes were mandatory, and students were evaluated in these sessions. While not directly enacting the guidelines of the PNB, Santander's English language curriculum had been designed on the school's funding structure (a focalized school), which provided additional learning opportunities for students. This suggests that the enactment of the PNB, mainly focusing on equitable access across schools, is complicated by the funding structures of English language programs in Colombia.

Bolivar School

In contrast to Belgrano and Santander, Bolivar was a piloting bilingual school that offered five hours of English instruction and taught the subjects of science, technology, and physical education in English. These practices were very different from those of the other two schools. All subjects were taught by teachers who graduated from English language teaching programs and had knowledge of the discipline. Gloria, the classroom teacher, stated that she attempted to deliver all her teaching in English but switched to Spanish if her students did not understand her instructions. The students confirmed that English was the primary language employed in class. Brenda, a student, reported that the teacher only used Spanish to explain something students did not understand in English. Mateo added that all the topics were in English, and her teacher encouraged students to use them whenever possible. Violeta, another student, said she considered herself and her classmates lucky to have good English classes at Bolivar because, according to her, other children could not study English because they did not have teachers who could speak the language.

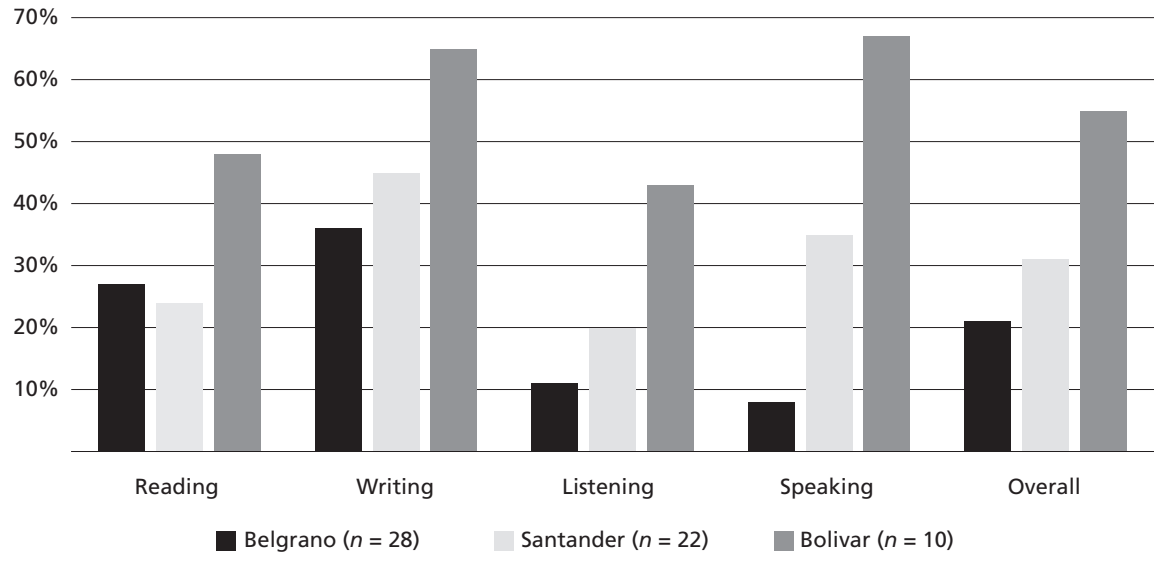
In short, Bolivar offered 13 hours a week in English (out of the 25 hours of their curriculum), English was commonly used in the classroom, and students were encouraged to use it whenever possible. The time spent actively using English across the three schools was an evident inequality that shaped students' access to it inside the classroom, which afforded varying opportunities for English language capital building. Not only did Bolivar School allocate more hours of English instruction than its counterparts, but the teacher and her students appeared to use the language more often in the classroom. In contrast, and as we have described, while participants at Santander reported that teachers and students occasionally used English in the classroom, those at Belgrano noted that students had limited exposure and opportunities to use English. We believe these inequalities are an organic consequence of the three policy enactments, exposing the complexities of PNB when schools have such varying funding structures.

Unequal Level of English Achievement Among Grade 5 Students

The *Pedagogical Principles and Guidelines* of the PNB outline the English language proficiency level that students should develop each school year. According to the document, "Students in Grade 5 should achieve an A1 proficiency level under the CEFR" (MEN, 2016, p. 31). Therefore, in addition to exploring the allocation of time spent in learning and using English within each school program, we wanted to explore the different levels of achievement among students by administering the YLE test. This is significant, as at the time of writing this paper, no existing studies had collected data on the achievement of Colombian primary schools concerning the goals set by the PNB. Although only three classrooms took the test, it sheds light on the different levels of achievement across English language enactments in the country.

Figure 1 shows the percentage of correct answers students scored in each section and the test overall.

Figure 1. Percentage of Correct Answers in the YLE Test



Rather than a more in-depth statistical analysis, percentages provide an overall picture of the variation in achievement across the schools. We acknowledge that further statistical analysis is required to understand and make sense of the relationships between student achievement, language skills, and school funding structures. Based on the Cambridge website guidelines for interpreting results, four students from Bolivar achieved an A1 proficiency level (the suggested proficiency for fifth graders according to the MEN), and no student from Belgrano or Santander obtained the necessary score to be considered an A1 proficient language learner.

Figure 1 corroborates our analyses of the qualitative data in that, despite the aspirational introduction of the national policy to address equality, the three language programs are not the same. Instead, they differ in both the opportunities for language exposure and use and their achievement outcomes.

Figure 1 also shows that the most remarkable differences among schools are listening and speaking, the critical components of spoken interactions and communication. This disparity may be due to differences in exposure to English and opportunities to use it within classrooms. Reading, on the other hand, is the language skill area in which schools performed similarly. Alongside an emphasis on developing students' English language reading and writing in schools (Zabala-Vargas et al., 2019), another reason might be that when language teachers do not feel confident in their listening and speaking skills, they tend to focus more on developing reading and writing competencies among their students (Van Canh & Renandya, 2017).

This study's qualitative and quantitative data suggest that the three programs are unequal regarding language exposure, use, or outcomes. Despite the goals of the PNB to promote "educational equality" (MEN, 2016, p. 7) through English language teaching and learning and to provide a curriculum that allows for "equitable treatment" (MEN, 2016, p. 26), we argue that the enactment of the curriculum is shaped more by the funding structures in place (e.g., non-focalized, focalized, and piloting bilingual) than it is by policy guidelines. This is not surprising given that these three schools were purposefully chosen to explore the enactment of three different language programs. However, the findings highlight that because the schools reflected similar socio-economic backgrounds, how they were *funded* had a powerful impact on how they enacted the PNB rather than the PNB itself.

Discussion

Bilingual policies in education theoretically demand the provision of opportunities for language capital building. These reforms attempt to create spaces where cultural, linguistic, and symbolic assets are transformed and exchanged through intricate networks within and across fields (Bourdieu, 1986). Nevertheless, when schools fall short of providing access to opportunities and spaces to create and exchange language capital, inequalities in language learning and levels of achievement arise between institutions. Moreover, it is possible to determine that *access* to funding may shape the schools' ability to provide opportunities and how much time students are exposed to and use English within the classroom. It is agreed that language learning reform should provide teachers with professional development opportunities to gain confidence in their abilities (Van Canh & Renandya, 2017) and help address currently-held beliefs about language and language learning (Barnes, 2021; Budach, 2013; Mellom et al., 2018; Zuniga et al., 2018), given that teachers can create opportune spaces for language learning. This is particularly important as it has been shown that teachers' language choices influence students' language use (see Ballinger & Lyster, 2011) and students' access to capital-building opportunities (De Wilde et al., 2020; Fhlannchadha & Hickey, 2019).

Enactments of policy, by nature, result in differing interpretations and implementations of the same policy, mainly due to the diversity of teachers' beliefs about language and language learning (Hornberger & Johnson, 2011; Zuniga et al., 2018) and how funding is applied (Butler, 2007; Nguyen, 2011). Although the PNB aims to provide equal access to English learning and encourages equal outcomes through the homogenization of the curriculum, the methodologies of teachers, and the assessment of students, the current funding structures towards this aspiration raise inequalities of learning opportunities. In many ways, the current funding structures thwart the successful enactment of the curriculum. When access to funding is not configured based on the needs of students, schools, communities, or regions, bilingual policies risk perpetuating learning inequalities. In other words, the distribution of human resources, materials, and learning resources that the PNB proposes ultimately influences unequal outcomes across institutions. Although there are chances for equal access to opportunities, these would need to be provided through needs-based funding and redistribution of human and learning resources, which is non-existent with the current policy.

Although bilingual abilities entail more than language proficiency, such as cognitive organisation (Bialystok, 2011), enhanced executive control (Bialystok et al., 2009), multicultural competencies, and tolerance to ambiguity (Dewaele & Wei, 2013), the MEN largely determines the success of the national language policies in terms of English language proficiency (MEN, 2014). We acknowledge the complexity of bilingual skills, and the administration of the YLE test aimed to provide a general overview of students' achievement levels and compare it with the policy goals. Notably, despite enjoying more English language learning opportunities than most mainstream schools in Colombia, four students from Bolivar—and no students from the other schools—achieved an A1 proficiency level. The MEN should not only widen its conception of "successful bilingualism" but also the instruments to assess it. If students' proficiency continues to be considered the primary outcome to evaluate the success of language policies in public schooling, other forms of achievement (e.g., openness to foreigners, tolerance towards difference, multicultural knowledge) might be obscured, and reforms might be perceived as "unsuccessful."

Conclusion

This study reveals that current funding structures hampered the enactment of the PNB. The study exposed the differentiated enactments of the English language curriculum guidelines and the unequal opportunities for learning and achievement. Moreover, we identified the complexities in language policy enactment. Given that English language learning is a conduit for human capital building (MEN, 2016; Murray, 2020), providing a set of curriculum guidelines for language instruction is just one step towards equalizing opportunities and achievement among students. There also must be the equal and equitable provision of financial resources to schools if the equality/equity agenda is to be meaningfully addressed.

Despite its contribution to the literature on policy enactment and its entanglement with school funding, this study is limited in scope. While the three participating teachers met the study's inclusion criteria, the participating students were not recruited based on inclusion or exclusion criteria but because they were students in the participating teachers' classrooms. In addition, data collection was limited in scope due to being part of a dissertation project. As a result, further research is needed to not only expand the number of participating schools and corroborate and further interrogate the findings of this study but to provide more quantitative analysis on student achievement, examining the relationships between different schools, language skills, and the allocation of language

instruction. In addition, future research might consider that some students, institutions, and regions may need more access to language capital than others.

References

Ayala Zárate, J., & Álvarez, J. A. (2005). A perspective of the implications of the Common European Framework implementation in the Colombian socio-cultural context. *Colombian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *7*, 7–26. https://doi.org/10.14483/22487085.162

Ball, S. J., Maguire, M., & Braun, A. (2012). *How schools do policy: Policy enactments in secondary schools*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203153185

Ballinger, S., & Lyster, R. (2011). Student and teacher oral language use in a two-way Spanish/English immersion school. *Language Teaching Research*, *15*(3), 289–306. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168811401151

Barnes, M. (2021). Creating 'advantageous' spaces for migrant and refugee youth in regional areas: A local approach. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *42*(3), 456–470. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2019.1709415

Bastidas, J. A. (2017). More than half a century teaching EFL in Colombian secondary schools: Tracing back our footprints to understand de present. *How Journal*, *24*(1), 10–26. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.24.1.348

Benavides, J. E. (2021). Level of English in Colombian higher education: A decade of stagnation. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *23*(1), 57–73. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v23n1.83135

Bialystok, E. (2011). Reshaping the mind: The benefits of bilingualism. *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology*, *65*(4), 229–235. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025406

Bialystok, E., Craik, F. I. M., Green, D. W., & Gollan, T. H. (2009). Bilingual minds. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, *10*(3), 89–129. https://doi.org/10.1177/1529100610387084

Bonilla Carvajal, C. A., & Tejada-Sanchez, I. (2016). Unanswered questions in Colombia's foreign language education policy. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *18*(1), 185–201. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v18n1.51996

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1992). *Language and symbolic power* (G. Raymond & M. Adamson, Trans.). Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (2006). The forms of capital. In H. Lauder, P. Brown, J.-A. Dillabough, & A. H. Halsey (Eds.), *Education, globalisation, and social change* (pp. 105–118). Oxford University Press.

Braun, V., & Clark, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a

Budach, G. (2013) From language choice to mode choice: How artefacts impact on language use and meaning making in a bilingual classroom. *Language and Education*, *27*(4), 329–342. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2013.788188

Butler, Y. G. (2007). Foreign language education at elementary schools in Japan: Searching for solutions amidst growing diversification. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *8*(2), 129–147. https://doi.org/10.2167/cilp115.0

Cadavid Múnera, I., McNulty, M., & Quinchía Ortiz, D. (2004). Elementary English language instruction: Colombian teachers' classroom practices. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *5*(1), 37–55. https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/11213

Cardona-Escobar, D. (2022). *Equity, language capital, and policy enactment: Voices of primary classrooms amid the current English language policy landscape in Colombia* [Doctoral dissertation, Monash University]. Monash University Theses.

Cardona-Escobar, D., Pruyn, M., & Barnes, M. (2021). Colombian National Bilingual Plan: A vehicle for equity or an instrument for accountability? *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2021.1980574

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages.* Cambridge University Press.

De Wilde, V., Brysbaert, M., & Eyckmans, J. (2020). Learning English through out-of-school exposure: Which levels of language proficiency are attained and which types of input are important? *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, *23*(1), 171–185. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728918001062

Dewaele, J.-M., & Wei, L. (2013). Is multilingualism linked with a higher tolerance of ambiguity? *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, *16*(1), 231–240. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728912000570

Fhlannchadha, S. N., & Hickey, T. M. (2019). Assessing children's proficiency in a minority language: Exploring the relationships between home language exposure, test performance and teacher and parent ratings of school-age Irish-English bilinguals. *Language and Education*, *33*(4), 340–362. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2018.1523922

Gómez Sará, M. M. (2017). Review and analysis of the Colombian foreign language bilingualism policies and plans. *How Journal*, *24*(1), 139–156. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.24.1.343

Guerrero, C. H. (2010). The portrayal of EFL teachers in official discourse: The perpetuation of disdain. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *12*(2), 33–49. https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/17669

Guerrero-Nieto, C. H., & Quintero, A. (2021). Elementary school teachers in neoliberal times: The silent voices that make educational policies work. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *23*(1), 27–40. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v23n1.83052

Hornberger, N. H., & Johnson, D. C. (2011). The ethnography of language policy. In T. L. McCarty (Ed.), *Ethnography and language policy* (pp. 273–289). Routledge.

McAlister, A., Lee, D., Ehlert, K., Kajfez, R., Faber, C., & Kennedy, M. (2017). *Qualitative coding: An approach to assess inter-rater reliability* [Paper presentation]. 2017 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition, Columbus, Ohio. https://doi.org/10.18260/1-2--28777

McNulty Ferri, M., & Usma Wilches, J. (2005). Evaluating research skills development in a Colombian undergraduate foreign language teaching program. *Íkala: Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *10*(1), 95–125.

Mellom, P. J., Straubhaar, R., Balderas, C., Ariail, M., & Portes, P. R. (2018). "They come with nothing": How professional development in a culturally responsive pedagogy shapes teacher attitudes towards Latino/a English language learners. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *71*(1), 98–107. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.12.013

Ministerio de Educación Nacional. (2014). *Colombia very well! Programa nacional de inglés*. Retrieved August 2022, from https://bit.ly/2NJOnuY

Ministerio de Educación Nacional. (2016). *Orientaciones y principios pedagógicos: currículo sugerido de inglés*. Imprenta Nacional.

Ministerio de Educación Nacional. (2018, January 9). *Lengua extranjera*. https://bit.ly/3WEGhGV

Moore, R. (2008). Capital. In M. Grenfell (Ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key concepts* (1st ed., pp. 101–118). Acumen. https://doi.org/10.1017/UPO9781844654031.010

Murray, D. (2020). The world of English language teaching: Creating equity or inequity? *Language Teaching Research*, *24*(1), 60–70. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818777529

Nguyen, H. T. M. (2011). Primary English language education policy in Vietnam: Insights from implementation. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *12*(2), 225–249. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2011.597048

Qi, G. Y. (2016). The importance of English in primary school education in China: Perceptions of students. *Multilingual Education*, *6*(1), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13616-016-0026-0

Rixon, S. (2013). *British Council survey of policy and practice in primary English language teaching worldwide*. British Council. https://bit.ly/3YLyvNd

Saldaña, J. (2012). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Sánchez Solarte, A. C., & Obando Guerrero, G. V. (2008). Is Colombia ready for "bilingualism"? *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *9*(1), 181–195.

Thomas, E. M., & Roberts, D. B. (2011). Exploring bilinguals' social use of language inside and out of the minority language classroom. *Language and Education*, *25*(2), 89–108. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2010.544743

Usma, J. (2009a). Education and language policy in Colombia: Exploring processes of inclusion, exclusion, and stratification in times of global reform. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *11*(1), 123–141.

Usma, J. (2009b). Globalization and language and education reform in Colombia: A critical outlook. *Íkala: Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *14*(2), 19–42. https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=255020476001

Valencia, M. (2013). Language policy and the manufacturing of consent for foreign intervention in Colombia. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *15*(1), 27–43. https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/37859

Van Canh, L., & Renandya, W. A. (2017). Teachers' English proficiency and classroom language use: A conversation analysis study. *RELC Journal*, *48*(1), 67–81. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688217690935

Vanbuel, M., & Van den Branden, K. (2021). Each primary school a school-based language policy? The impact of the school context on policy implementation. *Language and Education*, *35*(1), 42–59. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2020.1803352

Zabala-Vargas, S., Parra-Valencia, J., Lizcano-Reyes, R., Zabala-Vargas, J., & Lizcano-Dallos, A. (2019, July 1–3). *Effect of information and communication technologies in the development of reading and writing skills: Experiences in basic and secondary education in Colombia* [Paper presentation]. 11th International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies, Palma, Spain. https://doi.org/10.21125/edulearn.2019.1865

Zuniga, C. E., Henderson, K. I., & Palmer, D. K. (2018). Language policy toward equity: How bilingual teachers use policy mandates to their own ends. *Language and Education*, *32*(1), 60–76. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2017.1349792

About the Authors

Diego Cardona-Escobar holds a PhD from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. He works as an English language teacher at Institución Educativa Académico, a public school in Cartago, Colombia.

Melissa Barnes, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at La Trobe University (Australia).

Marc Pruyn, PhD, is a senior lecturer in the School of Curriculum, Teaching, and Inclusive Education, Faculty of Education, Monash University (Australia).

Appendix: Focus Group Interview With Students

Although the first questions do not have a direct relationship with the research, they attempt to establish some rapport with the students so that they participate during the interview:

a. How many hours of English class do you take weekly?
b. How long is each class?
c. How long have you been studying English with the same teacher?
d. Does the teacher give you homework? Could you please describe what the last homework looked like?

Perceptions towards the teacher's methodology

e. What language does the teacher use in class? When does she use Spanish, and when does she use English?
f. Do you ever communicate with your peers in English? With your teacher? Do you participate in Spanish or English during the class?
g. Could you please describe some of the activities you usually do in class? Could you describe some of the activities you did last week?
h. Do you work individually or in small or large groups during English classes?
i. Do you listen to conversations in English during the class? Do you watch videos or movies in English? Do you play during the English class?
j. What activities do you enjoy the most in class? What activities do you enjoy the least?
k. Could you please describe the last quiz or test you did in class?

Perceptions of English language learning

l. Do you like English? Why? Do you like your English class? Why?
m. Do you think learning English is important? Why?
n. How do you think you could learn English faster or better?

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.103953

Resisting Hegemonic Discourses on the Relation Between Teaching Second Languages and Socioeconomic Development

Resistiendo discursos hegemónicos sobre la relación entre la enseñanza de segundas lenguas y el desarrollo socioeconómico

Ferney Cruz-Arcila
Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Bogotá, Colombia
Vanessa Solano-Cohen
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá, Colombia
María Liliana Briceño-González
Ana Rincón
Antonio Lobato-Junior
Universidad EAN, Bogotá, Colombia

This study examines hegemonic discourses on English and socioeconomic development from teachers' perspectives. Specifically, it scrutinizes the sorts of positions a group of 36 teachers of English, French, Italian, German, and Portuguese in an undergraduate program of modern languages take towards both the predominant narrative of English as the language of development and the role that the languages they teach may also play. Using postdevelopment as a theoretical framework, teachers' social representations around the languages they teach are analyzed. Findings suggest that, although there is a strong tendency to uncritically accept and accommodate instrumental and Anglo normative views of development, "small hopes" for configuring plural, locally sensitive, less instrumental, and ecological understandings are also emerging.

Keywords: English, modern languages, postdevelopment, socioeconomic development

Este estudio examina, desde la perspectiva de los profesores, los discursos hegemónicos del inglés en relación con el desarrollo socioeconómico. En particular, analizamos los tipos de posicionamientos que toma un grupo de 36 profesores de inglés, francés, italiano, alemán y portugués en un programa de pregrado frente a la narrativa predominante del inglés como lengua de desarrollo y el papel que las lenguas que enseñan pueden desempeñar frente a esta narrativa. Apoyados teóricamente en el posdesarrollo, analizamos las representaciones sociales de los docentes en torno a las lenguas que enseñan. Los resultados sugieren que, aunque existe una tendencia a aceptar acríticamente las visiones instrumentales y anglonormativas del desarrollo, también surgen "pequeñas esperanzas" de interpretaciones plurales, localmente sensibles, menos instrumentales y ecológicas.

Palabras clave: desarrollo socioeconómico, inglés, lenguas modernas, posdesarrollo

Ferney Cruz-Arcila https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9185-9392 · Email: fcruz@pedagogica.edu.co
Vanessa Solano-Cohen https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5377-6879 · Email: va.solano@javeriana.edu.co
María Liliana Briceño-González https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2978-9896 · Email: Mlbriceno@universidadean.edu.co
Ana Rincón https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5580-938X · Email: acrinconf@universidadean.edu.co
Antonio Lobato-Junior https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8821-5097 · Email: alobato.d@universidadean.edu.co

The research project was sponsored by Universidad EAN. During the process, two of the researchers changed their institutional affiliations.

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Cruz-Arcila, F., Solano-Cohen, V., Briceño-González, M. L., Rincón, A., & Lobato-Junior, A. (2023). Resisting hegemonic discourses on the relation between teaching second languages and socioeconomic development. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 111–127. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.103953

This article was received on July 28, 2022 and accepted on March 16, 2023.

Introduction

This study takes a critical stance vis-à-vis hegemonic discourses of English, which associate this language, almost exclusively, with conventional understandings of socioeconomic development; that is, with what many language policies that prioritize English worldwide have referred to as better job and academic opportunities, quality of education, profitable business, and ease of intercultural communication and technological development (Coleman, 2010; Mohanty, 2017). Taking up debates about different ways in which the expansion of English has served as a mechanism of neo-colonization and cultural domination (Phillipson, 1992) and how this expansion has been resisted (Canagarajah, 1999) or locally reversed (Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Canagarajah, 2005; Kachru & Smith, 2008), this research explores the positioning of English, French, German, Portuguese, and Italian teachers at a university in Bogotá towards these hegemonic discourses. At the same time, it discusses whether these discourses resonate in languages other than English included in the institutional curriculum. A third dimension of interest is identifying other ways of making sense of language teaching and learning that are not necessarily aligned with instrumental and economistic development visions.

As noted (Cruz-Arcila et al., 2022), Colombia indeed represents a case in which anglonormativity, understood as the need to speak English to succeed personally and professionally (McKinney, 2016), has directly permeated national language policies. This has been mainly due to instrumental visions of languages that emphasize market interests (Mena & García, 2021). As Block (2018) rightly emphasizes, the market has become a dominant narrative that controls social institutions, such as education, by presupposing that it should mainly aim at developing individuals' skills and competences that make them "more saleable" (p. 577).

Today, when the global market narrative is imposed on social institutions, language policies in Colombia have been based on instrumental discourses of competitiveness, globalization, internationalization, and economic prosperity (British Council, 2015; Ministerio de Educación Nacional [MEN], 2005, 2014), which constitute a single perspective of socioeconomic development. In Colombia, these initiatives often seem to favor more the interests of international agencies than local needs (Bonilla-Carvajal & Tejada-Sánchez, 2016; Hurie, 2018; Mackenzie, 2022), which could have negative consequences by, for example, intensifying exclusion and social gaps. Therefore, considering that such discourses and linguistic policies have had a substantial impact on the configuration of the national curriculum and teacher training programs (Castañeda-Trujillo, 2018; González-Moncada, 2009), it becomes relevant to investigate how these mercantilist and dominant narratives about the value of teaching modern languages are related to the meanings that university teachers themselves give to the languages they teach. Thus, this study sets a dialogue between the dominant discourses of English and the social representations of English and other languages while exploring possible alternative meanings of socioeconomic development.

We took teachers' perspectives because of the importance of their point of view in promoting the languages they teach and the multiple drives they may have for doing so. Hence, it is crucial to analyze how aspects such as teacher training or the promotion of each language have taken place in Colombia, either through university programs and/or the internationalization and cultural expansion policies of some European countries. An examination of these issues allows us to claim that, in Colombia, the training of language teachers has maintained a Eurocentric dependence relationship that, at the same time, highlights and legitimizes traditional visions of development (Castañeda-Trujillo, 2018; Le Gal, 2018). For instance, from a critical reflection on the curricula of English teacher training programs, Castañeda-Trujillo (2018) argues that there is a strong tendency to replicate colonial power dynamics, evident in the promotion and legitimization of teaching methods validated by the

West and its visions of what can be considered good teacher education. This dynamic would prioritize the neoliberal interests of multinationals dedicated to the promotion of foreign languages, which benefit from the commercialization of training programs, certifications, international exams, and short courses, among others (Bonilla-Carvajal & Tejada-Sánchez, 2016; Le Gal, 2018). Likewise, teachers' training and professional role are reduced to a technicist and functional dimension (Guerrero, 2010), favoring capitalist ideals.

Due to the centrality given to English in national language policies, research on promoting languages such as French, German, Italian, and Portuguese, and their relation with socioeconomic development (Rincón Restrepo, 2020; Silva, 2011), has been less relevant. It seems that the promotion of other languages is in tune with these same global capitalist principles, which, although not as evident as in the case of English, are part of the internationalization policies of some European countries that see their linguistic/cultural capital as an opportunity for economic expansion (e.g., German Foreign Office, 2020; MAECI, 2014). However, in Colombia, how language teachers position themselves toward the prioritization of English is yet to be studied. Moreover, concerning this linguistic hierarchy, other languages could also represent opportunities for socioeconomic development, or better yet, how other possible alternative understandings to the hegemonic developmentalist vision could be established. These gaps precisely highlight the relevance of this study, mainly because we inquire into these possible alternative discourses to the mercantilist notion of development, determined by capital accumulation, wealth exchange, and industrialization (Bresser-Pereira, 2019). Examining these other possible meanings of the relation between socioeconomic development and learning/teaching modern languages reaffirms our critical stance. It invites us to question the discursive and ideological constructions that operate as a mechanism of Western cultural, social, and economic hegemony (Ziai, 2007).

A Postdevelopmentalist Perspective on Language Teaching and Learning

In Latin America, the concept of development as a Western benchmark of social organization has been, since the mid-20th century, at the center of the public policy debate. Since then, different approaches to understanding it have emerged, which can be grouped into two: hard and soft theories (Sen, 1998, as cited in Vergara Erices & Rozas Poblete, 2014). Hard theories emphasize money, capital accumulation, and industrial production, while soft theories focus more on quality of life, people, and the environment. Taking the world economic powers as the primary yardstick, hard theories have been hegemonic globally, understanding industrialization, technological innovation, urbanization, and market centrality as unequivocal development factors (Sen, 2015). This instrumental stance continues to permeate public policies at the global and local levels (Cuestas-Caza, 2019), resulting in a widening of social gaps by ignoring situated socioeconomic realities.

The hegemonic approach to development has imposed the market and competitiveness as the driving forces of everyday social practices, becoming a dominant narrative that also permeates L2 education. From the conventional developmentalist angle, the competitiveness and labor value language learners may achieve have become the leading indicators of success (Block, 2018). Thus, the promotion of language policies in countries such as Colombia has unreservedly adopted this notion which, in turn, privileges the teaching and learning of English as an apparent guarantee of socioeconomic growth. Following this reasoning, languages—especially English—are reduced to marketable products (Soto & Pérez-Milans, 2018). Likewise, L2 education is reduced to responding inertly to the underlying economic and mercantilist narratives imbued in national language policies.

In Colombia, a country marked by inequality (World Bank Group, 2021), it could be said that public policy aligned with traditional visions of development is not beneficial, as it does not contribute to equal access to opportunities and, on the contrary, seems to favor the elites (Mackenzie, 2022; Mohanty, 2017). As an example, in the results of Pruebas Saber 11 in 2021—an exam high school students must take to enter higher education institutions—the schools with the best scores, particularly in the English component, were bilingual institutions with tuition costs that only the national elite can afford (MEN, 2022). It could be argued that the specificity of the local context and the educational system respond to the global economistic dynamics. This highlights that language education is guided mainly by anglonormativity, where English is seen as the language of development and the only linguistic response to geopolitical and cultural problems (Coleman, 2011).

Consequently, underlining the tensions between L2 learning/teaching and development in Latin America allows us to ask ourselves, from a postdevelopmentalist theoretical framework, about possible alternatives to those dominant discourses that privilege English. By understanding development as an ideological discursive construction of Western origin that operates as a mechanism for cultural, social, and economic hegemony (Ziai, 2007), postdevelopment represents a constructive alternative to neoliberal discourses (Sachs, 2019). Following Escobar (2005), we understand postdevelopment as a theoretical space in which social and economic life ceases to be organized from the economistic premise. Therefore, the concept of economic growth based on the exploitation of nature, the commodification of human relations, and individualism is questioned. This theoretical vision interrogates the underdevelopment/development dichotomy underlying the hegemonic visions on the subject (Escobar, 1996/2014) and rescues alternative conceptions of progress and welfare in which the political participation of individuals concerning their contexts and particular needs prevails.

An excellent example of alternative understandings is the *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo para el Buen Vivir* or *Sumak Kawsay* (Calderón Paredes, 2014), promoted in Ecuador, which aims at social equality, the integration of peoples and territories, respect for diversity as well as the recognition of indigenous cosmovisions. Following Walsh (2010), the promotion of ancestral languages in education could facilitate familiarity with the knowledge, wisdom, and history of our peoples, which would be part of an authentic critical interculturality (i.e., a view of difference from below, through a constant interrogation of hierarchies and interiorization). Such initiatives contribute to decolonizing ourselves from Western knowledge and questioning the epistemic violence in the developmentalist homogenization and instrumentalization of languages.

Another alternative to predominant instrumental narratives of L2 education is attached to well-being. Here, we could mention the daily uses of languages in activities that generate enjoyment, such as social networks (Campos Bandrés, 2021). Likewise, it is possible to identify alternatives that highlight incentives derived from less instrumental desires and interests (Cruz-Arcila et al., 2022), where emotional realizations and the satisfaction of concrete social needs take more relevance. These two examples highlight the importance of this study's postdevelopmentalist angle, as it emphasizes the role of localized contexts and social practices related to the enjoyment and satisfaction of individual needs and interests over tangible economic benefit.

Anyhow, postdevelopment is not a mere superficial recovery of the ancestral, nor the construction of a hybrid model in which the tensions and critical visions are overridden (Escobar, 2019). The focus is a transition towards plurality. That is, postdevelopment theory interrogates the narrow economistic goal of development and proposes considering the needs of individuals, their contexts, and the construction of

socially equitable relations. Particularly, in L2 education, it is worth asking ourselves about the multiple meanings that can be constructed around language teaching/learning and the connections with multifarious ways of understanding socioeconomic development.

Method

Following the social representations theory, this study is informed by what is known as the plurality of approaches (Petracci & Kornblit, 2007). It is a principle concerned with understanding how social subjects attribute symbolic value to objects that are significant to them. Relatedly, the structural view of social representations was used. Such a perspective conceives social representations as structures of knowledge of topics of social life, shared by groups and formed by cognitive elements linked together. The central core theory underlies this approach. It argues that social representations are a double system formed by two components: a central core and a peripheral system. The core is a restricted concept set that defines and organizes social representations. The peripheral system comprises most elements with a conditional nature and is more flexible and practical, adapting the representation to everyday experiences (Wachelke & Wolter, 2011).

Thirty-six professors from the Modern Languages undergraduate program of a university in Bogota participated. Such a program emphasizes language learning about entrepreneurship and sustainability, which added relevance to the sort of analyses of socioeconomic development aimed at by the study. The program requires students to learn English as a mandatory language, plus two additional languages chosen out of French, German, Italian, or Portuguese. Most teachers teach only one of these languages. A general characterization of the participants is listed in Table 1.

Two data collection techniques were used: questionnaires (n = 34) and focus interviews (n = 18). Teachers took part in the study voluntarily. The questionnaire comprised 27 questions to gather ideas of ways teachers may link the languages taught with socioeconomic development. Following the structural approach of social representations, one section of the questionnaire was the free association of concepts: Informants were asked to provide five concepts or short expressions that first came to their minds concerning each language offered in the program. Moreover, teachers were asked to associate categories of traditional (e.g., economic growth) and alternative (e.g., personal achievement) ways of understanding development with

Table 1. Characterization of Teacher Participants

Gender	**Language taught:**	**Academic profile:**
Male: 18 Female: 18	*English: 12* French 9 Italian: 6 Portuguese: 4 German: 5	Doctorate: 1 *Master: 27* Undergraduate: 8
Years of teaching experience:	**Primary way of learning the language taught:**	
20 years or more: 7 Between 15 and 19 years: 4 *Between 10 and 14 years: 15* Between 5 and 9 years: 6 Less than 5 years: 4	*Undergraduate teaching degree: 16* Mother tongue: 8 Stay abroad: 4 Postgraduate degree: 2 Other (family, language courses): 6	

the languages taught in the undergraduate program, followed by a brief explanation of their choices.

Five focus interviews were conducted with an average duration of 1.5 hours. An attempt was made to have a teacher of each language in each interview. The focus was to discuss the results of the questionnaires.

We obtained both discursive and closed-ended information. The discursive data were first analyzed manually following a thematic approach and later triangulated with Atlas.ti. The evocations obtained in the free associations of words were analyzed through the OpenEvoc program (Scano et al., 2002), which allows a structural approach to delineate social representations. Such a tool helped examine the different meanings teachers construe about the languages of interest. A hypothesis of centrality, zones of contrasts, and peripheral zones of evocations were identified for the whole set of responses and the groups of teachers of the specific languages. The tables generated by the OpenEvoc program are read as follows: The first quadrant, at the top left (++), gathers the terms with the highest frequency and placed by the respondents in the first places, thus constituting the hypothesis of the central nucleus (Wachelke & Wolter, 2011). The second quadrant, in the upper right part (+-), is the first periphery, with the evocations of higher frequency but with a different average location, that is, mentioned in the last places, which connoted less importance for the subjects. The third quadrant (-+), on the lower left, contains the terms of lower frequency and the high average order of evocation; that is, terms not very often mentioned but evoked in the first places by the subjects. Finally, the fourth quadrant (--), on the lower right, are the terms of both lower frequency and last positions of evocation (see Table 2 in the Postdevelopment Cracks section).

Findings

Accepting Hegemony: An Instrumental View of the Relation Between Language and Development

From the analysis of teachers' social representations of the relationship between language learning and socioeconomic development, the central tendency was an uncritical acceptance of the hegemonic developmentalist views. This section discusses this finding, highlighting the absence of a critical perspective on language teaching/learning.

The data show that, in the view of teachers, second languages, especially English, guarantee economic growth (Figure 1) and job opportunities (Figures 2 and 3), which to a certain extent facilitate

Figure 1. L2 Most Associated With Economic Growth

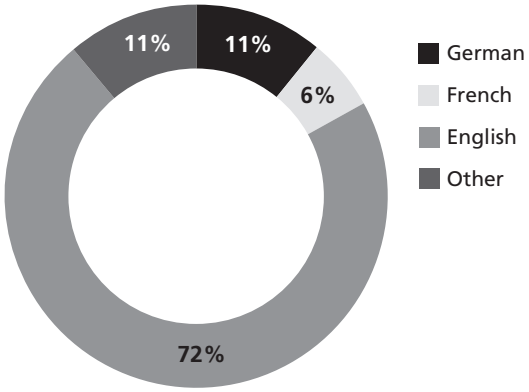


Figure 2. L2 Most Associated With Job Opportunities

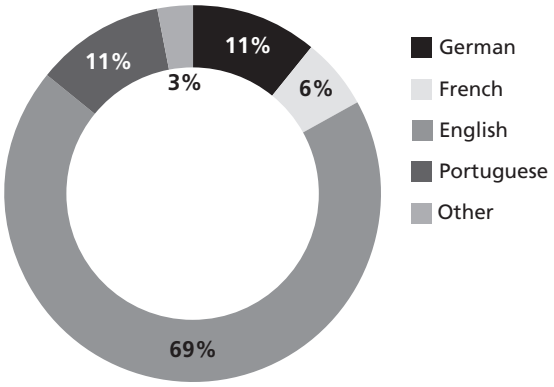
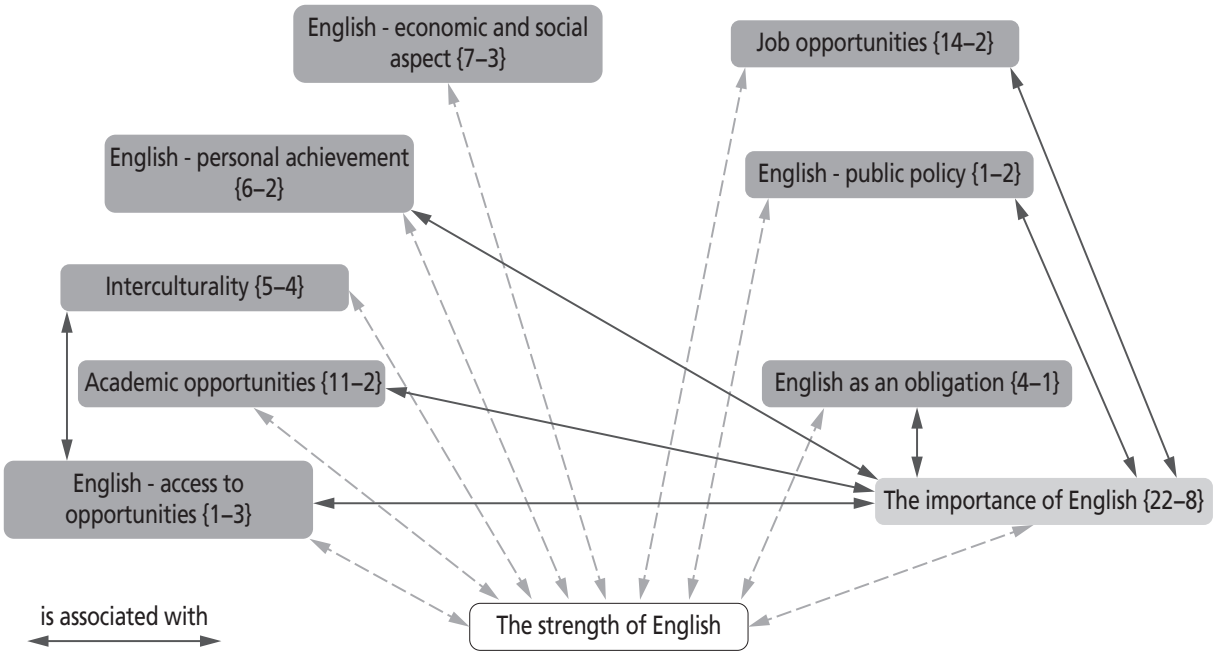


Figure 3. The Strength of English: Family of Codes From Atlas.ti



access to culture—understood as a consumer good. Following Bourdieu (1979/2002), consumer goods are an important part of the habitus that socially and symbolically distinguishes and differentiates social groups. Thus, language learning would play a role in these acts of distinction by perceiving languages as tools to access and dominate consumption goods (e.g., money, job, culture).

This commoditized view of language learning was confirmed in the semantic relationships emerging from the analysis in Atlas.ti. As observed in Figure 3, the strength of English is constructed around the same instrumental evocations (e.g., job and academic opportunities, access to culture, and economic and social capitals).

Following on from this observation, the notion of development and its relation to language learning would be based, as Patricia[1] states, on the unique possibility offered by the mastery of an L2 to have contact with other countries and cultures, which would allow, collectively, the construction of a more "developed" society:

> *Language teaching allows students…to achieve other economic and professional positions*…many opportunities…arise when you can communicate in another language, work for another country, for companies, you are not limited only to your country… *when you have this working tool…it allows you to develop as a person.*[2] (Focus interview)

Along the same lines, Martha is confident that teaching and learning an L2 guarantee development. Hegemonic principles permeate this discourse by relating education as a possible guarantee of social mobility and, therefore, of socioeconomic development: "Surely [learning languages] will *generate socioeconomic*

1 All names used here are pseudonyms.

2 All data were originally collected in Spanish.

development oriented from pedagogy, from teaching, from education…other facets in which socioeconomic development will be generated" (Focus interview).

Drawing on Bourdieu (1979/2002), the above could be interpreted as a symbolic dimension of cultural recognition, as an exercise of distinction of social groups in terms of access to consumer goods. Therefore, such distinction/recognition that comes with learning prestigious languages underscores an instrumentalist vision of language learning and teaching that reduces them merely to instruments for accessing better job opportunities. In this regard, Álvaro notes: "We could also be talking about *employment opportunities*…so speaking more than one language, *even if it's not like a native*, is very important…because it can *open several doors*" (Focus interview).

Alvaro's words stress the implicit association between employment and proficiency in a foreign language and underline an apparent alignment with the commoditization of L2. Beyond that, Alvaro also accepts and exalts the privileged vision of the native speaker by pointing out a scale of subordination to their imagined linguistic supremacy.

Likewise, it was interesting to find that when speaking of personal achievement and social prestige and their relationship with language learning, it is impossible to read any questioning of the dominant instrumental anglonormative narratives. However, there is a salient ambivalent position when assuming a priori that learning English should not be understood as a personal achievement since it is an obligation in all academic training. As some participants stated:

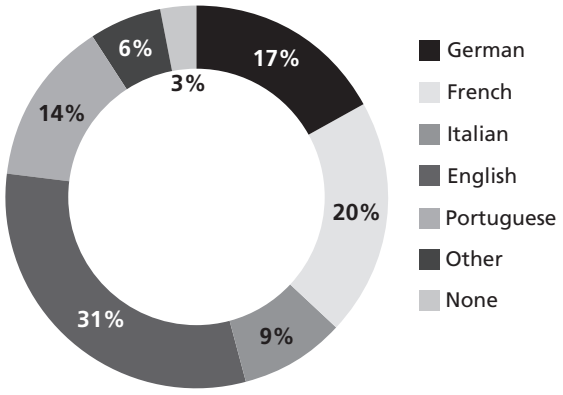
> I will learn English because it is practically *a necessity*, and one becomes a little illiterate. (Luisa, Focus interview)
>
> English…responds to an academic or even professional issue; it already becomes…a global communication *need*, so more than a personal achievement, *I see it more as a necessity*. (Natalia, Focus interview)
>
> Let's say that it is no longer a plus but *an obligation* for a professional in the labor market today to have proficiency in the English language. (Sandro, Focus interview)

Interestingly, in contrast to what Natalia says, when it comes to personal achievement, English was also the most highly regarded language (Figure 4). Nonetheless, in tune with what we have called "the comfort of the hegemonic," this perception seemed derived from anglonormative development views. As Sabrina puts it:

> [Learning English] is a personal achievement, and I know that in our Colombian families…the fact of speaking English is a success; it is a personal achievement. So, that's how I consider it and the work and academic travel experiences I have had thanks to this language. (Focus interview)

Sabrina, thus, associates personal achievement with tangible personal gains mainly. However, for others, such association is constructed with the difficulty of learning languages such as German. These beliefs are problematic as they appear to be detached from any consideration of social reality, where, for example, severe issues of inequality in Colombia (World Bank Group, 2021) are viewed as important factors. Relating personal achievement to linguistic

Figure 4. L2 Most Associated With Personal Achievement



distance from Spanish (the case of German) means not considering social factors that affect the learning/teaching processes.

Relatedly, the excerpts below suggest that the value of personal achievement is configured in terms of an imagined notion of challenges derived from the apparent difficulty of some languages and instrumental benefits, such as access to scholarships.

> *I would have thought that German would be a little higher than English* [in terms of personal achievement] because students always say: "Oh no, I am interested in German because it is a challenge"…they think…that it is tough and then it turns out that it is not. (Trina, Focus interview)
>
> *After English, I would say German* because of *all the [academic] possibilities that Germany offers*…It is the country that offers the most scholarships. (Camilo, Focus interview)

From a colonial viewpoint, learning a dominant language is a guarantor of prestige, economic growth, and job opportunities, which also underlies the belief that being multilingual is mainly limited to mastering dominant-western languages. Intriguingly, according to Ignacio, these languages would ensure job opportunities in Latin American contexts but not in Europe where it is "normal," almost natural, to be multilingual, and such linguistic competence offers neither prestige nor economic growth:

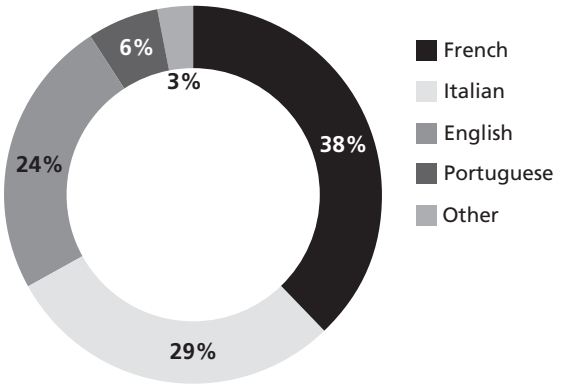
> In other countries, it is *normal* for any ordinary person…to speak two or three languages; and, in reality, this does not open doors or does not benefit them because, *in the end, they are like one more in the crowd* who, by the same educational system, already have access to speak two or three languages, to be…a polyglot. *But that is not common in our country, so when you have access to that, you obviously have an advantage.* (Focus interview)

In broad terms, concerning the general perception of each of the languages of focus in this study, we can argue that social representations seem to follow hierarchical dynamics. This is evident in three general observations: (a) English continues to be perceived and accepted as the dominant language; (b) French and German are often associated with academic opportunities and social prestige and would be second on the scale of relevance; and (c) from the instrumentalist viewpoint of development, Portuguese and Italian tend not to be perceived as very closely related to labor or academic opportunities.

As seen in Camilo's words, in the hierarchy of social representations we have identified, languages other than English are not significantly associated with economic value; they are seen mainly as cultural capital: "French [is] the language of culture, like Italian, *so I would study French and Italian to be cultured*" (Focus interview).

Camilo's configurations of Italian and French seem to derive from the stereotypes that the very dynamics of internationalization of these languages perpetuate, presenting these merely as cultural archetypes. These words resonate with the instrumentalist and colonial vision of language learning and teaching, a Eurocentric vision that values as cultured only that related to the knowledge of the old continent. An interesting example of this view is the relationship participants establish between L2 and artistic production (Figure 5). As

Figure 5. L2 Most Associated With Artistic Production



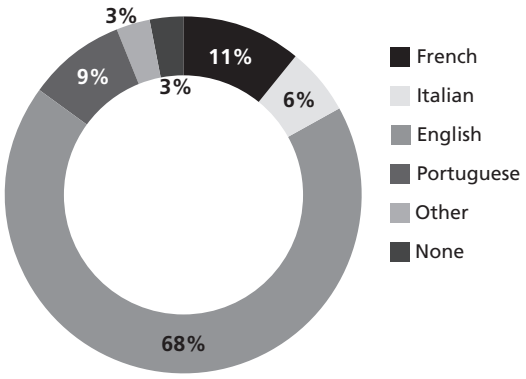
noted, dominant European languages are the most associated with artistic production, and only a low percentage of teachers (3 %) signaled that there might be other languages worth considering.

In closing, by analyzing the relationship teachers establish between development, culture, and interculturality, we found that, on the one hand, it is not possible to identify a critical stance towards what is understood by development nor by culture; and, on the other hand, that such relation tends to be monolithic, superficial, and functional to the system (Walsh, 2010). This is evident in the following excerpts, where interculturality is referred to as a capacity limited to an exchange of information and to establishing communication bridges—all this to be replicated in the classroom.

> Interculturality is *the capacity* I have to understand and communicate to interact with other languages, and that is what is taught in this undergraduate program. (Camilo, Focus interview)
>
> I understand intercultural communication as an *exchange of information* that goes beyond simply sharing a language but also having access to specific information related to the culture. (Ignacio, Focus interview)
>
> The intercultural speaker is the one who can see their culture [and] the target culture and *establishes…a bridge* between the two. (Sabrina, Focus interview)

Returning to Walsh's (2010) critical position, this view of the relation among cultures is the result of colonial patterns in which the *inter*-relation is not understood as a space of dispute and negotiation that makes visible the tensions framed in the differences "that maintain inequality, inferiorization, racialization, and discrimination" (p. 79, own translation). This notion of interculturality is functional to the neoliberal system. This research also confirmed a conceptualization since English is seen as the language most closely related to intercultural communication (Figure 6).

Figure 6. L2 Most Associated With Intercultural Communication



The apparent absence of a critical stance on the part of the teachers allows us to evidence a comfort with hegemonic discourses and, therefore, a naturalization of the instrumental view that guides the relationship between language learning and development. What role would L2 learning/teaching play in constructing critical interculturality in Colombia? The challenge would be to question this instrumentalist understanding, be aware of the acritical accommodation to hegemony, and orient language teaching/learning towards more critical reflections and positionings. There is hope, but we will deal with that in the following section.

Postdevelopment Cracks

Despite the above more salient bias towards traditional relations between socioeconomic development and language learning, from a postdevelopment lens, the data also allows us to identify some tensions that suggest that the instrumental benefits of learning English or any other L2 do not entirely exhaust the complexity of meanings teachers themselves have constructed around being language learners and teachers. Drawing on the theoretical-critical stance underpinning this study, we associate these tensions with what Walsh (2017) calls "fissures and cracks, where otherwise thinking, small hopes dwell, sprout and grow" (p. 31, own translation). That is, we read such tensions as emerging options to transgress dominant narratives and, therefore, begin

to open the field to alternative interpretations. Of note is that such tensions also illustrate the dilemmas and contradictions teachers experience in their everyday practice. They negotiate between instrumental and neoliberal drives with less evident but relevant alternatives to make sense of language learning. As shown in this section, the importance of the local, situational, and individual and the concern for social inequality are essential starting points to open fissures towards such alternative understanding.

Sandro and Carolina, for example, emphasize that there should be a more situational and individual approach, where meeting the English "requirement" is not necessarily associated with socioeconomic development. The relationship between socioeconomic development and language learning cannot be reduced to only learning the languages of the economic powers under the taken-for-granted premise of more and better opportunities. Furthermore, it is also necessary to consider the agency and particular interests of individuals who have countless ways to configure and project themselves into the "pluriverse" of socioeconomic development (Escobar, 2019). The purely economistic discourse could be conceived as one of these options, but not the only one. As some participants emphasize,

> Economic development does not depend on the power that speaks the language but on its conscious and responsible citizens who defend the public sector and its institutions. (Danna, Questionnaire)
>
> [Development involves] the formation of a country's values, of a whole cultural, sociocultural system, which is stronger than the economic and political…*the economic is one aspect*, I would say…*the cultural is much stronger*, for me culture is everything: the way of thinking, of acting, of discussing something…that is very strong. (Camilo, Focus interview)

Although Camilo fully aligns with a hegemonic discourse of development, he highlights a dimension of development that is conventionally less emphasized but equally valid. The development also has to do with the negotiation and configuration of sociocultural identities. This type of representation interrogates the monolithic instrumental and capitalist development narrative and paves the way for considering that, following Walsh (2010), critical interculturality emerges as an alternative. Camilo points out "training in values" and "the way of thinking, acting, and discussing something" as elements that cannot be ignored when relating language learning to socioeconomic development. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to think that the negotiation of values and ways of acting may be motivated by decolonial agendas, which question and seek to transform unequal social relations and structures that allow us to recognize and project ourselves toward multiple visions of being, knowing, and learning.

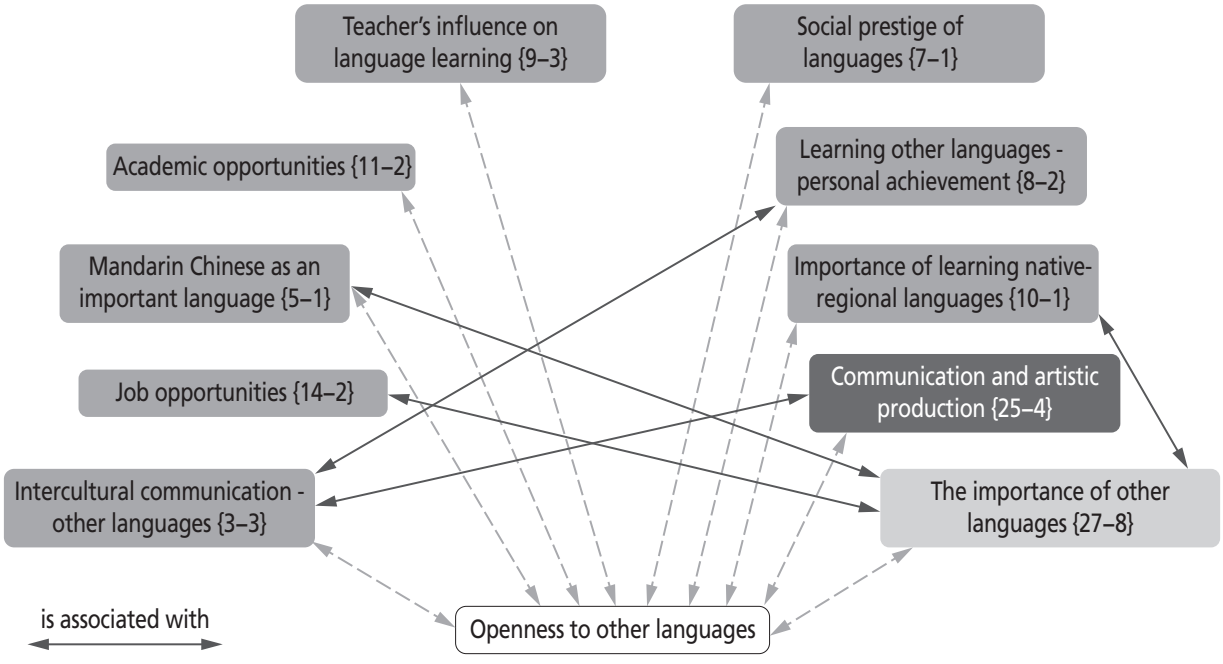
An important observation emerging from the hypothesis of a central nucleus of social representations around languages stresses this possible fissure where more critical configurations can manifest themselves. As seen in Table 2 and Figure 7, there are contradictions and uncertainties in how L2 may relate to socioeconomic development. Despite the apparent overarching uncritical acceptance of hegemonic discourses of development discussed previously, concepts such as "culture" and "interculturality" were frequently evoked (OpenEvoc) and discursively present (Atlas.ti) in teachers' social representations. By itself, this observation already represents an alternative counternarrative to the more instrumental dominant discourses of L2, to views of languages as currencies of exchange or interchangeable resources in the market (Mena & García, 2021).

Although it is not possible to identify a critical stance on the notions of "culture" and "interculturality" (+-), the fact that they have a more privileged place in social representations compared to more instrumental constructs such as "globalization" and "opportunity" is,

Table 2. Structural Elements of Social Representations on English, German, Italian, Portuguese, and French

++	**Frequency >= 2 / Order of evocation < 3**		+-	**Frequency >= 2 / Order of evocation >= 3**	
7%	Culture	2.57	2%	Globalization	3
2%	Interculturality	2.75	2%	Opportunity	3.75
-+	**Frequency < 2 / Order of evocation < 3**		--	**Frequency < 2 / Order of evocation >= 3**	
1.5%	Literature	2.33	1.5%	Study	3
1.5%	Communication	2.67	1.5%	Creativity	3
1%	Meaningful	1	1.5%	Pronunciation	3.67
1%	Meaningful learning	1.5	1%	Communicative competence	3.5
1%	Learning	2	1%	Passion	3.5
1%	Opportunities	2	1%	Films	3.52
1%	Didactics	2	1%	Tourism	4
1%	Interaction	2.5	1%	Sociability	4.5
1%	Share	2.5	1%	Knowledge	4.5

Figure 7. Openness to Other Languages



to use Walsh's words again, "a small hope" that there is a crack, a fertile ground for cultivating alternatives to the dominant instrumental discourse. The analysis via Atlas.ti also supports this small hope. As seen in Figure 7, concerning the interest in intercultural communication and interculturality, a promising openness towards other languages (primarily regional ones) and the relevance given to personal achievements are deviations of purely instrumental configurations.

Similarly, as Bibiana points out, social equality would become an important reference to interrogate the monolithic discourse of development. It is not a question of whether there are more opportunities but how they are thought of and who can access them. This is an important observation because it calls into question the prioritization given to English globally, which, at the same time, is at odds with the rhetoric of justice and equity promoted in language policies, such as the bilingualism initiatives in Colombia (for critiques in this regard see Cruz-Arcila, 2017; Hurie, 2018).

Thus, Bibiana understands development as "all those activities that allow a country to develop economically *but also from a social point of view*, that is, to guarantee…equity…gender equity, race equity, everything" (Focus interview).

Considering socioeconomic development concerning social equity objectives brings to the debate Sen's (2009) and Nussbaum's (2011) proposals of capital accumulation as relevant only insofar as it guarantees human development. As defined by these authors, the opportunity to lead the type of life deemed convenient guarantees decent standards of life quality. Although instrumental ideals still frame this vision, it represents an interesting way to question the excessive importance given to the mere accumulation of capital for its own sake and to ask for other forms of constructing the notion of development in light of alternative vocabularies. For example, having social equality as an aim could be an important platform for breaking down the stratification that tends to be established between languages themselves, according to their allegedly universal instrumental value. As some participants state,

> *I do not consider that there is a general criterion applicable to the importance of each language*. This depends on what you want in terms of work and the opportunities you want to achieve in the different fields of interest. (Kelly, Questionnaire)
>
> There is a lack of awareness of the reality…*when other languages do not appear, it shows that we still need to work on the awareness of the importance of these other languages*. The importance is indisputable. If it does not appear in the research, people did not answer because they are not aware of that importance. (Patricia, Focus interview)

Both excerpts emphasize that all languages are necessary if one takes a more localized view of their role. Patricia's comment, in particular, shows that the subsidiary value that tends to be given to languages other than English is often caused by ignorance. In other words, the dominant discourses that privilege English have overshadowed other instrumental and intrinsic meanings more associated with other languages. The concern for social inequality makes it easier to realize how the hierarchies between languages are not helpful.

Finally, another point representing alternative postdevelopment cracks is constituted by what Sabrina called "personal satisfaction." "Pleasure," "passion," "creativity," "interaction," and "sociability" were concepts that, despite not being quite recurrent in the analysis of teachers' social representations toward languages, create a semantic framework that helps to counteract the instrumental hermeticity with which language training tends to be understood. Echoing Campos Bandrés (2021), it could be argued that the emotional dimension underscored here, the enjoyment and satisfaction of self-interests, could well be understood as another form of development we should consider more.

Conclusions

Questioning dominant and anglonormative narratives about the relation between language learning and possibilities for socioeconomic development from the teachers' perspective in Colombia has allowed us to identify several tensions and possibilities for more critical configurations. First, perhaps in response to the Eurocentric dynamics in which teacher education programs are developed in the country (Castañeda-Trujillo, 2018; Le Gal, 2018), the centrality of the market and the satisfaction of real instrumental needs stand out as drives for L2 learning; hence, the uncritical acceptance of the supremacy of English reported here. This absence of a critical perspective is evidenced primarily in the instrumentalist vision of languages as tools for accessing job opportunities and cultural exchanges, always privileging Western values, which underline a naturalized colonial worldview. Teachers' representations seem to be aligned with the neoliberal educational system, which parametrizes competences, achievements, and skills, a system where education itself is framed within the values of the market. This dominant understanding is problematic, as it leaves aside the local context's particular needs, problems, and possibilities, characterized, as pointed out above, by huge social gaps.

On the other hand, following Walsh (2017) and Escobar (2019), the lens of postdevelopment has made it possible to detect "cracks" to cultivate alternative meanings, which are less instrumental and more sensitive to local social realities. One of them is the possibility of constructing cultural identities from a more critical and less functional positioning towards the status quo, in which language teaching can also serve to question structural inequalities among diverse sociocultural groups. Relatedly, a concern for social equality was identified as a constituent factor of socioeconomic development. This concern represents a counternarrative to purely economistic, instrumental, and anglonormative visions by implying the need to question and overturn different types of social hierarchies, including those that tend to be established between languages themselves as more/less valuable. A third possibility, from the postdevelopment angle, is the emotional dimension, which draws attention to the relation between learning languages and the satisfaction of particular interests, achievements, and passions, which can be viewed as relevant spheres of individual and, thus, collective development.

Identifying both alignments and critiques of neoliberal views of L2 illustrates the complexity and contradictions of the social representations teachers have construed around their practice. Interestingly, the alignment with the predominant hegemonic positionings paradoxically represents the main path of action to build more plural development options to deconstruct the current neoliberal-colonial discourse, which permeates the teaching work per se. For instance, for the modern language program analyzed, the views discussed above underline neglect for the local since the interests, needs, and resources specific to our context and individual motivation, beyond the economistic level, tend to be eluded or denied. Therefore, an initial step towards a more pluralistic and reflective approach to development would be the recognition of this uncritical positioning, which would open the space for a less monolithic and hermetic approach to development. The possible opening to multiple possibilities of thinking about development, considering the social and political particularities, and consequently the local linguistic and cultural diversities, is an invitation to understand that instrumentalist motivations represent only one possible dimension of socioeconomic development and that investigating and recognizing other alternatives is a critical endeavor we could all contribute to from our L2 classrooms.

References

Block, D. (2018). Some thoughts on education and the discourse of global neoliberalism. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *18*(5), 576–584. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2018.1501851

Bonilla-Carvajal, C. A., & Tejada-Sánchez, I. (2016). Unanswered questions in Colombia's foreign language education policy. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *18*(1), 185–201. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v18n1.51996

Bourdieu, P. (2002). *La distinción: criterios y bases sociales del gusto* (M. Ruiz de Elvira, Trans.). Taurus. (Original work published 1979)

Bresser Pereira, L. C. (2019). Models of the developmental state. *Revista Cepal*, (128), 35–47. https://doi.org/10.18356/876f838e-en

British Council. (2015). *English in Colombia: An examination of policy, perceptions and influencing factors*. https://bit.ly/3Wop8YR

Brutt-Griffler, J. (2002). *World English: A study of its development*. Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853595790

Calderón Paredes, E. (2014). *Educación para el buen vivir: alcances y limitaciones* [Master's thesis, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, Sede Ecuador]. https://repositorio.flacsoandes.edu.ec/handle/10469/8575

Campos Bandrés, I. O. (2021). Actitudes de los maestros en formación hacia las lenguas extranjeras y la educación multilingüe. *Revista Electrónica Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado*, *24*(2), 67–80. https://doi.org/10.6018/reifop.428651

Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford University Press.

Canagarajah, A. S. (2005). *Reclaiming the local in language policy and practice*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410611840

Castañeda-Trujillo, J. (2018). Voices from the south: English language pre-service teachers' contributions to ELTE. In Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación (Ed.), *ELT local research agendas I* (pp. 159–179). Editorial Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas.

Coleman, H. (2010). *The English language in development*. British Council. https://bit.ly/3NdmN8W

Coleman, H. (2011). Developing countries and the English language: Rhetoric, risks, roles and recommendations. In H. Coleman (Ed.), *Dreams and realities: Developing countries and the English language* (pp. 9–21). British Council.

Cruz-Arcila, F. (2017). Interrogating the social impact of English language teaching policies in Colombia from the vantage point of rural areas. *Australian and International Journal of Rural Education*, *27*(2), 46–60. https://doi.org/10.47381/aijre.v27i2.117

Cruz-Arcila, F., Solano-Cohen, V., Rincón, A., Lobato Junior, A., & Briceño-González, M. (2022). Second language learning and socioeconomic development: Interrogating anglonormativity from the perspective of pre-service modern language professionals. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *23*(5), 466–487. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2021.2006944

Cuestas-Caza, J. (2019). El discurso del desarrollo en las políticas públicas: del postdesarrollo a la crítica decolonial. *Trayectorias Humanas Trascontinentales*, (4). https://doi.org/10.25965/trahs.1561

Escobar, A. (2005). El "postdesarrollo" como concepto y práctica social. In D. Mato (Coord.), *Políticas de economía, ambiente y sociedad en tiempos de globalización* (pp. 17–31). Universidad Central de Venezuela.

Escobar, A. (2014). *La invención del desarrollo* (D. Ochoa, Trans.; 2nd ed.). Universidad del Cauca. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1pbwvtf (Original work published 1996)

Escobar, A. (2019). Transiciones civilizatorias. In A. Khotari, A. Salleh, A. Escobar, F. Demaria, & A. Acosta (Coords.), *Pluriverso: un diccionario del postdesarrollo* (pp. 458–461). Icaria.

German Foreign Office. (2020). *Deutsch als Fremdsprache weltweit: Datenerhebung 2020*. https://bit.ly/3SKinqV

González-Moncada, A. (2009). On alternative and additional certifications in English language teaching: The case of Colombian EFL teachers' professional development. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *14*(2), 183–209. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.2638

Guerrero, C. H. (2010). The portrayal of EFL teachers in official discourse: The perpetuation of disdain. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *12*(2), 33–49.

Hurie, A. H. (2018). English for peace? Coloniality, neoliberal ideology, and discursive expansion in Colombia Bilingüe. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *23*(2), 333–354. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.v23n02a09

Kachru, Y., & Smith, L. E. (2008). *Cultures, contexts, and world Englishes*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203891346

Le Gal, D. (2018). English language teaching in Colombia: A necessary paradigm shift. *Matices en Lenguas Extranjeras*, (12), 154–187. https://doi.org/10.15446/male.n12.73267

Mackenzie, L. (2022). Linguistic imperialism, English, and development: Implications for Colombia. *Current Issues in Language Planning, 23(2), 137–156*. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2021.1939977

MAECI. (2014). *L'Italiano nel mondo che cambia*. https://bit.ly/3NbnNu7

McKinney, C. (2016). *Language and power in post-colonial schooling: Ideologies in practice*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315730646

Mena, M., & García, O. (2021). "Converse racialization" and "un/marking" language: The making of a bilingual university in a neoliberal world. *Language in Society*, *50*(3), 343–364. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404520000330

Ministerio de Educación Nacional. (2005). Bases para una nación bilingüe y competitiva. *Altablero*, (37). http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1621/article-97498.html

Ministerio de Educación Nacional. (2014). *Programa Nacional de Inglés 2015–2025: documento de socialización*.

Ministerio de Educación Nacional. (2022, February 17). *Icfes presentó a la comunidad educativa el Informe de los Resultados agregado Saber 11 en 2021*. https://bit.ly/3gINZA3

Mohanty, A. (2017). Multilingualism, education, English and development: Whose development? In H. Coleman (Ed.), *Multilingualisms and development* (pp. 261–280). British Council.

Nussbaum, M. C. (2011). *Creating capabilities: The human development approach*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674061200

Petracci, M., & Kornblit, A. L. (2007). Representaciones sociales: una teoría metodológicamente pluralista. In A. L. Kornblit (Ed.), *Metodologías cualitativas en Ciencias Sociales: modelos y procedimientos de análisis* (pp. 91–111). Biblos.

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford University Press.

Rincón Restrepo, C. (2020). L'enseignement du français dans l'espace universitaire en Colombie : deux cents ans d'histoire, mais quel avenir? *Synergies Chili*, (16), 49–62.

Sachs, W. (2019). El diccionario del desarrollo reconsiderado. In A. Khotari, A. Salleh, A. Escobar, F. Demaria, & A. Acosta (Coords.), *Pluriverso: un diccionario del postdesarrollo*. Icaria.

Scano, S., Junique, C., & Vergès, P. (2002). *Ensemble de programmes permettant l'analyse des évocations, EVOC2000: Manuel d'utilsateur*.

Sen, A. (2009). *The idea of justice*. Allen Lane. https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674054578

Sen, A. (2015). Development as freedom (1999). In J. T. Roberts, A. B. Hite, & N. Chorev (Eds.), *The globalization and development reader: Perspectives on development and global change* (pp. 525–548, 2nd ed.). Blackwell Publishing.

Silva, H. (2011). *Langues et territoires: le statut du français en Amérique Latine*. Cahier Senghor de la Franchophonie.

Soto, C., & Pérez-Milans, M. (2018). Language, neoliberalism, and the commodification of pedagogy. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *18*(5), 490–506. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2018.1501844

Vergara Erices, L., & Rozas Poblete, M. (2014). Conceptualizaciones del desarrollo desde lo cultural: avances y desafíos en un mundo diverso. *Revista Líder*, *25*, 9–34.

Wachelke, J., & Wolter, R. (2011). Criterios de construcción y elaboración de informes para el análisis prototípico de representaciones sociales. *Psicología: Teoría e Investigación*, *27*(4), 521–526.

Walsh, C. (2010). Interculturalidad crítica y educación intercultural. In J. Viaña, L. Tapia, & C. Walsh (Eds.), *Construyendo interculturalidad crítica* (pp. 75–96).

Instituto Internacional de Integración del Convenio Andrés Bello.

Walsh, C. (2017). Gritos, grietas y siembras de vida: entretejeres de lo pedagógico y lo decolonial. In C. Walsh (Ed.), *Pedagogías decoloniales. Prácticas insurgentes de resistir,(re) existir y (re)vivir* (tomo II, pp. 17–48). Abya Yala.

World Bank Group. (2021). *Hacia la construcción de una sociedad equitativa en Colombia*. https://bit.ly/3SGqHIv

Ziai, A. (2007). Development discourse and its critics: An introduction to post-development. In A. Ziai (Ed.), *Exploring post-development: Theory and practice, problems and perspectives* (pp. 3–17). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203962091

About the Authors

Ferney Cruz-Arcila holds a PhD in Language Discourse and Communication from King's College London. His research interests center on bilingual education, language policies, teacher identity, rural education, and the relations of all these elements with social justice issues. He works at the Languages Department of Universidad Pedagógica Nacional.

Vanessa Solano-Cohen holds a PhD in Social Studies of Latin America from UNC, Argentina. Her research interests involve the relationship between literature and violence, the discursive configuration of migrants in the media, and the social construction of illness. She works as a professor at the Department of Languages at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.

María Liliana Briceño-González holds an MA in Comparative Literature from the University of Vienna in Austria. Her current research interests are the teaching strategies of German as a foreign language and the relationship between language learning and socioeconomic development. She works at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Universidad EAN.

Ana Rincón holds a PhD in Modern Languages from Universidad de Córdoba (Spain). Her research interests are in second language teaching and learning and pragmatics. She is an associate professor at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Universidad EAN.

Antonio Lobato-Junior holds a PhD in Education from Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas (Colombia). His research interests focus on higher education, social representations theory, learning processes, and teacher training. He works at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Universidad EAN.

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.102348

Constructing Community Knowledge by Exploring a Group of High School Students' Funds of Knowledge

Construcción del conocimiento de comunidad mediante la exploración de los fondos de conocimiento de un grupo de estudiantes de secundaria

Karol Castillo
Luz Dary Cárdenas
Sandra Lastra
Universidad del Tolima, Ibagué, Colombia

This two-cycle action research explores how Colombian students from rural and urban areas construct community knowledge by exploring funds of knowledge using dialogue journals. Thirty-three seventh graders from an urban school participated in the first phase and 19 sixth graders from a rural school and 18 eighth graders from an urban school in the second phase. Data were gathered through journals, artifacts, audio recordings, narratives, focus groups, and interviews. Results revealed how students learned to see and re-signify their communities and territory by exploring the knowledge held by their families and community members. Then dialogue journals were valuable tools to verbalize and communicate their perceptions and understandings about their communities and funds of knowledge.

Keywords: community knowledge, dialogue journals, funds of knowledge, rural and urban schools

Esta investigación-acción explora cómo estudiantes colombianos de zonas rurales y urbanas construyen el conocimiento de la comunidad mientras exploran sus fondos de conocimiento utilizando diarios de diálogo. El estudio siguió dos fases: en la primera participaron 33 estudiantes de grado séptimo de una escuela urbana, y en la segunda, 19 estudiantes de grado sexto de una escuela rural y 18 estudiantes de grado octavo de una escuela urbana. Los datos se recopilaron mediante diarios, artefactos, grabaciones, narraciones, un grupo focal y entrevistas. Los resultados revelaron cómo los estudiantes vieron y resignificaron sus comunidades y territorios explorando el conocimiento que poseen de sus familias y su comunidad. Así, los diarios de diálogo sirvieron para verbalizar y comunicar las percepciones y comprensiones de los estudiantes sobre sus comunidades y fondos de conocimiento.

Palabras clave: conocimiento de comunidad, diarios de diálogo, escuela rural y urbana, fondos de conocimiento

Karol Castillo https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2885-1897 · Email: klcastilloc@ut.edu.co
Luz Dary Cárdenas https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2439-8730 · Email: luzda389@hotmail.com
Sandra Lastra https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9133-429X · Email: splastra@ut.edu.co

This article is based on the thesis completed by Castillo and Cárdenas (2021). Professor Lastra acted as the supervisor of the thesis.

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Castillo, K., Cárdenas, L. D., & Lastra, S. (2023). Constructing community knowledge by exploring a group of high school students' funds of knowledge. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 25*(2), 129–146. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.102348

This article was received on April 28, 2022 and accepted on March 20, 2023.

Introduction

Communities have been recognized as groups of people that share common interests and live in particular areas called territories. Each community member possesses meaningful knowledge in different fields, either agriculture, cooking, mechanics, medicine, or other areas that make them unique. Lemke (1995) defines communities as "systems of doing, of social and cultural activities or practices, rather than as systems of doers, of human individuals per se" (p. 93). In this view, communities provide local knowledge constructed through time and transmitted by generations. As Corburn (2003) states, "local knowledge can also include information about local contexts or settings, including knowledge of specific characteristics, circumstances, events, and relationships, as well as important understandings of their meaning" (p. 421). All the knowledge held by communities constitutes a fundamental source for teaching and learning since it can bridge the gap between schools and students' realities, provoking more significant learning.

By exploring funds of knowledge, students and teachers can find possibilities to see their ways of living and territory, thus re-signifying who they are and their community. In addition, using mechanisms such as dialogue journals to verbalize and communicate their perceptions and understandings of their communities paves the way for authentic interactions, the actual use of language, and the possibility to see others, thus establishing relationships that transcend the distance and possible cultural and place differences. Considering these possibilities, two teachers from various locations and contexts joined forces to interact and build community knowledge by using dialogue journals and exploring their students' communities and funds of knowledge.

This study explores how students from rural and urban schools construct community knowledge by delving into their families' funds of knowledge and exchanging information about their community using dialogue journals. Students were stimulated to write about their family and community knowledge and share their perceptions and understandings of what they explored with other pals. This experience allowed students to see their territory, share culture, and learn from others' experiences. Teachers and students can make connections between classroom life and the world outside "when schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more" (Henderson & Mapp, 2002, p. 7).

This article reports the findings of an action-research study aimed at answering the following research question: How do students from rural and urban educational institutions construct community knowledge by exploring their funds of knowledge and using dialogue journals?

Theoretical Framework

This study drew on community-based pedagogy (CBP) principles that regard the community and the knowledge families hold as sources for curricular construction. Sharkey (2012) defines CBP as the "curriculum and practices that reflect knowledge and appreciation of the communities in which schools are located, and students and their families inhabit" (p. 11). It is an asset-based approach that emphasizes funds of knowledge as starting points for teaching and learning.

Funds of Knowledge

Funds of knowledge are based on the premise that all students and families are valuable and accumulate knowledge, skills, and cultural resources (Moll et al., 1992). Funds of knowledge build a bridge in which teachers connect with students' sociocultural, linguistic, and intellectual backgrounds, developing funds of identity (Marquez Kiyama & Rios-Aguilar, 2017). By exploring funds of knowledge, we attribute such value to students' knowledge drawn from their life experiences which can be nurtured and strengthened with teaching

practices beyond the classroom walls. As Cummins (1996, as cited in González et al., 2009) states, "our prior experience provides the foundation for interpreting new information. No learner is a blank slate" (p. 5).

In this vein, learning is a social practice that should be connected to students' lives, local histories, and community contexts (González et al., 2009), which is where funds of knowledge become a fundamental pillar in CBPs. These two intertwined frameworks provide a platform for teaching and learning. According to Lastra et al. (2018), "[CBP] involves the knowledge of the local communities, beliefs, constructs, and perceptions that all the people who belong to that community hold and share through everyday contact" (p. 211). In addition, Cooper and Levin (2011) also argue that CBP is an action-oriented method to help teachers learn more about their students' cultures, especially their homes and communities. When CBP is rooted in funds of knowledge and is used as a framework for classroom practices, teachers and students become more aware of their social responsibility. Community knowledge nourished by the family is central to curriculum and pedagogy (Freire & Macedo, 1987). In this respect, Murrell (2001, p. 6) states that schools should collaborate with parents and the community to provide classroom practices that involve their reality, experiences, and communities.

Exploring funds of knowledge in classrooms brings positive connections that stimulate learning and engage students in a more significant process. First, the connection with new learning content related to their context that at the same time supports their academic improvement (Subero et al., 2017). Second, the teacher–student connection (Barton & Tan, 2009) and students' empowerment (Esteban-Guitart et al., 2019) in which they feel their voices are heard by their classmates, who may share the same background or not, drawing on knowledge that is meaningful for the student. "The knowledge produced by students offers educators opportunities to learn from young people and to incorporate such knowledge as an integral part of their teaching" (Giroux, 2004, p. 66).

Community Knowledge

Community knowledge, also known as local knowledge, entails the richness of understandings, values, beliefs, customs, and traditions that each human community has created through time. This local knowledge is not a product constituted by the beliefs and practices of the past [but] is a process of negotiating dominant discourses and engaging in an ongoing construction of relevant knowledge in the context of [people's] history and social practice (Canagarajah, 2005, p. 13).

This local knowledge is the basis for the construction of new knowledge. We cannot ignore that this knowledge has a changing character, subject to the new changes that continue appearing around communities (Canagarajah, 2005). Local knowledge entails all the wisdom elders have, constituting a treasure trove of information beyond schooling because it is steeped in a community's context. Usually, it is knowledge acquired through survival. As such, it is part of the intangible heritage of families and communities; it is the accumulated knowledge of many generations and covers a wide diversity of context-based (rather than school-based) topics. Local knowledge is mainly "orally transmitted (from generation to generation) and is largely undocumented; it is based on experimentation, adaptation, and innovation and driven by the pragmatic demands of everyday life" (Šakić Trogrlić et al., 2019, "Conceptualising Local Knowledge" section, para. 7).

In this regard, local knowledge provides insights into how communities interact with their surroundings; it is context-bound and locally situated (Canagarajah, 2005). In other words, "local knowledge is the human capital of urban and rural communities" (FAO, n.d.). Local knowledge is present in people's discourses, reactions, and beliefs, showing how people face and respond to living conditions. In a rural community,

local knowledge also represents the way people produce (farming) and trade (income) their food. It is immersed in the social environment (inhabitant interactions) between family, friends, and neighbors. In conclusion, as Figure 1 illustrates, local knowledge entails the experiences, conceptions, and beliefs the members of a community hold.

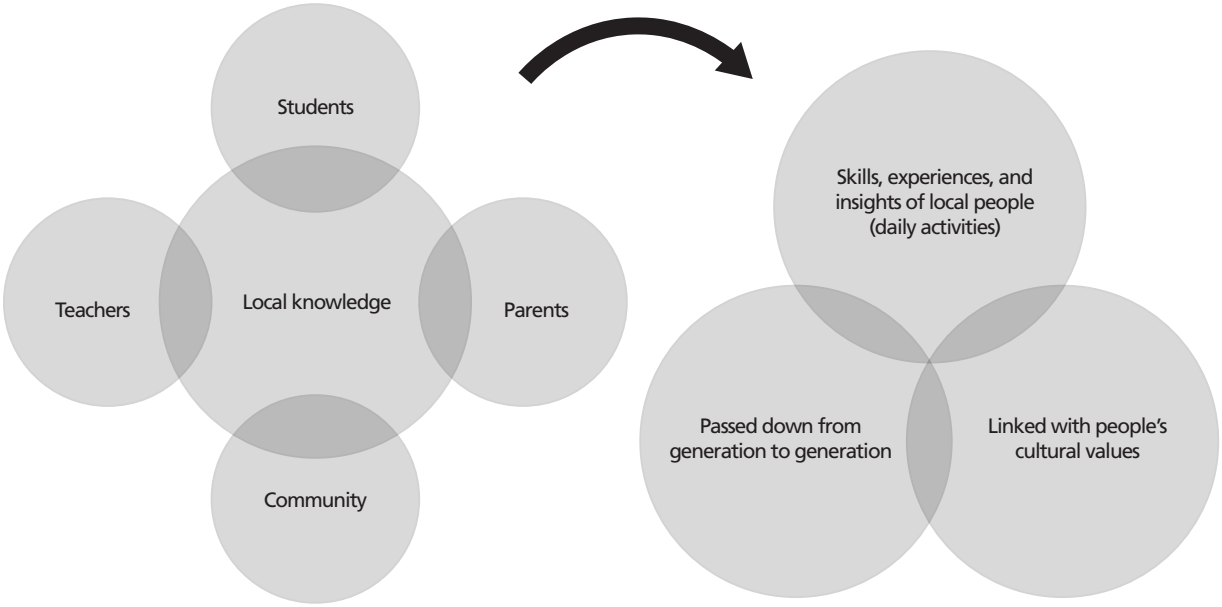
In recognition of this wealth of knowledge, schools must build bridges that allow significant connections between local knowledge and the curricular demands of educational institutions. When the curriculum brings students' backgrounds and social contexts into the classroom, the learning process becomes more authentic, facilitating the creation and integration of different types of knowledge.

Dialogue Journals

Dialogue journals are written conversations between two people, one-to-one, like pen pals. Dialogues can be done "live," as quick exchanges during class, or as "takeaways," longer, more leisurely letters written and answered at the correspondents' convenience (Daniels & Daniels, 2013, p. 100). The benefits of dialogue journals for students are broad: Students feel motivated and invited to constantly communicate their thoughts, feelings, and opinions to others based on topics they propose. Moreover, using dialogue journals in class allows teachers and students to participate in private written conversations to share feelings, understandings, experiences, and other academic activities (Hail et al., 2013). In our study, dialogue journals served as a bridge to establish connections and build relationships between rural and urban students to exchange real-life interactional conversations. Anderson et al. (2011) acknowledged the importance of "forming positive student–teacher relationships" (p. 270), especially in middle school when social disengagement becomes popular. This pedagogical tool was crucial to developing trust and confidence in teenage students, who typically reject writing and are shy about expressing their feelings.

Dialogue journals allow students to express themselves and help them improve their language skills at the lexical and grammatical levels. Additionally,

Figure 1. Constituents of Local Knowledge



the discursive and communicative aspects of writing can be enhanced. Students became more confident with people and their language abilities, and their willingness to write increased. Finally, they pointed out that they could express opinions, felt heard, and had a critical view of world issues. For our research, these insights guided the intention of motivating students to communicate their perceptions and understandings of their communities.

Method

This study was framed within a collaborative action-research design, which entails a deep inquiry into one's professional interactions and finding ways to understand and improve teaching practices (Riel, 2019). Similarly, collaborative action research "provides a path of learning from and through one's practice through a series of reflective stages that facilitate the development of progressive problem solving" (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993, as cited in Riel, 2019, p. 1). In this respect, our role was to plan the instructional design based on the study's objectives and the school curriculum. The teachers who carried out the plan were in constant dialogue with each other to follow up on the students' progress, the plan's course, and the data collected throughout the implementation.

A curricular unit was designed (see Appendix A) to integrate the realities of the students, their communities, and their funds of knowledge into the curriculum. The objective was to make this knowledge visible and to open interaction spaces through dialogue journals, provoking the development of meaningful literacies for students.

Context and Participants

This study occurred at two Colombian public schools: one in an urban area (the city of Ibagué, the capital of the Department of Tolima) and the other in a rural town (in the same Department). The participants volunteered to participate, and their parents signed a consent letter after being informed about the study. The study was carried out in two phases. A group of 33 seventh graders (average age: 13–14 years) from the urban school participated in the first phase. Teacher L from the urban school explored dialogue journals to encourage students to talk about their neighborhoods. As the results obtained in this first moment exceeded expectations, Teacher L shared her experience in an academic setting in which Teacher K, motivated by the experience and in agreement with Teacher L, decided to expand the study by exchanging students' dialogue journals and exploring knowledge of both participants' communities (rural and urban); that is when the second phase of the study took place. Two groups participated in this second phase: 19 sixth graders from the urban school whose average age range was 10–11 years (of the 19 participants, one was 12 and another 15). The second group comprised 18 eighth graders from a rural school whose average age range was 12–13 years (only one student was 14). Teacher K taught this group. The students were selected considering their positive responses in English class and their interest in the study. For ethical reasons, participating students were numbered and given a code based on whether they were from a rural school (RS) or an urban school (US). For instance, Student 1 from the rural school was coded as RS-Student 1.

Data Collection Process

At the beginning of the implementation, a needs analysis (see Appendix B) was applied to the participants in the study's first phase to explore their opinions about the English class and their preferences regarding methodology and class activities. This instrument revealed students' feelings and expectations of the class and provided information that guided Teacher L to use journals to explore students' neighborhoods and give them authentic motives to write and exchange information with her. This was the first approach to students' voices. Afterward, the

teacher designed and administered a survey and a questionnaire to collect their opinions about writing in English and using journals in class.

Students' positive responses to the use of dialogue journals guided Teacher L in planning the first phase of this study. Students mapped their communities and participated in different activities in English class. They had to write about their communities and families in journals they designed following personal criteria, and the students exchanged the journals with the teacher every Friday. From the beginning, Teacher L agreed with students that the journals were to be read just by her. The improvement in students' writing and responses was evident, with more accurate use of English, longer messages, and positive reactions to the teacher's responses.

Based on the results obtained in the first phase, and after an academic dialogue with Teacher K, both teachers decided to work together to further explore the students' funds of knowledge by using dialogue journals in the second phase. Both teachers planned their pedagogical intervention in a curricular unit (see Appendix A). It included the moments and all the activities students carried out throughout the pedagogical implementation; the curricular unit exhibits the community events students explored, the actions and the different assignments they completed, and the family and community knowledge they explored.

In the second phase of the study, data were collected through students' artifacts (e.g., posters, infographics, and brochures) and interviews with students' relatives and community members. These instruments allowed us to identify and analyze students' funds of knowledge and perceptions of their community. Another instrument was the students' dialogue journal, in which they wrote about topics related to family and personal anecdotes, feelings, understandings, and experiences. Students from both schools shared their journals once a week within their groups and got responses and comments from their pals. Both teachers wrote narratives about the most spontaneous moments of the implementation and their reflections. Besides these instruments, a focus group, guided by Teachers L and K, was held via Zoom at the end of the process to explore students' reactions and the most significant lessons drawn from the experience. Students from both schools participated and had the chance to meet for the first time.

Data Analysis

The analysis of results followed the principles of the grounded theory approach. First, the initial coding resulted from a careful reading of data from each instrument, which is a "process of analyzing qualitative text data by taking them apart to see what they yield before putting the data back together in a meaningful way" (Creswell, 2015, as cited in Elliott, 2018, p. 2850). This initial coding expressed in marginal notes provided preliminary themes. Afterward, we used memo-writing to study the data and codes in new ways, and we interpreted data analytically and identified emerging patterns to develop theories about them (Hull, 2013). Then we proposed tentative categories by exploring the theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2012) to refine those preliminary categories into saturated categories (Coyne, 1997). All this process led to five preliminary categories:

1. Characterizing community funds of knowledge: Unveiling cultural richness,
2. Rediscovering family as firm upright support for students' communities,
3. Understanding local knowledge derived from community experiences,
4. Bearing out emotions regarding students' community, and
5. Re-signifying writing.

After exhaustive analysis and reviewing of data, we observed the possibility of merging Categories 1 and 2 since they shared elements that could be repetitive when presented individually. Likewise, in Categories

4 and 5, the results from one category were implicit in the other. Then, three categories were finally stated.

Data were validated using member checking, a technique that allows researchers to increase the authenticity, goodness, plausibility, and credibility of the inquiry they conduct (Carlson, 2010) and to understand in a better way the students' experiences and the significance of those experiences (Candela, 2019). This makes it more than a validation tool but also a reflective experience. Member checking also "consists of taking data and interpretations back to the participants in the study so that they can confirm the credibility of the information and the narrative account" (Laryea, 2020, p. 93).

Findings

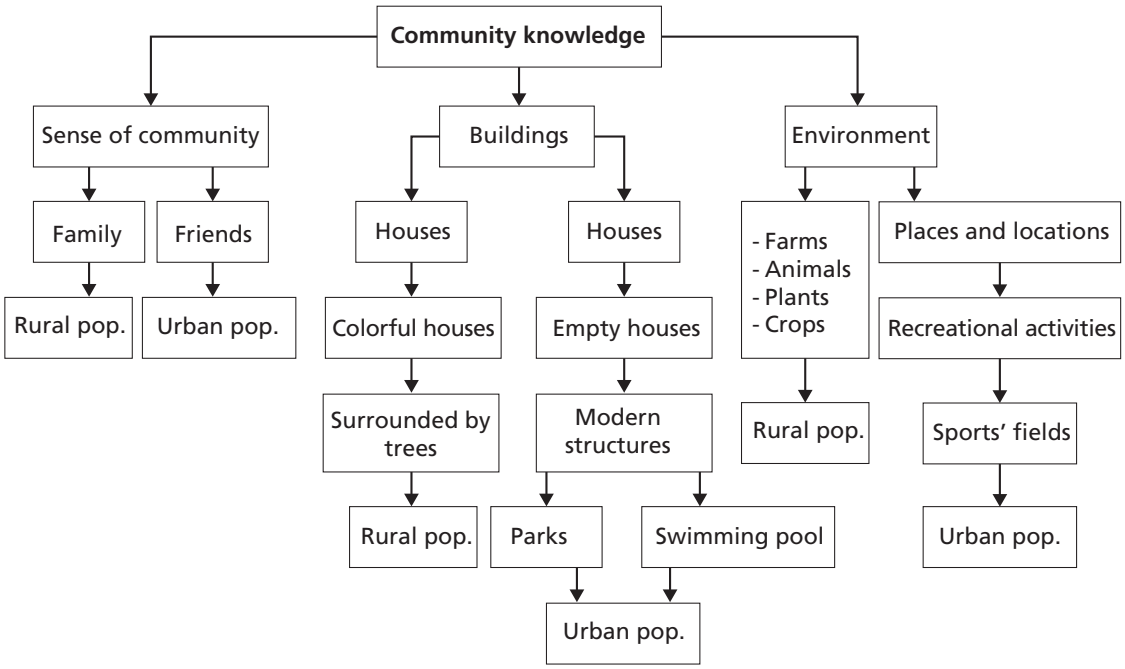
This section describes how participants constructed community knowledge as they explored their funds of knowledge. These ways have been grouped into three main categories: (a) Characterizing Community Funds of Knowledge and Building Significant Connections, (b) Building Confidence by Understanding Local Knowledge as a Result of Seeing and Sharing Community Experiences, and (c) Re-Signifying Community Knowledge and Bearing out Emotions.

Characterizing Community Funds of Knowledge and Building Significant Connections

This category reports a deep analysis of participants' views and insights regarding the concept of community. Significant connections were evident in students' reports and class discussions. Firstly, students connected the community with the territory; the geographical space was linked to ways of living, houses, locations, families, animals, pets, individuals, and activities, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Students feel proud of the natural environment they have, as a student claims in the following excerpt: "There is my house, it is big and . . . family big, my

Figure 2. Conceptual Map Compiling Students' Perceptions of Community as a Territory



house has many streams, this is my pig, there are many animals" (RS-Student 1, community poster). There is a strong association between the territory and the richness of the community; its plantations and representative crops define its territory. The students' houses were places of encounter, places to share. The territory is also associated with the people the students relate with. "My house is the place where I spend most of the time, with my family…my friends are a great company and distraction when I am depressed" (US-Student 3, community poster).

Secondly, the concept of community was connected with others' ways of living. Students focused the descriptions of their communities on their friends, sports fields, and zones of entertainment. People around them are an important part of their lives and are present in their idea about the community.

Thirdly, for the participants, the community is connected with culture, beliefs, customs, and ways of living. Mapping their communities made them pay close attention to what surrounded them; walking around and taking photographic evidence opened the door to see their territory and all they moved and lived in. By seeing their community, participants could portray the richness of their territory represented by the individuals and the activities carried out in that place. Thus, the concept of community for these students was linked to individuals, animals, and the social, economic, and religious activities in that specific community. As two students state:

> The celebrations in my town are very beautiful, people from all over the country go, and we celebrate the mountaineer's day. (US-Student 1, infographic)
>
> On family vacations, we go out every Sunday and eat something, we go to the church every 15 days, the vegetable cream is the special food of the house…family festivities are celebrated by going for a walk…with my brother we use the ball; Jerson, my brother, is the funniest person. (US-Student 2, infographic)

Exploring funds of knowledge allows teachers to see students and connect with their sociocultural, linguistic, and intellectual backgrounds (Marquez Kiyama & Rios-Aguilar, 2017). Using funds of knowledge also connects learning to students' lives and the community they represent (González et al., 2009). Teachers are invited to rethink the course content, negotiate meaning and curriculum with the students, involve families in class activities, and generate community projects that bring social proposals. In this vein, dialogue journals became instruments to verbalize students' perceptions, illustrate their contexts, and provide a clear vision of who they are, where they come from, and their understanding of family. The following excerpt illustrates the student's point of view about the experience of sharing dialogue journals:

> Dear friend, thank you for sharing everything in your life, your adventures, the place where you live, what you told me through is very nice, I would like to go one day to meet you and you will show me how beautiful Guasimal is. Where you see, me it would be easy to get to know and that you were the one to show me the landscapes that Guasimal has and I hope that we continue to communicate and that could be your friend and then thank you very much for all friends and that you and your family are very well. From your friend: RS-Student 2. (Journal entry)

It is evident how dialogue journals provide meaningful ways of communicating ideas when students write for real audiences and get authentic responses. Thus, writing turns into meaningful social practice.

Building Confidence by Understanding Local Knowledge as a Result of Seeing and Sharing Community Experiences

Students understood their funds of knowledge when they could depict their daily events, family activities, and relationships with different family

members. Discovering each other's world brought such significant meaning for the participants. As one of them describes: "It is interesting to see the way [students in rural areas] live, to see their daily routine, the difference between living there and in the city; it makes us value what we have, and that is something beautiful" (US-Student 1, focus group).

Interacting with members of their families, neighbors, and other actors in their communities helped students appreciate the lifestyle of others and make connections between their personal and family experiences. In this respect, one student states: "Uh...I learned about what my partner liked, I learned about the places she had visited, I learned about the things she liked to do, religion, her favorite subjects" (US-Student 2, focus group). We can observe that authentic communication flows without any linguistic restriction when students have significant topics to write or talk about. Students felt confident talking about their family and community, and language served as a vehicle to communicate what they felt identified with. Feeling confident to express, respond, react, and share results from having authentic topics to dialogue. The exploration of funds of knowledge lets students make their families and communities visible.

At the same, their context and the knowledge that individuals hold about a specific space become meaningful when such knowledge is associated with feelings of tranquility and peace. Even for those living in the city, nature becomes valuable because it constitutes a territory of serenity and color. Valuing nature is rooted in the ability to discover the relationship between the countryside, the animals, and the activities of the community members. Appreciation, acknowledgment, and empathy amid diversity were manifested in the dialogues, and the expressions participants in the city used when referring to their partners in rural areas, and vice versa. All this community knowledge observed and discussed by students throughout their class activities allowed them to explore ways of describing, narrating, and reacting, turning all these communicative intentions into authentic content for the English class:

> I like the poster of your community because it is very quiet here, because there are many animals and a connection with nature. I call my attention to your community because in the place you live in it is very quiet and there are not as many cars as in the city, the animals, crops, and rivers that you have are very cool. (US-Student 4, dialogue journal)

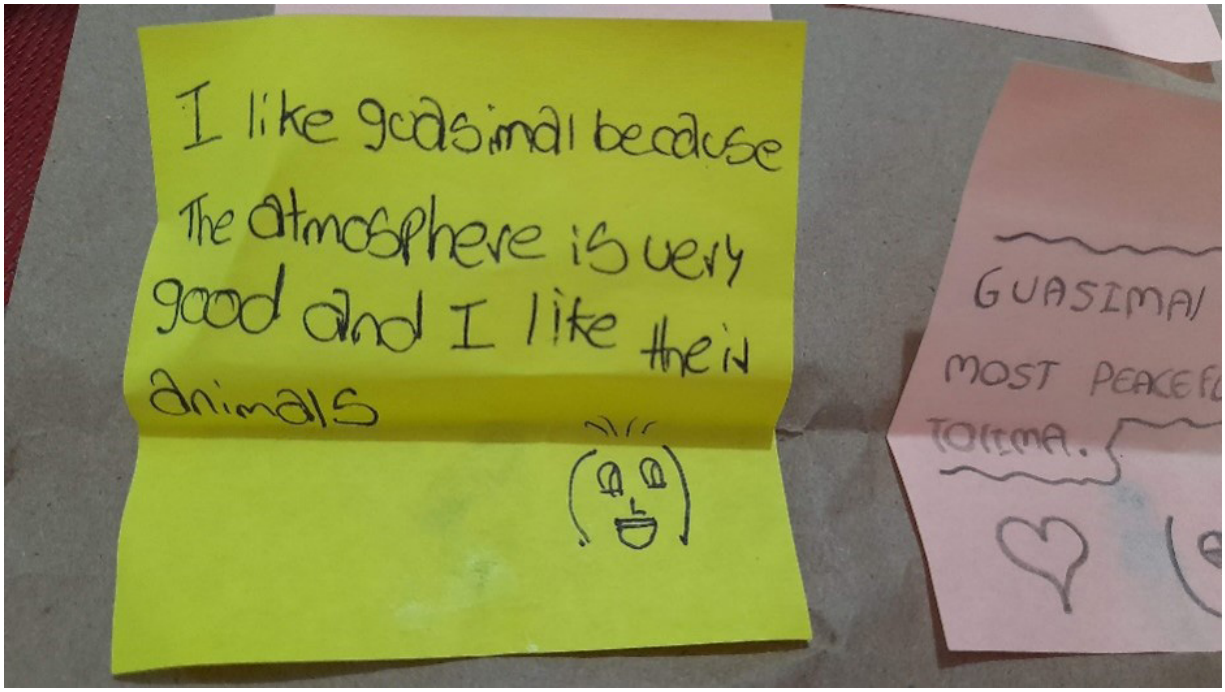
Visiting local knowledge which is locally situated (Canagarajah, 2005) paves the way for contextualized teaching and learning, which makes explicit connections between the class activities and materials and the local knowledge students hold. These connections provoke authentic interactions and let students open themselves and gain confidence when expressing their perspectives, emotions, or reactions because this knowledge becomes their capital and the hallmark of their identity (FAO, n.d.).

Dialogue journals in class allowed students to tell their activities to others and react to the differences between one area and the other, to find meeting points and characteristics that make them unique. Furthermore, students became aware of their cultural richness, their traditions, and the joy of sharing them with other people, as Figure 3 shows.

Re-Signifying Community Knowledge and Bearing out Emotions

This category aims to reveal all the emotions that surfaced in the students while exploring their communities and exchanging journals. They narrated their stories and reported on the different elements they could re-signify when observing their community and exploring the knowledge of their families, friends, and neighbors. These feelings and perceptions are grouped into four big ideas.

Figure 3. Dialogue Journal Entry



Enjoying and Strengthening the Sense of Belonging

Exploring their communities and interacting with their members served as an eye-opener to discover the beauty of their territory and all the wisdom their families hold in their activities. Learning about rural and urban communities made them feel proud of their territories and broadened their perspective of the other's community. Students embraced their surroundings, natural resources, backgrounds, traditions, values, typical food, and lifestyle. In this respect, one of the participants states (see also Figure 4):

> Well...I really enjoyed sharing with you...here my partner is eh...it was nice to share everything we liked...what we liked to do during the holidays with our family, to know a little about ourselves...it was very interesting, it was very nice eh...to see how...to know how to value people, that was like the message that got to be the hardest, eh? to know how to value what we have and thank you very much for sharing with us, that was so nice. (US-Student 5, focus group)

Acknowledging Others

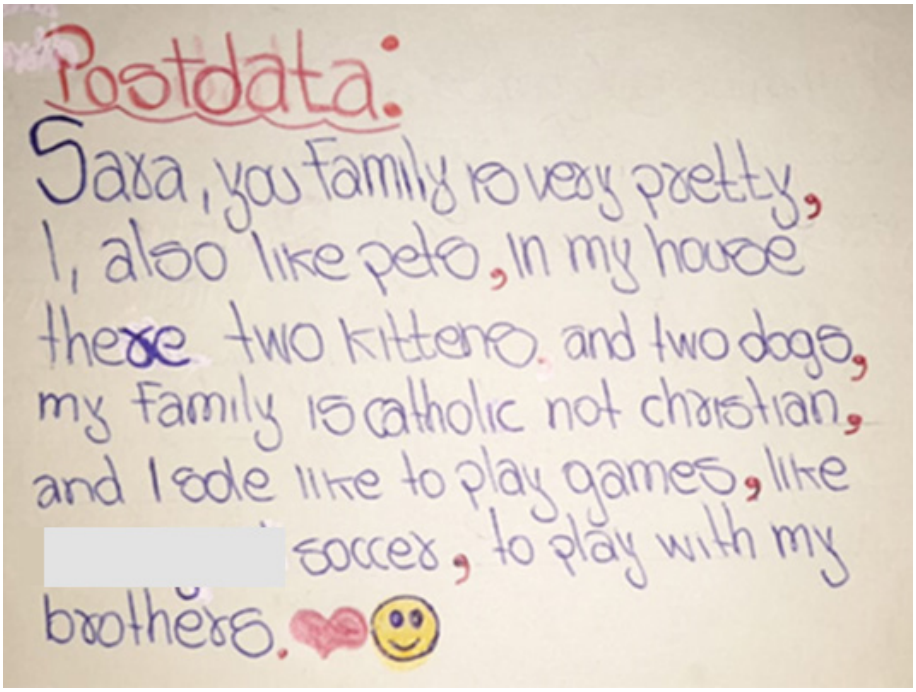
Comments written in the dialogue journals as reactions to the information participants exchanged made visible feelings of empathy, admiration, interest, and curiosity in students from rural and urban contexts. Their comments and reactions are the results of acknowledgment and appreciation of their environment; this is evident through positive comments that magnify the place they come from:

> Dear student, I thank you for having shared your life with me, even if I don't know you, I hope you are a person with a wonderful future and hopefully our teacher will agree so that one day we can visit your institution. (US-Student 6, dialogue journal)

Emotions Play a Relevant Role in Learning

Besides the feelings of excitement, there is once again the happiness of sharing the experiences of a community with other students from alternate

Figure 4. Student's Comment About Infographics (US-Student 2, dialogue journal)



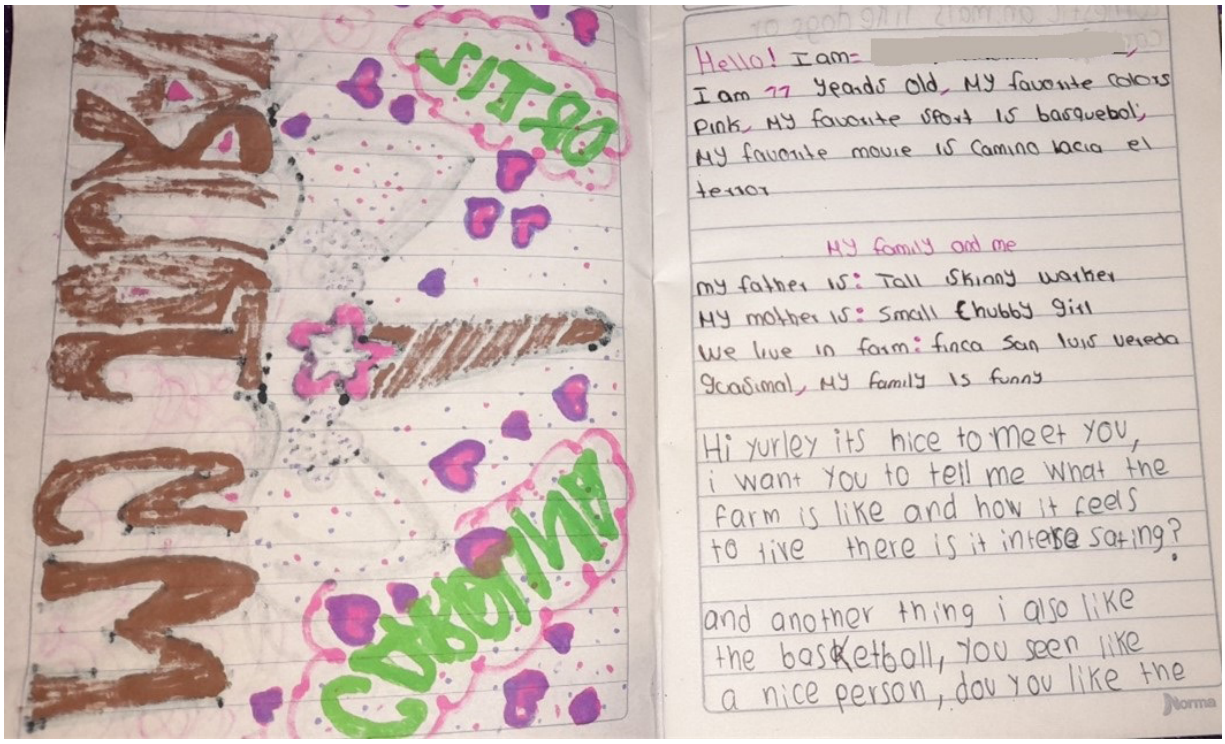
contexts, the enchantment to know other realities, the expectation of a subsequent encounter, the enjoyment of meeting new people, the joy of having a voice and reflecting in the company of others on the differences of each community, and above all, the hope, at the end of the project, to meet the other participants face to face. A student describes her feelings in the following excerpt:

> Ehhh...well...I felt very happy, the truth is that when the teacher told us that we were going to interact with other classmates eh...I felt very happy because it is a nice way to get to know people...also...as I said...a lot of reflection.... because, before, I didn't have the same classmate but I also had another classmate, because with the notebooks and the life experiences they told us were eh...sometimes very nice, sometimes very sad and like...that made you nostalgic and at the same time happy...you went like a carousel of emotions so...that was...that was something very nice. (US-Student 4, focus group)

This project operated as a bridge of interaction between both environments, where all the participants not only reported but also learned about the practices of other students by bringing class their funds of knowledge. Gratitude and best wishes to all were the rewards for the great work.

This classwork type helps English teachers realize that emotions play a relevant role in teaching and learning. It is necessary nowadays to humanize education and understand that we work with individuals who are not only brains but hearts. Emotions can either trigger learning or turn into an obstacle. It is valid to bring teaching practices in which students have the possibility of experiencing and expressing what they feel. Bearing out emotions opens options to connect students with the classroom, and language becomes more significant because exploring communities awakens all the feelings we represent and hold, and all this together allows students to make their voices heard, as Figure 5 illustrates.

Figure 5. Dialogue Journal Entry



Discussion

Undeniably, exploring funds of knowledge and using dialogue journals to exchange experiences and knowledge provided relevant information about how teachers can benefit from students' backgrounds to construct knowledge in class. Murrell (2001) highlights the importance of supporting teaching-learning activities with a community-based practice that makes language significant for students while visiting and seeing their surroundings. He also argues that a community teacher "possesses and works to build on the knowledge of culture, community, and identity of children and families as the core of his/her teaching practice" (p. 2). The different practices that the students had throughout the implementation enabled them to map their communities, listen to the stories of their families and neighbors, and explore the knowledge they had regarding specific activities. This gave participants real possibilities for communication and authentic scenarios of interaction. By visiting their communities and inquiring about their cultural and economic activities, the students discovered themselves, and we, as teacher-researchers, got to know and understand the world of our students with whom we shared a tremendous amount of time. In addition, most of the teaching decisions were enlightened by all the knowledge students shared in class.

Exploring students' communities helped not only the participants but the teachers as well to find significant resources in the community. Family activities and knowledge became sources for curricular construction in which students established authentic connections between the target language and their realities and context. Gruenewald (2003) claims that individuals are the product of a lifetime of environmental and cultural education embodied

in our experiences of places. It is a must for schools to see those experiences and connect them to class to be explored, analyzed, and valued in such a manner that education would not be a core of content isolated from the students' world but a place where students can learn from their realities and make significant connections at school.

Dialogue journals to share information and experiences that resulted from the students' community exploration provoked "good conversations" (Bahadur Rana, 2018) in which students from both schools could express themselves and see their own and others' experiences in a two-way interaction. This allowed the students to bring their experiences into the classroom to establish connections with what they were learning at school, creating new knowledge (Bahadur Rana, 2018).

Participants discussed various family-related topics and issues with their peers as openly as they did with their teachers at the beginning of the research. At first, we thought students would be unwilling to share personal information with their peers. However, this was not the case, and the participants enthusiastically wrote about their families and personal lives in their artifacts. The participants felt equally respected, appreciated, and supported in both pairings, which would support Atwell's (1987) ideas that the writer's need for response can come from various sources. Most of the students' entries developed their appreciation for their communities and others, the value of their chores at home and on farms, as well as school duties, and the love of their family as a central part of their life.

Conclusions

The concept of community makes sense for students when they can observe the places they are part of. Students belong to places, live with people, and inhabit communities that hold the knowledge that can be explored and analyzed in class to make connections between the school curriculum and the realities of students. This study provides insights for teachers in rural and urban areas to see the richness around them, which can be used as a pedagogical and curricular resource.

Students expressed their motivation, confidence, and engagement to participate in meaning-making writing opportunities with peers in their dialogue journals. Exploring funds of knowledge and communities of students provided reasons to write about topics that come from their daily life and actual events. Dialogue journals facilitated communication and provided authentic scenarios of interaction.

The process of constructing community knowledge by exploring funds of knowledge provided connections that were significant for students. These connections went in three directions: First, connections with content tied to the student's culture. Seeing the community paves the way for authentic interactions, uncovering the richness of the place and the people that live in that specific space, which permeates teaching decisions and opens the door for authentic language practices. Second, connections between teachers and students: The former becomes a sort of researcher of the student's context and community by exploring their lifestyle, customs, and economic and social activities with students. Third, connections with pals to willingly share information and respond to each other's entries. Using dialogue journals, students pictured their understanding of their community with words and developed authentic conversation cycles that included spontaneous responses. Student–student dialogue journaling engaged them to write in English and made them feel respected, appreciated, and supported. Indeed, the reactions that emerged were always optimistic; the experienced emotions were happiness and excitement of doing research at home with their families, joy and hope to interact with other people different from their context, and inspiration to do future projects where their families are the base of the research.

In general, local knowledge is a valuable resource for teaching and learning, as people can explore their daily happenings and share their community knowledge, which is full of funds of knowledge that could be used in classrooms to engage families and turn that knowledge into significant input, worthy of being incorporated into the curriculum. The issue of rethinking and re-signifying the role of communities in Colombian education is of central importance since little attention has been paid to the student's previous experiences and backgrounds, the affective dimension in class, and the creation of safer classroom environments that boost students' learning (García Gutiérrez & Durán Narváez, 2017). This might be done by becoming educators who empower "students with a profound trust in people and their creative power" (Freire, 1968/2018, p. 24).

References

Anderson, D. H., Nelson, J. A. P., Richardson, M., Webb, N., & Young, E. L. (2011). Using dialogue journals to strengthen the student–teacher relationship: A comparative case study. *College Student Journal*, *45*(2), 269–288.

Atwell, N. (1987). *In the middle: Writing, reading, and learning with adolescents.* Heinemann.

Bahadur Rana, L. (2018). The use of dialogue journals in an ESL writing class from Vygostkyan perspective. *Journal of NELTA Surkhet*, *5*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.3126/jns.v5i0.19481

Barton, A. C., & Tan, E. (2009). Funds of knowledge and discourses and hybrid space. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, *46*(1), 50–73. https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.20269

Canagarajah, A. S. (Ed.). (2005). *Reclaiming the local in language policy and practice*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410611840

Candela, A. G. (2019). Exploring the function of member checking. *The Qualitative Report*, *24*(3), 619–628. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2019.3726

Carlson, J. A. (2010). Avoiding traps in member checking. *The Qualitative Report*, *15*(5), 1102–1113. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2010.1332

Castillo, K., & Cárdenas, L. D. (2021). *Constructing community knowledge from a rural and urban EFL community by exploring their funds of knowledge while using dialogue journals* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Universidad del Tolima.

Charmaz, K. (2012). The power and potential of grounded theory. *Medical Sociology Online*, *6*(3), 2–15. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/3ehJqMc

Cooper, J. E., He, Y., & Levin, B. B. (2011). *Developing critical cultural competence: A guide for 21st-century educators*. Corwin Press. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452275420

Corburn, J. (2003). Bringing local knowledge into environmental decision making: Improving urban planning for communities at risk. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *22*(4), 420–433. https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X03022004008

Coyne, I. T. (1997). Sampling in qualitative research. Purposeful and theoretical sampling; merging or clear boundaries? *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *26*(3), 623–630. https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.1997.t01-25-00999.x

Daniels, H., & Daniels, E. (2013). *The best-kept teaching secret: How written conversations engage kids, activate learning, grow fluent writers…K–12*. Corwin Press. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483389752

Elliott, V. (2018). Thinking about the coding process in qualitative data analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, *23*(11), 2850–2861. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.3560

Esteban-Guitart, M., Lalueza, J. L., Zhang-Yu, C., & Llopart, M. (2019). Sustaining students' cultures and identities: A qualitative study based on the funds of knowledge and identity approaches. *Sustainability*, *11*(12), 3400. https://doi.org/10.3390/su11123400

FAO. (n.d.). *What is local knowledge?* Retrieved from https://bit.ly/3ekW796

Freire, P. (2018). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. Bergman Ramos, Trans.). Bloomsbury. (Original work published 1968)

Freire, P., & Macedo, D. (1987). *Literacy: Reading the word and the world.* Praeger Publishers.

García Gutiérrez, C. A., & Durán Narváez, N. C. (2017). Revisiting the concept of self-efficacy as a language learning enhancer. *GIST - Education and Learning Research Journal*, (15), 68–95. https://doi.org/10.26817/16925777.391

Giroux, H. A. (2004). Cultural studies, public pedagogy, and the responsibility of intellectuals. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, *1*(1), 59–79. https://doi.org/10.1080/1479142042000180926

González, N., Moll, L. C., & Amanti, C. (Eds.). (2009). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. Taylor & Francis.

Gruenewald, D. A. (2003). The best of both worlds: A critical pedagogy of place. *Educational Researcher*, *32*(4), 3–12. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X032004003

Hail, C., George, S., & Hail, J. (2013). Moving beyond journaling to dialogues in writing. *Critical Questions in Education*, *4*(1), 42–51.

Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement*. National Center for Family & Community Connections With Schools.

Hull, S. (2013). *Doing grounded theory: Notes for the aspiring qualitative analyst*. https://doi.org/10.6084/M9.FIGSHARE.1050453

Laryea, E. W. D. (2020). *Exploring the factors that African refugee-background students identify as being helpful to their academic success* [Doctoral dissertation, Brock University]. https://bit.ly/3ZVE5wJ

Lastra, S. P., Durán, N. C., & Acosta, D. (2018). Community based pedagogy as an eye-opening for pre-service teachers' initial connections with the school curriculum. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *20*(2), 209–229. https://doi.org/10.14483/22487085.13047

Lemke, J. L. (1995). *Textual politics: Discourse and social dynamics.* Taylor & Francis.

Marquez Kiyama, J., & Rios-Aguilar, C. (Eds.). (2017). *Funds of knowledge in higher education: Honoring students' cultural experiences and resources as strengths.* Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315447322

Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & González, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, *31*(2), 132–141. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405849209543534

Murrell, P. C. (2001). *The community teacher: A new framework for effective urban teaching*. Teachers College Press.

Riel, M. (2019). *Understanding collaborative action research.* Center for Collaborative Action Research. https://base.socioeco.org/docs/center_for_collaborative_action_research.pdf

Šakić Trogrlić, R., Wright, G. B., Duncan, M. J., van den Homberg, M. J. C., Adeloye, A. J., Mwale, F. D., & Mwafulirwa, J. (2019). Characterizing local knowledge across the flood risk management cycle: A case study of Southern Malawi. *Sustainability*, *11*(6), 1681. https://doi.org/10.3390/su11061681

Sharkey, J. (2012). Editorial: Community-based pedagogies and literacies in language teacher education: Promising beginnings, intriguing challenges. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *17*(1), 9–13. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.11519

Subero, D., Vujasinović, E., & Esteban-Guitart, M. (2017). Mobilising funds of identity in and out of school. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *47*(2), 247–263. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2016.1148116

About the Authors

Karol Castillo holds a BA in English education and an MA in English didactics from Universidad del Tolima (Colombia). Currently, her research focus is on English didactics and community research.

Luz Dary Cárdenas holds a BA in Spanish and English Education from Universidad del Tolima (Colombia). She is pursuing an MA in English Didactics at Universidad del Tolima. She is a teacher in a public institution.

Sandra Lastra holds an MA in Applied Linguistics to English Teaching from Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas. She is a full-time professor at Universidad del Tolima. Her research focuses on teacher education and community research. Her current research projects are concerned with community-based pedagogy and rural education.

Appendix A: Curricular Unit

Weeks	*BEG (Basic English Rights)*	*Thematic focus*	*Learning aims*	*Grammar and vocabulary structures*	*Activities*	*Resources*	*Expected outcome*
3 & 4	Writes short and simple texts about familiar actions, experiences, and plans using a sequence of images and a pre-established model for the text. A simple text whose topic is connected to familiar events. For example, whenever the student reads or listens to a text, they can answer questions.	My Journal	To identify words and phrases in simple written texts related to personal information and daily activities.	**Lexical:** Family, likes, food, personality adjectives Expressions of likes and dislikes **Grammar:** Present tense Wh- questions	**Warm-up activity** Based on the previous activities, Students write questions about the community in their journals for their partners. Students write questions to their family members about their likes, special times, habits, trips, lifestyles, and others. **Research at home:** Based on the previous activity, students design and prepare infographics.	Classroom resources Journals Notebook	Posters Journal Infographics
5 & 6	Expresses emotions and feelings about a situation or specific topic related to their family or school and presents supporting reasons clearly and simply. Briefly narrates current facts, daily situations, or personal experiences orally and in written form.	Our Anecdotes	To describe beliefs and emotions. To write a short descriptive and narrative text on the characteristics of the person, places, and events orally and in writing. To identify expressions on daily subjects based on short descriptive oral and written texts.	**Lexical:** Family, likes, food, personality adjectives Expressions to narrate: *One day, I went for a walk.* *Marcos has been sick for a while.* *My mother used to say mean things.* *A long time ago/ Once upon a time* **Grammar:** Simple past tense Connectors of sequence	**Warm-up activity** Students ask their relatives for a brief story about a strange, curious, or funny event that has happened to them (the anecdote). Teachers explain narrative tenses. Interpretation, design, and production of anecdotes heard by family members in a booklet. Students shared brochures and described in their journals the reactions of their peers to the brochures.	Classroom resources	The anecdote Brochure

7 & 8	Describes people, activities, events, and personal experiences orally using simple phrases and sentences previously rehearsed with their classmates and teacher.	My Daily Routine	To describe orally situations related to topics of general interest. To identify expressions about daily topics using short descriptive oral and written texts. To make a simple oral description previously rehearsed about daily topics. To exchange information about daily topics through questions and answers.	**Lexical:** Hobbies: *Play sports* *Dance* *Listen to music* *Go to the movies* *Watch TV* *Ride a bike* *Collect things* *Play videogames* Expressions to show interest and tastes: *My favorite activity is…* *I like to dance.* *I really like…* Relations of time: *Everyday* *Once/twice a week/month/year* *Always* *Never* *Recently* *Regularly* **Grammar:** Simple present tense Connectors of sequences	**Warm-up activity** Present simple test. Students make videos about their daily routines.	Classroom resources	Videos

Appendix B: Needs Analysis

Name: **Age:**
Date: **Grade:**
Area: English

This survey aims to explore the factors that affect seventh graders' academic performance in English class, their opinions and expectations of the class, and the influence of their parents' support.

Please read each question carefully before answering and answer them honestly.

1. Do you like the English class? Yes _____ No _____
Why?
2. Do you consider that the English class provides you with qualities for your life?
Yes _____ No _____
Why do you think so?
3. How much time do you spend studying English outside the class?
Between 1 and 2 hours __
Between 2 and 3 hours __
More than 3 hours __
Less than one hour __
4. What difficulties do you think you have in the educational institution that prevent you from improving your learning in English?
5. Do you feel motivated by the teacher's strategies to teach English?
Yes _____ No _____
Why do you feel this way?
6. What difficulties do you think you have at home that prevent you from improving your learning in the subject of English?
7. Do you consider that the support of your parents is important to improve your English learning process?
Yes _____ No _____
Elaborate:
8. Do you feel accompanied by your parents in your learning process?
Yes _____ No _____
9. Do you consider that your friends are a motivation or an impediment to improving your performance in the English class?
Motivation___ Impediment ___
Explain:

Note. The original version of this survey was in Spanish.

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.104703

Planning an Online Assessment Course for English Language Teachers in Latin America

La planeación de un curso de evaluación en línea para docentes de inglés de Latinoamérica

Frank Giraldo
Universidad de Caldas, Manizales, Colombia
Xun Yan
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

In this article, we report the results of a study through which we collected English language teachers' needs and wants to design an online language assessment course. Through a mixed-methods approach, we asked 20 teachers from four Latin American countries what they wanted to learn in the course. The teachers wanted a course in which they could address the challenges they faced in assessment; discuss and develop new ways to assess; and learn about authentic, valid, and ethical assessment. Therefore, the findings suggest that the teachers wanted a course that mixed theory, practice, and principles of assessment. Additionally, the course should address emerging topics in English language assessment, namely bilingual assessment and the assessment of learners with special educational needs.

Keywords: assessment literacy, language assessment literacy, language testing, teacher professional development

En este artículo reportamos los hallazgos de una investigación mixta acerca de los deseos y necesidades en evaluación de un grupo de docentes de inglés con el objetivo de diseñar un curso en línea de evaluación de lenguas extranjeras. Tras ser entrevistados, veinte docentes de inglés de cuatro países latinoamericanos informaron que deseaban un curso que les permitiera discutir los retos de la evaluación; estudiar maneras novedosas de evaluar, y aprender sobre la evaluación auténtica, válida y ética. Es decir, un curso que incorpore la teoría, la práctica y los principios de evaluación y que además explore temas emergentes en la evaluación del inglés como lengua extranjera: la evaluación bilingüe y la evaluación de estudiantes con necesidades educativas especiales.

Palabras clave: desarrollo profesional docente, evaluación de lenguas extranjeras, literacidad en evaluación, literacidad en evaluación de lenguas extranjeras

Frank Giraldo https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5221-8245 · Email: frank.giraldo@ucaldas.edu.co
Xun Yan https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4544-4938 · Email: xunyan@illinois.edu

The official name for this project was *Fostering Language Teachers' Assessment Literacy Through an Online Program: The Latin American Case*. This project was funded by Fulbright Colombia, through a scholarship called "Visiting Colombian researcher."

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Giraldo, F., & Yan, X. (2023). Planning an online assessment course for English language teachers in Latin America. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 147–164. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.104703

This article was received on September 8, 2022 and accepted on March 14, 2023.

Introduction

After Davies' (2008) seminal paper, which brought impetus for discussion on language assessment literacy (LAL), there has been a major focus of scholarly work on teachers' LAL, particularly regarding their training (or lack thereof), practices, and beliefs (Crusan et al., 2016; Fulcher, 2012; Sultana, 2019; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014; Yan & Fan, 2021). Researching these areas in teachers' LAL is indeed essential because a clear picture of assessment is a necessary condition for devising appropriate instructional initiatives for teacher education (Baker & Riches, 2017; Fulcher, 2012; Giraldo & Murcia, 2018; Malone, 2017; Scarino, 2013; Yan & Fan, 2021; Yan et al., 2018).

Researchers have also attempted to describe language teachers' LAL profiles, particularly the necessary knowledge and skills required for professional assessment (Kremmel & Harding, 2019; Stabler-Havener, 2018; Taylor, 2013). Additionally, scholars have indicated that drawing the LAL profiles for several stakeholders—including language teachers—is challenging, given the contextual nature of language assessment and pedagogy (Scarino, 2013; Yan, 2021). However, there is abundant research evidence to conclude that language teachers should participate in LAL initiatives (e.g., courses), which may lead to professionalization in language assessment. Such a professional profile might cultivate an assessment culture in which teachers critically consider assessment and its implications for their institutions (Boyd & Donnaruma, 2018; Inbar-Lourie, 2008, 2017; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014).

To propose pedagogically sound initiatives for teachers' LAL, feedback from these stakeholders is a central consideration (Bøhn & Tsagari, 2021). Thus, our purpose in this paper is to present and discuss the findings we gathered from a research study in which we collected data from English language teachers to design an online language assessment course.

Literature Review

Teachers' Language Assessment Literacy

Language testing scholars have discussed LAL within three major components: knowledge, skills, and principles (Davies, 2008; Fulcher, 2012). Knowledge refers to concepts and theories around assessment; skills help stakeholders to design, develop, or evaluate language tests; and principles include considerations such as ethics and fairness in assessment. LAL profiles naturally differ when various stakeholders are involved (e.g., researchers, language testers, school administrators), encouraging scholars to research particular LAL profiles for different people (Kremmel & Harding, 2019; Inbar-Lourie, 2013a; Taylor, 2013).

As mentioned above, teachers' LAL has been a central focus in LAL literature. Descriptions of competency in assessment have been proposed for teachers, from the principles for assessment in general education (American Federation of Teachers et al., 1990) to Fulcher's (2012) LAL model for language teachers and the International Language Testing Association's (2007) guidelines for practice. The existing LAL models and descriptions have further suggested that teachers' LAL profile amalgamates theoretical, technical, and critical considerations (Fulcher, 2012; Giraldo, 2018; Inbar-Lourie, 2013b; Stabler-Havener, 2018). In sum, teachers with solid training in language assessment are better positioned to develop appropriate testing systems for their schools and students and to evaluate existing systems and their impact (Boyd & Donnarumma, 2018; Kremmel et al., 2018).

Although teachers' LAL is (and probably will be) a matter of discussion, some trends regarding the knowledge, skills, and principles they should have for language assessment are clear. In Table 1, we synthesize significant aspects of each LAL component.

Table 1. Major Components in Teachers' Language Assessment Literacy

Knowledge	Skills	Principles
• Models of language ability • Bilingualism and multilingualism • Theories and frameworks for assessment • Measurement concepts • Current language teaching pedagogies • Personal beliefs and practices • Local policies	• Test analysis and critique • Design of test items and tasks for different language skills • Calculation or interpretation of statistics • Integration among assessment, teaching, and learning	• Ethics • Fairness

Pedagogical Initiatives for LAL

Researchers in language testing have reported on courses for teachers' LAL. These initiatives have shown that teachers have become aware of assessment and its positive impact on their assessment practices, teaching, and students' learning. Notably, teachers in these initiatives have been involved in assessment development tasks which have cultivated their professional development in this area. Below, we describe the major components of these LAL courses regarding contents and pedagogical approaches.

Contents in LAL Courses

LAL courses are primarily based on knowledge and skills, mainly including major measurement concepts, purposes and types of assessment, and theoretical considerations for assessing language skills (Giraldo & Murcia, 2019; Kleinsasser, 2005; Kremmel et al., 2018; Montee et al., 2013; Nier et al., 2009; O'Loughlin, 2006). However, other LAL courses for teachers have used a more specific approach to content selection and use. For example, in Koh et al. (2018), the researchers taught teachers about the principles of task development within Authentic Intellectual Quality; in Walters (2010), teachers in New York learned about test specifications to conduct reversed-engineer specifications to evaluate standards for language learning.

Methodological Approaches in LAL Courses

Regarding how teachers learn about language assessment, there is a clear tendency towards a practical focus, with hands-on workshops being prominent in these courses. In the courses we reviewed, generally, teachers are engaged in test critique, test and task development (including peer feedback), and test and task evaluation (Arias et al., 2012; Giraldo & Murcia, 2019; Koh et al., 2018; Kremmel et al., 2018; Montee et al., 2013).

In our review, we found limited attention to the *principles* side of LAL. Courses addressing concerns for ethics and fairness included discussions of ethics conceptualized as transparency in assessment, that is, informing students of the what and how of assessment (Arias et al., 2012; Levi & Inbar-Lourie, 2019; Restrepo-Bolívar, 2020). Kleinsasser's (2005) study mentions Shohamy's (2001) *The Power of Tests*, but the author does not discuss how principles for assessment were addressed among the participating student teachers.

Thus, LAL initiatives for teachers have mainly focused on the theoretical and practical aspects of testing, but not so much on the critical side of this field, despite a consensus on the need for ethics and fairness in LAL (Fulcher, 2012; Inbar-Lourie, 2008, 2013a).

Research Context

The findings we report in this work come from the diagnostic stage in a project seeking to create an online assessment course for 50 Latin American English language teachers. In the first study of Latin America, Villa-Larenas et al. (2021) surveyed stakeholders' perceptions of and needs in their LAL. The researchers concluded that LAL initiatives should be implemented across this region. Thus, and as Fulcher (2020) encourages, the field of language testing should move from description to action so that we can cater to teachers' needs in language assessment.

Responding to these two calls, we shared information about a free online language assessment course for 50 teachers in five Latin American countries: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela. The initiative was designed as a 10-week, 40-hour course with two weekly workshops of two hours each. To invite participants, we shared this initiative via L-Test (an email list-serv for language testing and assessment), personal contacts and social media, the Latin American Association of Language Testing and Assessment, and the International Research Foundation for English Language Education. We also contacted fellow teacher educators in language teaching programs, expecting they could share the information with English language teachers.

To join the course, the participants had to meet three criteria: (a) be English language teachers at the high school level, (b) work for public/state schools in any of the five countries, and (c) agree to provide information about their assessment practices and learning needs, before course implementation. After two months, 20 teachers' applications were successful and made them course participants (more information in the Results section). In this paper, we report the diagnostic stage based on the feedback from these 20 teachers. This stage was guided by this research question: What do a group of English language teachers in Latin America need and want to learn about language assessment?

Responses to this question would then lead us to interpret how these stakeholders' needs and wants could inform the design and implementation of an appropriate language assessment course to be delivered online.

Method

To draw participants' LAL profiles and needs, we resorted to a mixed-methods approach, which allowed us to have complementary data to plan a context-sensitive course. A concurrent mixed-methods research design (Ivankova & Greer, 2015) provides a complete picture of the research phenomenon from different perspectives (Creswell, 2014; Dörnyei, 2007).

We first interviewed each teacher individually, asking them about their language assessment practices, challenges, and learning needs. For this, we used a semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix A), which we administered before the teachers took the online questionnaire so that the interview data would emerge without influence from the language in the questionnaire items (Fulcher, 2012). Before the interviews, each teacher received an email telling them that the interviews were about their practices and challenges in language assessment and aspects they would like to learn about in this area. Each interview took place and was recorded online via Google Meet.

After the interviews, the teachers completed a questionnaire through Google Forms (see Appendix B). The questionnaire, with 52 items, was divided into four sections: background information (six items, including country, age, and studies); prior training in language assessment (six items); assessment activities in which the teachers have been engaged (eight items); and LAL topics for the course (31 items).

In Section 4 of the questionnaire, the teachers were asked to determine to what extent they found various language assessment topics necessary for the course, rating them from 1 (*not important at all*) to 5 (*extremely important*). For this instrument, we decided not to include the technical, generic names of concepts

in language assessment but rather what we considered a teacher-friendly description. For example, the item for authenticity (Item 10) was "Creating test items and tasks that resemble real-life language use."

To design a questionnaire that could be fit for purpose, we examined and ensured its validity in three ways. First, we wrote items reflecting the central construct under investigation: LAL. To do so, we based the items on the three major components of LAL, as suggested in the literature—knowledge, skills, and principles. For instance, Item 10 was meant to tap into the *knowledge* of authenticity and the *skill* of designing authentic test tasks; Item 29 (Discussing ethics and fairness in classroom language assessment) was meant to collect information on these *principles* for assessment. Secondly, we asked four content experts engaged in language testing and assessment and language teacher education to evaluate the questionnaire. The feedback form had this guiding prompt: "Evaluate whether the instruments are fit for purpose, i.e., that they have the potential to give us information about teacher needs to plan and design a LAL program for English language teachers." All experts agreed that the questionnaire was appropriate for these purposes. Two experts recommended adding Item 21 (Assessing different age groups: young learners, teenagers) and Item 30 (Conducting fair, ethical, and transparent assessment practices). These additions helped with the method's construct validity. Finally, we calculated Cronbach's Alpha to check the internal consistency of the items in Section 4 (LAL contents) of the questionnaire. The value for Cronbach's Alpha was $\alpha = .87$, suggesting satisfactory internal consistency (George & Mallery, 2003) in measuring what we defined as LAL.

Overall, the content experts suggested that the interview and the questionnaire tap into teachers' prior training and experiences in assessment. Thus, in the interview, we included one question about experiences and one about assessment challenges or difficulties. As for the questionnaire, we had closed-ended items on prior assessment activities.

Data Analysis

After transcribing the interview answers for each teacher, we used theme coding (Saldaña, 2016) as an iterative process of reading and analysis, allowing us to identify trends in teachers' practices, challenges, and LAL learning needs across all transcriptions. From this first read-through, we made a list of initial themes; we then used NVivo (QSR International, n.d.) to code the data to refine, discard, or validate our initial themes, especially those amenable to use for planning the online course. The final themes from this data set were *institutional challenges influencing assessment*, *learning about innovative ways to assess professionally*, and *spaces for discussions about assessment*. Table 2 has the complete matrix derived from our theme analysis.

For the questionnaire data, we calculated descriptive statistics for the items in the last section: the topics for the LAL course. The descriptive statistics were mean, median, and range. We used these three measures to understand teachers' choices clearly. With the results from the questionnaire—specifically, means and medians—we ranked the topics the teachers considered most important for this LAL course. Thus, Table 3 presents the data referring to teachers' prior language assessment training, while Table 4 describes teachers' involvement in assessment activities.

Results

This section first characterizes teachers' challenges and learning needs in language assessment. For this, we include data that illustrate trends across the interviews. Then, we report the results from the questionnaire items asking teachers to rate the importance of LAL topics for the course.

Institutional Challenges Influencing Assessment

When asked about challenges or difficulties that the teachers faced when it came to assessment, most of them indicated, first and foremost, that the number

Table 2. Significant Themes and Codes From Interview Data

Question focus	Themes in data	Data codes
Practices in language assessment	A. Purpose: Progress B. Purpose: Administrative C. Methods: Traditional D. Methods: Performance E. Methods: Other F. Skills: Reading/Writing G. Skills: Listening/Speaking H. Skills: All four	A1. Checks on learning/whether students are learning B1. Provides or uploads grades on the platform C1. Administers quizzes/tests D1. Administers interviews/oral presentations E1. Uses exit slips/teaching logs F1.1. Assesses reading F1.2. Assesses writing G1.1. Assesses listening G1.2. Assesses speaking H1. Assesses all skills
Challenges/Difficulties in language assessment	I. Institutional J. Involving people	I1.1. Mentions lack of resources I1.2. Mentions lack of time J1.1. Mentions students' attitudes J1.2. Mentions parents' attitudes J1.3. Mentions colleagues' attitudes
Language assessment literacy learning needs	K. Conduct better assessment L. Learn other assessment methods N. Fairness in assessment N. Learn with/from others O. Spaces for discussion	K1.1. Wants to do better assessments K1.2. Wants to become a better assessor K1.3. Wants to improve their assessment practices L1.1. Wants to learn about better/other assessment methods L1.2. Wants to learn about new techniques M1.1. Mentions fairness only M1.2. Wants to be fair N1.1. Wants to learn about other teachers' assessment approach N1.2. Wants to learn about other teachers' contexts O1.1. Expects to have discussion spaces O1.2. Recommends spaces for discussion

of students impedes efficient assessment practices. As the teachers commented, giving personalized feedback becomes challenging due to the high number of students per classroom and grade. In a related manner, the teachers stated that they had limited time to assess their learners, which they see as challenging to conduct appropriate assessments (e.g., administration and checking). As T15 comments:

> When I use rubric[s] because, for each student, another difficulty is the time because I have only three times per week, three pedagogical hours per week. No more. And I have uh, 35 or 38 students, so it's so difficult to do one rubric for each student.

Learning About Innovative Ways to Assess Professionally

One of the main questions in the interview asked teachers what they would like to learn about assessment. A related question asked teachers about expectations they had towards the online course. In their responses to

Table 3. Teachers' Prior Training in Language Assessment

Items	Yes	No	N/A
A complete course in your undergraduate studies	5	15	
A complete course in your graduate studies (MA or PhD)	3	14	3
A module in a course in your undergraduate studies	13	7	
A module in a course in your graduate studies (MA or PhD)	7	10	3
Attended workshops (about language assessment) after you started to work as an English language teacher	13	7	
Learning about language assessment independently, e.g., reading articles, watching videos	17	3	

Table 4. Participation in Assessment-Related Activities

Items	Yes	No
Evaluating tests found in textbooks to be used in your school	17	3
Evaluating the results of regional or national standardized tests in your country	14	6
Participating in regional or national test development projects	8	12
Designing your tests to use in your school	20	0
Administering tests designed by coordinators in your school	7	13
Administering tests designed by organizations external to your school	12	8
Participating in assessment committees at your school	12	8
Participating in assessment committees in your city, region, or country	5	15

these two questions, the teachers highlighted an overall need to become better assessors by resorting to new methods they can use with their language learners and help them improve their language ability. The sample below, from T10, shows the need for a more professional approach to language assessment.

> I want to innovate for that they can be a good, [*sic*] or a better feedback [*sic*] between them and me, and we will work better. I really want this kind of tool or innovation tools. Not always the same. I want to change.

Spaces for Discussions About Assessment

The interviews showed that teachers found being in a course with English language teachers from other Latin American countries helpful. Thus, the answers showed that they expected to have spaces to share ideas about assessment and, correspondingly, learn from each other's experiences and contexts. T8 comments on the expectation to have these discussion scenarios and the positive consequences they could have: "I don't

know. Probably have more spaces. To talk, to share our experiences, our ideas. . . . And these spaces also help us to improve our English practice, and our English."

Importance of LAL Topics for the Course

We now turn to the quantitative data drawn from the questionnaire. In Table 5, we present the descriptive statistics about the items in the last part of the questionnaire, with mean and median values ranked from highest to lowest.

The results show that the teachers (N = 20) found 23 topics, out of 31, extremely important for the course. *Creating test items and tasks that resemble real-life language use* and *Designing test items that have the potential to collect precise information about your students' language skills* were the items with the highest means (M = 4.7, Mdn = 5) and a narrow range of 4–5. These items are followed closely by two items with the same mean and median but a slightly wider range of 3–5: *Designing test tasks that have the potential to collect precise information about your students' language skills* and *Establishing a clear purpose for assessing your students' English*. Item 22, *Assessing learners with special educational needs*, has a mean of 4.5 and a median of 5 but a relatively wide range: 2–5. A slightly similar picture is presented by Items 29 and 30: *Discussing ethics and fairness in classroom language assessment* (M = 4.3, Mdn = 4) and *Conducting fair, ethical, and transparent assessment practices* (M = 4.4, Mdn = 4); these two items have a wide range of 1–4.

The teachers found seven topics very important for the online assessment course, though their responses varied widely; for instance, Item 19, *Assessing pronunciation* (M = 3.9, Mdn = 4), has a range of 1–4. Additionally, two items have a mean and median of 4 and a high range of 1–4: Item 24, *Designing alternative assessments (e.g., self- and peer assessment, portfolios)*; and Item 17, *Assessing grammar*. Item 23 (*Designing traditional tests with true-false and multiple-choice questions*) has lower values (M = 3.4, Mdn = 3) and a wide range of 1–4. Finally, teachers' responses varied widely for Item 1 (*Learning about the history of language testing*) and Item 14 (*Evaluating large-scale or standardized language tests*), with a wide range of 1–5. Specifically, teachers found Item 1 moderately important (M = 2.8, Mdn = 3) and Item 14 very important (M = 3.9, Mdn = 4).

Discussion

Even though the challenges the teachers discussed in the interview are not assessment-related per se, they impact their assessment practices. The difficulties related to limited time and many students have been documented elsewhere in Latin America (Díaz-Larenas et al., 2012; Frodden et al., 2004). Scarino (2013) argues that teachers' lifeworlds need to be considered when discussing teachers' LAL, and this may include problems teachers face in assessment. In the case of this finding, our challenge lay in addressing the high number of students and time limitations as topics in the online assessment course (see Appendix C for how we decided to address these challenges).

As for the learning needs the teachers expressed in the interview, two aspects merit discussion. On the one hand, the teachers expressed their desire to assess well and learn new assessment methods. The teachers did not provide more specific answers for this question, and we believe this is expected because they may lack knowledge of assessment terminology. Two teachers emphatically commented that they wanted to learn how to be fair in assessment, but this trend was not frequent enough in the interview data to discuss it here. We also acknowledge that the lack of granularity in teachers' answers may be an issue in our research: Asking teachers what they want to learn about assessment may not be fruitful. However, we felt compelled to ask the question: "What would you like to learn about assessment?" because this information was included in the email teachers received about the interview (see the

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Importance of Language Assessment Literacy Topics in the Course

	Items	*M*	*Median*	*Range*
Item 10	Creating test items and tasks that resemble real-life language use	4.7	5	1
Item 7	Designing test items that have the potential to collect precise information about your students' language skills	4.7	5	1
Item 8	Designing test tasks that have the potential to collect precise information about your students' language skills	4.7	5	2
Item 2	Establishing a clear purpose for assessing your students' English	4.7	5	2
Item 5	Planning the design of assessment instruments	4.6	5	2
Item 9	Creating test items and tasks that can provide consistent and reliable information about your students' language skills	4.6	5	2
Item 16	Assessing productive skills: speaking and writing	4.6	5	2
Item 3	Evaluating whether an assessment instrument is meeting, or not, its purpose	4.5	5	2
Item 4	Evaluating whether a test has the potential to collect information about a determined set of language skills	4.5	5	2
Item 22	Assessing learners with special educational needs	4.5	5	3
Item 20	Assessing integrated skills	4.5	5	1
Item 15	Assessing receptive skills: listening and reading	4.4	5	1
Item 30	Conducting fair, ethical, and transparent assessment practices	4.4	4	3
Item 6	Describing clearly the particular skills you want to assess	4.4	4	2
Item 13	Evaluating the positive or negative influence that assessment can have on teaching and learning	4.4	4	2
Item 26	Relating language assessment to language teaching and learning	4.4	4	2
Item 31	Analyzing misuses of language assessment	4.3	4	2
Item 18	Assessing vocabulary	4.3	4	2
Item 11	Evaluating available resources (e.g., technology) for test development	4.3	4	1
Item 12	Using available resources efficiently during test development	4.3	4	2
Item 29	Discussing ethics and fairness in classroom language assessment	4.3	4	3
Item 21	Assessing different age groups (young learners, teenagers)	4.2	4	2
Item 25	Administering assessments successfully	4.2	4	2
Item 24	Designing alternative assessment methods (e.g., self- and peer assessment, portfolios)	4	4	3
Item 28	Assessing students in a bilingual mode	4	4	3
Item 17	Assessing grammar	4	4	3

	Items	*M*	*Median*	*Range*
Item 27	Interpreting statistical information and scores from language assessment	4	4	2
Item 19	Assessing pronunciation	3.9	4	3
Item 14	Evaluating large-scale or standardized language tests	3.9	4	4
Item 23	Designing traditional tests with true-false and multiple-choice questions	3.4	3	3
Item 1	Learning about the history of language testing	2.8	3	4

discussion for questionnaire results following and the Limitations section for more on this matter).

On the other hand, in the interviews, the teachers clearly stated that they wanted to learn about other teachers' perspectives of assessment through interactive spaces in the online course. LAL scholars have suggested that LAL involves social learning, which can happen through learning communities of practice to help teachers move forward in LAL (Baker, 2021; Scarino, 2013; Yan, 2021). In the case of this group of teachers, learning from others may be helpful as they all have been involved in language assessment activities of some kind (see Table 4). Thus, this finding should have a clear implication for planning and teaching the online assessment course—including interactive and collaborative activities. Therefore, asking teachers about their course expectations, as in the present study, yielded valuable data for course planning.

Regarding the questionnaire results, these teachers found 23 topics out of 31 to be extremely important for learning in the LAL course, further corroborating their need for LAL: knowledge, skills, and principles. That teachers need rounded LAL has been found in other studies (Fulcher, 2012; Giraldo & Murcia, 2018; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014). Remarkably, the questionnaire results provide feedback to plan a generic assessment course: One that includes test design as a significant task (see the six top items in Table 5); general assessment concepts and principles, such as authenticity and validity (Items 7, 8, and 10); and attention to the assessment of language skills (Items 15, 16, and 20). As we show in our literature review, test design, and core concepts are prominent in language testing courses for teachers.

Notwithstanding the generic course nature we outline above, this group of teachers signaled areas in language assessment that have not been documented prominently in other studies regarding English teachers' LAL needs: assessing learners with special educational needs (SEN); ethics and fairness; and bilingual assessment, with somewhat lesser importance. In other studies, principles are ranked low by teachers (Fulcher, 2012; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014), whereas the assessment of SEN learners and bilingual assessment have not appeared as topics for English teachers' LAL development.

Limitations

The data for this study was used to plan a language assessment course for 20 English language teachers in four Latin American countries. The data cannot represent nor be considered trends in Latin America or any given country in this region. The data, however, were beneficial to plan a course that could cater to the LAL needs and expectations of the teachers involved.

As we stated earlier, asking teachers directly what they want to learn about assessment may not be fully informative, as they provide general answers or state they want to learn everything the course offers. Aware of this issue, we also used the online questionnaire, which confirmed the need for a balanced—although contextual—LAL profile. Thus, we believe more research should be done regarding the use of interviews to collect data for planning a LAL course for English

language teachers. In our case, asking teachers about their expectations—rather than what they want to learn—helped collect their needs, but this technique may require further scrutiny.

Finally, as we commented in our Method section, we phrased the items in the last part of the questionnaire to avoid using technical names such as validity and reliability. Therefore, we must acknowledge that these descriptions simplify heated debates in language testing and educational assessment in general. However, we needed to design items that would be useful to collect teachers' LAL learning needs; this is something that, we argue, the questionnaire did reasonably well.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this research report was to characterize the learning needs of a group of English language teachers in Latin America in the area of LAL. The data we collected through the interview and questionnaire led us to suggest that this group of stakeholders needed a course that balanced the generic of LAL and the specific, that is, challenges at their institutions. The answers taught us that the course should be driven by practice, including interactive discussions, address traditional topics such as validity and authenticity, critical issues such as ethics and fairness, and address emerging issues in English language testing (e.g., SEN learners and bilingual assessment). Appendix C has the LAL topics we decided to include in the course, with some commentary reflecting what we found.

Based on our LAL needs analysis exercise, we recommend that researchers, especially those engaged in teaching teachers about language assessment, utilize a mixed-methods approach to data collection. This methodology may provide information to substantiate an LAL course and unveil the stakeholders' particularities. Additionally, we recommend that when and if appropriate, the items to survey teachers' LAL should be phrased as practices rather than merely topics, from *test specifications* to *planning assessments carefully*. This change in LAL language may be more friendly to teachers who may not have the terminology but have LAL learning needs.

References

American Federation of Teachers, National Council on Measurement in Education, & National Education Association. (1990). *Standards for teacher competence in educational assessment of students*. https://buros.org/standards-teacher-competence-educational-assessment-students

Arias, C. I., Maturana, L. M., & Restrepo, M. I. (2012). Evaluación de los aprendizajes en lenguas extranjeras: hacia prácticas justas y democráticas. *Lenguaje*, *40*(1), 99–126. https://doi.org/10.25100/lenguaje.v40i1.4945

Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). *Language testing in practice: Designing and developing useful language tests*. Oxford University Press.

Baker, B. (2021, July 2). *Unpacking the concept of language assessment literacy for all key stakeholders* [Conference session]. New Directions in English Language Assessment Conference, Bogotá, Colombia. https://bit.ly/3F9dOTT

Baker, B. A., & Riches, C. (2017). The development of EFL examinations in Haiti: Collaboration and language assessment literacy development. *Language Testing*, *35*(4), 557–581. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265532217716732

Bøhn, H., & Tsagari, D. (2021). Teacher educators' conceptions of language assessment literacy in Norway. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *12*(2), 222–233. https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1202.02

Boyd, E., & Donnarumma, D. (2018). Assessment literacy for teachers: A pilot study investigating the challenges, benefits and impact of assessment literacy training. In D. Xerri & P. Vella Briffa (Eds.), *Teacher involvement in high-stakes language testing* (pp. 105–126). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77177-9_7

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. SAGE.

Crusan, D., Plakans, L., & Gebril, A. (2016). Writing assessment literacy: Surveying second language teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and practices. *Assessing Writing*, *28*, 43–56. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2016.03.001

Davies, A. (2008). Textbook trends in teaching language testing. *Language Testing*, *25*(3), 327–347. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265532208090156

Díaz-Larenas, C., Alarcón-Hernández, P., & Ortiz-Navarrete, M. (2012). El profesor de inglés: sus creencias sobre la evaluación de la lengua inglesa en los niveles primario, secundario y terciario. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *17*(1), 15–26. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.10039

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford University Press.

Frodden, M., Restrepo, M., & Maturana, L. (2004). Analysis of assessment instruments used in foreign language teaching. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *9*(1), 171–201. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.3146

Fulcher, G. (2012). Assessment literacy for the language classroom. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, *9*(2), 113–132. https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2011.642041

Fulcher, G. (2020). Operationalizing assessment literacy. In D. Tsagari (Ed.), *Language assessment literacy: From theory to practice* (pp. 8–28). Cambridge Scholars.

George, D., & Mallery, P. (2003). *SPSS for Windows step by step: A simple guide and reference. 11.0 update* (4th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

Giraldo, F. (2018). Language assessment literacy: Implications for language teachers. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *20*(1), 179–195. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v20n1.62089

Giraldo, F., & Murcia, D. (2018). Language assessment literacy for pre-service teachers: Course expectations from different stakeholders. *GIST – Education and Learning Research Journal*, (16), 56–77. https://doi.org/10.26817/16925777.425

Giraldo, F., & Murcia, D. (2019). Language assessment literacy and the professional development of pre-service language teachers. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *21*(2), 243–259. https://doi.org/10.14483/22487085.14514

Inbar-Lourie, O. (2008). Constructing a language assessment knowledge base: A focus on language assessment courses. *Language Testing*, *25*(3), 385–402. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265532208090158

Inbar-Lourie, O. (2013a). Guest Editorial to the special issue on language assessment literacy. *Language Testing*, *30*(3), 301–307. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265532213480126

Inbar-Lourie, O. (2013b, November). *Language assessment literacy: What are the ingredients?* [Paper presentation]. 4th CBLA SIG Symposium, University of Cyprus, Cyprus.

Inbar-Lourie, O. (2017). Language assessment literacy. In E. Shohamy, I. G. Or, & S. May (Eds.), *Language testing and assessment: Encyclopedia of language and education* (3rd ed., pp. 257–270). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02261-1_19

International Language Testing Association. (2007). *ILTA guidelines for practice in English*. https://bit.ly/3F17GNp

Ivankova, N., & Greer, J. (2015). Mixed methods research and analysis. In B. Paltridge & A. Phakiti (Eds.), *Research methods in applied linguistics: A practical resource* (2nd ed., pp. 63–81). Bloomsbury Publishing.

Kleinsasser, R. C. (2005). Transforming a postgraduate level assessment course: A second language teacher educator's narrative. *Prospect*, *20*(3), 77–102.

Koh, K., Burke, L. E. C., Luke, A., Gong, W., & Tan, C. (2018). Developing the assessment literacy of teachers in Chinese language classrooms: A focus on assessment task design. *Language Teaching Research*, *22*(3), 264–288. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168816684366

Kremmel, B., Eberharter, K., Holzknecht, F, & Konrad, E. (2018). Fostering language assessment literacy through teacher involvement in high-stakes test development. In D. Xerri & P. Vella Briffa (Eds.), *Teacher involvement in high-stakes language testing* (pp. 173–194). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77177-9_10

Kremmel, B., & Harding, L. (2019). Towards a comprehensive, empirical model of language assessment literacy across stakeholder groups: Developing the language assessment literacy survey. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, *17*(1), 100–120. https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2019.1674855

Levi, T., & Inbar-Lourie, O. (2019). Assessment literacy or language assessment literacy: Learning from the teachers. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, *17*(2), 168–182. https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2019.1692347

Malone, M. E. (2017). Training in language assessment. In E. Shohamy, I. G. Or, & S. May (Eds.), *Language testing and assessment: Encyclopedia of language and education* (3rd ed., pp. 225–239). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02261-1_16

Montee, M., Bach, A., Donovan, A., & Thompson, L. (2013). LCTL teachers' assessment knowledge and practices: An exploratory study. *Journal of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages*, *13*, 1–31.

Nier, V. C., Donovan, A. E., & Malone, M. E. (2009). Increasing assessment literacy among LCTL instructors through blended learning. *Journal of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages*, *7*, 94–118.

O'Loughlin, K. (2006). Learning about second language assessment: Insights from a postgraduate student on-line subject forum. *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL*, *1*, 71–85.

QSR International. (n.d.). Nvivo® (Version 10) [Computer software]. https://bit.ly/3Xweiug

Restrepo-Bolívar, E. M. (2020). Monitoring preservice teachers' language assessment literacy development through journal writing. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research*, *17*(1), 38–52.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. SAGE Publications.

Scarino, A. (2013). Language assessment literacy as self-awareness: Understanding the role of interpretation in assessment and in teacher learning. *Language Testing*, *30*(3), 309–327. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265532213480128

Stabler-Havener, M. L. (2018). Defining, conceptualizing, problematizing, and assessing language teacher assessment literacy. *Working Papers in Applied Linguistics & TESOL*, *18*(1), 1–22.

Sultana, N. (2019). Language assessment literacy: An uncharted area for the English language teachers in Bangladesh. *Language Testing in Asia*, *9*(1), 2–14. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-019-0077-8

Taylor, L. (2013). Communicating the theory, practice and principles of language testing to test stakeholders: Some reflections. *Language Testing*, *30*(3), 403–412. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265532213480338

Villa-Larenas, S., Quevedo, G., & González, F. (2021, July 1-3). *Survey on language assessment literacy in Latin America: Preliminary results* [Paper presentation]. New Directions in English Language Assessment Conference, Bogotá, Colombia.

Vogt, K., & Tsagari, D. (2014). Assessment literacy of foreign language teachers: Findings of a European study. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, *11*(4), 374–402. https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2014.960046

Walters, F. S. (2010). Cultivating assessment literacy: Standards evaluation through language-test specification reverse engineering. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, *7*(4), 317–342. https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2010.516042

Yan, X. (2021, June 14–17). *Towards a conceptual model of LAL development across stakeholder groups and contexts* [Paper presentation]. Language Testing Research Colloquium, online.

Yan, X., & Fan, J. (2021). "Am I qualified to be a language tester?": Understanding the development of language assessment literacy across three stakeholder groups. *Language Testing*, *38*(2), 219–246. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265532220929924

Yan, X., Zhang, C., & Fan, J. J. (2018). "Assessment knowledge is important, but …": How contextual and experiential factors mediate assessment practice and training needs of language teachers. *System*, *74*, 158–168. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2018.03.003

About the Authors

Frank Giraldo holds an MA in English Didactics from Universidad de Caldas (Colombia) and an MA in TESOL from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (USA). His research interests include the interface between language assessment literacy and teachers' professional development.

Xun Yan holds a PhD in Second Language Studies from Purdue University (USA). He is an associate professor of Linguistics, Second Language Acquisition and Teacher Education, and Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (USA). His research interests include speaking and writing assessment, psycholinguistic approaches to language testing, and language assessment literacy.

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Procedures

- Start by greeting the teachers kindly and then reminding them of the purpose of this data collection. Finally, thank them for their interest in the course.
- Start with the ice-breaker, which need not be recorded.
- Start recording once you are ready to ask Question 2 (see Questions and Probes below).
- Ask probes as needed, especially when teachers seem to be stuck or needing help.
- Rephrase questions so that teachers can understand them better.
- After the interview, tell the teachers about the online questionnaire they will take.
- End the interview by thanking the teachers again and welcoming them to the course.

Questions and Probes

1. Ice-breaker: Tell me a little about your teaching context.
2. Tell me about how you assess your students.
   Probes: What is your purpose? Why do you assess? What do you do with the information you collect? What skills do you assess?
3. In your context, what challenges (if any) do you face regarding language assessment?
   Probe: What difficulties do you face? How do these challenges influence your assessment?
4. What would you like to learn about language assessment in the course?
   Probes: What topics? What skills would you like to develop in this area? Anything else?
5. What expectations do you have about this course?

Appendix B: Questionnaire for the Diagnostic Stage

Section 1: Background Information

What is your full name?

Country where you work:

Colombia
Venezuela
Ecuador
Peru
Brazil

Name of the institution where you work:

What is your email account? Please type the one you use most frequently.

What is your level of education?

Bachelor of Arts (undergraduate studies)
Specialization (one year)
Master's degree
PhD

Choose your age range:

20–25 years old
26–30 years old
31–35 years old
36–40 years old
41–45 years old
46–50 years old
51–55 years old
56–60 years old
61 and older

Section 2: Prior Training in Language Assessment

Please, choose whether you have had any training in language assessment:

- A complete course in your undergraduate studies
  Yes__ No__
- A complete course in your graduate studies (MA or PhD)
  Yes__ No__ Do not have graduate studies__
- A module in a course in your undergraduate studies
- A module in a course in your graduate studies (MA or PhD)
- Attended workshops (about language assessment) after you started to work as an English language teacher
- Learning independently, e.g., by reading articles, watching videos
- Other? Please specify:

Section 3: Assessment Activities

From the list below, choose the assessment activities that, as an in-service teacher, you have been involved in:

__ Evaluating tests found in textbooks to be used in your school.
__ Evaluating the results of your country's regional or national standardized tests.
__ Participating in regional or national test development projects.
__ Designing your tests to use in your school.
__ Administering tests designed by coordinators in your school.
__ Administering tests designed by organizations external to your school.
__ Participating in assessment committees at your school.
__ Participating in assessment committees in your city, region, or country.
__ Other? Please specify.

Section 4: Content Selection for the Course

Please state to what extent you think the topics below are important to include in the assessment course you will take:

1. Learning about the history of language testing.
   Not important at all__ Slightly important__ Moderately important__ Very important__ Extremely important__
2. Establishing a clear purpose for assessing your students' English.
3. Evaluating whether an assessment instrument is meeting or not its purpose.
4. Evaluating whether a test has the potential to collect information about a determined set of language skills.
5. Planning the design of assessment instruments.
6. Describing clearly the particular skills you want to assess.
7. Designing test items that have the potential to collect precise information about your students' language skills.
8. Designing test tasks that have the potential to collect precise information about your students' language skills.
9. Creating test items and tasks that provide consistent and reliable information about your students' skills.
10. Creating test items and tasks that resemble real-life language use.
11. Evaluating available resources (e.g., technology) for test development.
12. Using available resources efficiently during test development.
13. Evaluating the positive or negative influence that assessment can have on teaching and learning.
14. Evaluating large-scale or standardized language tests.
15. Assessing receptive skills: listening and reading.
16. Assessing productive skills: speaking and writing.
17. Assessing grammar.
18. Assessing vocabulary.
19. Assessing pronunciation.

20. Assessing integrated skills.
21. Assessing different age groups (young learners, teenagers).
22. Assessing learners with special educational needs.
23. Designing traditional tests with true-false and multiple-choice questions.
24. Designing alternative assessments (e.g., self- and peer assessment, portfolios).
25. Administering assessments successfully.
26. Connecting language assessment to language teaching and learning.
27. Interpreting statistical information and scores from language assessment.
28. Assessing students in a bilingual mode.
29. Discussing ethics and fairness in classroom language assessment.
30. Conducting fair, ethical, and transparent assessment practices.
31. Analyzing misuses of language assessment.

Appendix C: Outline of Topics for the LAL Course – With Commentary

- Teach participants these topics in a short handbook; complement the handbook by addressing other topics during the synchronous sessions.
- Most of the topics in the table below come from the questionnaire results.
- The challenges teachers mentioned in the interview must be addressed in synchronous course sessions, especially during group discussions.

Week	Topic
1	*Introduction to Fundamentals of Language Assessment* Commentary: Refer to types of assessment and three key questions: why, how, and what
2	*Qualities of Language Assessment* Commentary: Resort to Bachman and Palmer's (1996) usefulness framework
3	*Assessing Receptive Skills* Commentary: Address test specs and design here; include traditional test formats; address stats here, too.
4	*Assessing Productive Skills* Commentary: Remark on task-based design for authenticity; address stats here, too.
5	*Assessing Integrated Skills* Commentary: None
6	*Bilingual Assessment* Commentary: Emphasize the need for exploratory translanguaging in ELT and assessment.
7	*Assessing Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities* Commentary: Resort to a discussion-based format, given the wide range for this item.
8	*Alternative Assessment* Commentary: Connect this topic to challenges teachers expressed; for instance, they can use peer assessment when the number of students is high.
9	*Ethics & Fairness in Classroom Language Assessment* Commentary: Since this item has a wide range, involve teachers in self-reflection of unethical or unfair practices.
10	*Relating Language Assessment to Language Teaching and Learning* Commentary: After teachers have refined their LAL, elicit how this relationship can occur in the English language classroom.

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.103917

Exploring Criteria for Evaluating In-Service English Language Teachers' Performance

Exploración de los criterios para evaluar el desempeño de los maestros de inglés en servicio

Azadeh Hassani

Zari Saeedi

Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran

This case study explored the evaluation criteria applied by six supervisors of a private language institute (three men and three women) through individual in-depth interviews in an English-as-a-foreign-language context. The researchers also collected data from supervisors' observation checklists and written feedback. A thematic analysis resulted in five main themes and two sub-themes. Therefore, a tentative framework was developed, encompassing five criteria: English and Content Knowledge, Teaching Skills, Personal Traits, Fulfilling Workplace Expectations, and Parents'/Learners'/Peers' Feedback. The proposed framework can help increase language supervisors' teacher evaluation literacy.

Keywords: language supervisor, language teacher evaluation, performance supervision, supervisors' criteria

Este estudio de caso exploró los criterios de evaluación aplicados por seis supervisores de un instituto privado de idiomas (tres hombres y tres mujeres) en un contexto de inglés como lengua extranjera. Para recoger datos se usaron entrevistas individuales en profundidad, listas de verificación de observación de los supervisores y comentarios escritos. Un análisis temático permitió identificar cinco temas principales y dos subtemas. Así, se desarrolló un marco tentativo que abarca cinco dominios: el inglés y el conocimiento del contenido, las habilidades de enseñanza, los rasgos personales, el cumplimiento de las expectativas del lugar de trabajo y la retroalimentación de los padres/estudiantes/compañeros. El marco propuesto puede ser útil para aumentar el conocimiento de los supervisores de idiomas sobre la evaluación docente.

Palabras clave: criterios de los supervisores, evaluación del profesor de idiomas, supervisión del desempeño, supervisor de idiomas

Azadeh Hassani https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5807-3769 . Email: ahassani4@huskers.unl.edu
Zari Saeedi https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2165-8891 . Email: Saeedi.za@atu.ac.ir

Azadeh Hassani is currently a PhD student in Innovate Learning Technologies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (USA).

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Hassani, A., & Saeedi, Z. (2023). Exploring criteria for evaluating in-service English language teachers' performance. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 165–181. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.103917

This article was received on July 26, 2022 and accepted on March 24, 2023.

Introduction

The enduring integration of evaluation and teaching has turned evaluation into an inseparable part of teaching English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL), which is also applied in various aspects, including teacher development. In general, there is an evidence-supported relationship between teachers' effectiveness and students' academic achievement (Canales & Maldonado, 2018; Marzano & Toth, 2013; Phillips et al., 2014; Podolsky et al., 2019; Rachmajanti, 2008). Hence, numerous studies have focused on evaluating language teachers' performance, teaching quality, and effectiveness in different contexts, mainly from teachers', lecturers', or teacher trainers' perspectives (Khaksefidi, 2015; Mashhadlou & Izadpanah, 2021; Mazandarani & Troudi, 2017; Mousavi et al., 2016; Ostovar-Namaghi, 2013; Rashidi & Forutan, 2015; Wei & Hui, 2019). Due to teacher evaluation's multifaceted and complicated nature, it is necessary to collect the views of all educational stakeholders, including language supervisors, apart from teachers' perceptions.

Traditionally, these in-house evaluators bear the rather challenging and demanding responsibility of regular supervision of language teachers' performance and performing unpleasant duties—such as giving teachers negative feedback (Bailey, 2006)—to measure and maintain the quality of language institutes' educational services and to improve teaching practices (Chen & Cheng, 2013). Even with the advent of mobile and video-recording technologies, administrators still give more weight to employing supervisors to personally observe and contextually assess language teachers' performance and then discuss issues in teachers' practices during post-observation meetings (Sadeghi & Richards, 2015).

While these supervisory practices would be undoubtedly influential in teachers' professional growth and development (Richards & Farrell, 2005) and in their level of self-esteem and security (Ponticell et al., 2019; Vásquez, 2004), it seems that investigating the evaluative criteria of language supervisors, particularly in EFL contexts, has not received sufficient attention (Akbari & Yazdanmehr, 2012). Mixed feelings and attitudes of EFL teachers toward supervision (Gholaminejad, 2020; Ostovar-Namaghi, 2013) make it harder to determine comprehensive and all-embracing criteria for evaluating them. Thus, by conducting an in-depth qualitative case study in a well-established language institute in the Iranian EFL context, we tried to reveal supervisors' criteria for evaluating language teachers' performance.

Literature Review

Language Teacher Supervision

As part of teacher evaluation systems, supervision holds a significant status due to its direct and indirect impacts on teaching quality. Generally, supervision in educational settings has been defined as an interactive, facilitative process aimed at teachers' professional development and improving classroom practice (Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004). To Gebhard (1990), "language teacher supervision is an ongoing process in which the supervisor observes what goes on in the teacher's classroom with an eye toward the goal of improved instruction" (p. 2). Different supervisory approaches have been suggested for evaluating the effectiveness of EFL/ESL teachers (e.g., Bailey, 2006; Freeman, 1982; Gebhard, 1990; Knop, 1980). They primarily differ regarding the supervisor's and the teacher's roles in the supervisory cycle. Bailey (2006) provides a detailed description of various forms of language teacher supervision and performance evaluation. Emphasizing contextual factors, she mentions some evaluative criteria, including (a) evaluators' judgments or opinions (often based on their beliefs and attitudes rather than on predetermined criteria), (b) the teacher's teaching method, and (c) teacher competencies and performance standards.

Regarding the Iranian EFL contexts, supervision procedures mainly conform to the "scientific approach" (Knop, 1980), the "supervisory approach" (Freeman, 1982), the "directive model" (Gebhard, 1990), and the "prescriptive approach" (Bailey, 2006). These approaches assess the quality of teaching against students' achievement and suggest that the supervisor's role is to observe and provide feedback to the teacher. Moreover, teachers have little power and voice in any of these approaches. While the power imbalance ruling the supervisory process is confirmed by both teachers and supervisors (Agheshteh & Mehrpour, 2021), Iranian English language institutes still prefer to rely on their supervisors' judgments to ensure and improve the quality of their educational services.

Various aspects of language teacher supervision have been targeted in research carried out in EFL/ESL contexts. Conducting two separate studies, Azizpour and Gholami (2021a, 2021b) investigated seven teacher supervisors' and 218 teachers' attitudes toward language supervision. The findings of the former shed light on supervisors' qualifications, responsibilities, and concerns, and those of the latter revealed that, despite the anxiety-provoking nature of the supervision process, many EFL teachers found it beneficial. Hişmanoğlu and Hişmanoğlu (2010) explored non-native and native language teachers' perceptions of educational supervision at three universities. According to the results, most teachers complained about the supervisors' judgmental attitudes.

Moreover, classroom observation was found relatively unfruitful in developing teachers professionally. Akbari and Yazdanmehr (2012) examined Iranian EFL teachers' recruitment and assessment criteria in five institutes. The resulting four-element categorization for teacher assessment included command of English, teaching skills, compliance with the syllabus, and personal/affective features.

Focusing on one aspect of language teacher supervision, Hatamvand et al. (2020) attempted to develop and validate a Language Teacher Observation Scale. After gathering data from 540 Iranian English teachers, a six-factor model of EFL teacher observation was developed, including cognitive considerations, classroom management and teacher behavior, metacognitive considerations, preparing for the lesson, social-interaction considerations, and teacher knowledge. Another study explored the quality standards applied in private language institutes to evaluate EFL teachers' professional competence (Mousavi et al., 2016). Consequently, five standards emerged in the following order, from the most to the least frequent: "describing language and understanding language acquisition and development process," "planning, managing, and implementing instruction," "assessment skill," "cultural competence," and "professionalism skill." These studies represent teacher supervision and evaluation as two processes that go hand in hand. In other words, supervision is conducted based on predetermined, often research-supported criteria. The dynamic nature of a language classroom lays the ground for the language supervisor to devise and apply additional evaluative criteria.

Language Teacher Evaluation

Despite various definitions, models, and frameworks for teacher evaluation, researchers agree that it should be conducted in a regular and formative manner to ensure the achievement of institutional goals, focused educational improvement, and accountability of educators for their instruction (Phillips et al., 2014). Danielson and McGreal (2000) believe that an effective teacher evaluation system defines the teaching domain coherently and introduces clear standards for acceptable performance. In addition, through trained evaluators capable of making evidence-based decisions, consistent judgments are made in this system to assess all aspects of teaching based on defined procedures. According to Isoré (2009), the objectives of teacher evaluation are twofold: (a) ensuring that

teachers make concerted efforts to enhance student learning and (b) informing teachers of their strengths and weaknesses. The fundamental challenge in supervision and evaluation is activating a supervisory sense in teachers that guides them while teaching (Marshall, 2009). When aiming at developing teaching capacity, teacher evaluation is achieved through supervision conducted by administrators, supervisors, or peers (Hallinger et al., 2014).

Two of the most widely-adopted teacher evaluation frameworks in mainstream education are those of Marzano and Toth (2013) and Danielson (2013). Marzano and Toth's model, which is founded on teacher growth and student achievement, embraces four domains: "classroom strategies and behaviors," "planning and preparing," "reflecting on teaching," and "collegiality and professionalism." Danielson's framework, which mainly depends on classroom observation, is composed of "planning and preparation," "the classroom environment," "instruction," and "professional responsibilities." After all, EFL teachers are teachers in the first place, and to be considered efficient, they should generally embody the desirable characteristics of their counterparts in other subjects.

Bell (2005) explored effective foreign language teaching from the perspectives of 457 postsecondary teachers of French, German, and Spanish. More than 95% of the participants agreed on the teacher's enthusiasm for the target language and culture, competence in using the target language, frequent use of authentic realia and materials, and group work in the classroom. Çelik et al. (2013) sought to reveal 998 undergraduate Turkish students' perceptions regarding the attributes of effective EFL teachers. The results suggested that the significant criteria were personal qualities, content and pedagogy-specific knowledge, professional skills, and classroom behavior. Ninety Iranian students and EFL teachers in Khaksefidi's (2015) study agreed upon 13 components as their primary criteria for an effective EFL teacher. Non-linguistic factors, such as teachers' appearance and discipline, were regarded as crucial as their linguistic abilities. Another study explored the perceptions of Iranian students majoring in English language teaching and translation about effective EFL teachers (Zamani & Ahangari, 2016). The findings reflected students' expectations of effective EFL teachers in having the ability to establish rapport, build up students' confidence, and maintain discipline in the classroom.

Mazandarani and Troudi's (2017) exploratory study investigated Iranian EFL lecturers' perceptions of the qualities of an efficient EFL/ESL teacher. The findings led to an effective teaching model composed of teachers' traits, cognitive and metacognitive qualities, and pedagogical and professional skills. Wei and Hui (2019) compared Vietnamese university students' and two administrators' views about their EFL teachers' performance. The students preferred teachers who promoted classroom interaction and student engagement, while the administrators associated good teaching with focusing on instructional techniques. Griffiths and Tajeddin (2020) enumerated similar characteristics for efficient language teachers. They also point out other standards, such as up-to-date technical knowledge and familiarity with feedback techniques, classroom management practices, instructional strategies, and assessment procedures. A myriad of studies has also sought to explore the characteristics of effective EFL/ESL teachers (e.g., Barnes & Lock, 2013; Brown, 2009; *Demiröz & Yeşilyurt*, 2015; Shishavan & Sadeghi, 2009; Tarajová & Metruk, 2020). To our knowledge, almost no study has focused merely on exploring the evaluation criteria of EFL supervisors, who have the most determining power in the supervisory processes. Through an exploratory qualitative study, we tried to explore the main criteria applied by language supervisors in their evaluation of Iranian in-service EFL teachers' performance.

Method

Participants and Context of the Study

The context for the current study was a well-established private language institute in Tehran, Iran. Moreover, the head supervisor of this institute was an acquaintance of the first researcher. Therefore, we managed to gain access to the target population of this study. For these reasons, this institute was selected for data collection. Before selecting the participants, the head supervisor contacted the supervisors in different branches to gain their consent for participation. Finally, six supervisors (three men and three women) in five different institute branches agreed to participate in this study. Hence, they were selected through convenience sampling due to their accessibility and availability to the researchers (Ary et al., 2019). The institute's managers agreed to collaborate with us under the condition that the anonymity of the institute was preserved. The data collection procedures were carried out in December 2020.

The supervisors came from different educational backgrounds, and their ages ranged between 28 and 45, with an average of seven years of experience in supervision. Moreover, they were all considered experienced language teachers since they had more than ten years of teaching English to learners with different proficiency levels. Regarding research ethics, all participants' anonymity was guaranteed, so we used pseudonyms in all transcriptions. Two supervisors, Maryam and Sarah, worked in the same branch. All supervisors, except one female supervisor, Tina, were willing to reveal their personal/professional information, as shown in Table 1.

Instrumentation

To answer the research question comprehensively, we employed a triangulation of instruments. Due to the privacy policies of the institute, we were not allowed to access the teachers' demographic information.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Based on our developed interview protocol, we conducted semi-structured interviews with each supervisor to gain an in-depth understanding of their criteria for evaluating language teachers' performance. Six open-ended questions were formulated based on a comprehensive review of the related literature and our knowledge of supervisory procedures in Iranian language institutes. All questions were consulted with

Table 1. Supervisors' Demographic Information

Name	Gender	Age	Educational background	Teaching experience (Years)	Supervision experience (Years)
Maryam	Female	45	BA in English Literature	20	2
Sarah	Female	40	MA in TEFL	10	7
Tina	Female	NA	NA	NA	NA
Shayan	Male	32	BSc in Mining Engineering	10	5
Parsa	Male	36	PhD in TEFL	17	14
Sina	Male	28	MBA	12	7

Note. NA = Not applicable, TEFL = Teaching English as a foreign language.

two PhD holders in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and modified or reworded to ensure the credibility of the interview protocol. After interviewing the first participant (Shayan), we revised the questions to make them more transparent and precise and remove any confusion (Ary et al., 2019). The interviews were carried out in the workplaces of the supervisors. The following questions were asked:

1. What are your primary criteria for evaluating in-service EFL teachers' performance?
2. How do you observe EFL teachers' instruction?
3. What is your most important criterion for evaluating EFL teachers' performance?
4. How often do you observe EFL teachers?
5. What procedures do you follow to observe EFL teachers' performance?
6. What factors, apart from those in observation checklists, affect your judgment during observation?

Supervisors' Checklists and Written Feedback

To increase the depth of the inquiry, we utilized the observation checklists and supervisors' written feedback, which were the outcome of their observations and post-observation meetings. Under the supervision of Shayan and Parsa, two branches used the same observation checklist consisting of five sections, each including several sub-sections. The checklist contained 15 statements, with responses on a three-point Likert scale (*exceeds expectations*, *meets expectations*, and *needs improvement*), plus some extra space for the supervisor's comments. At the bottom of the checklist, a separate section was dedicated to the "overall impression of teaching effectiveness." The other three branches had designed their observation forms. Taking an entirely qualitative approach, one branch—supervised by Maryam and Sarah—relied merely on the supervisors' comments. The other two—supervised by Tina and the other by Sina—had enumerated several different criteria in their checklists and separate sections for the evaluator's comments and suggestions.

Data Collection Procedure

The semi-structured interviews were the primary data source, lasting between 25 and 60 minutes, depending on each interviewee's availability. Initially, the meetings were arranged through the institute headquarters office. The interviews took place at five different branches where the participants worked. During each session, the first author guided the discussion by raising clarifying questions, and the interviewee was allowed to elaborate on their evaluative criteria. The interviews—four in English and two in Persian due to the participants' preferences—were tape-recorded and later transcribed verbatim. At the end of each session, the interviewer was provided with the supervisors' observation checklists.

Data Analysis

We adopted a qualitative approach to analyze interview transcriptions and supervisory documents. First, we reviewed the scripts multiple times. Then the salient features of the content were coded through initial coding (Saldaña, 2016). In this phase, qualitative data was broken down into discrete parts and closely examined to generate tentative and provisional codes. The second data analysis phase was devoted to categorizing codes obtained from the first phase. Hence, significant themes and sub-themes were recognized through focused coding. Two PhD students in TEFL reviewed the extracted themes and sub-themes to increase the reliability of the coding process. Through consultation and revision, some sub-themes were modified or recategorized. Finally, we and the reviewers reached a reasonable level of agreement.

Findings

The thematic data analysis revealed five main criteria applied by supervisors for evaluating in-service EFL teachers' performance. We devised a tentative framework, consisting of five themes and two sub-themes, for evaluating the performance of in-service

EFL teachers (see Figure 1). This framework subsumes all the issues of concern in the evaluation procedure followed by the supervisors of the investigated institute.

English and Content Knowledge

All supervisors endorsed the importance of having adequate general English knowledge as an evident and crucial prerequisite for recruiting EFL teachers in the first place. Considering it his first and foremost criterion, Parsa believed that:

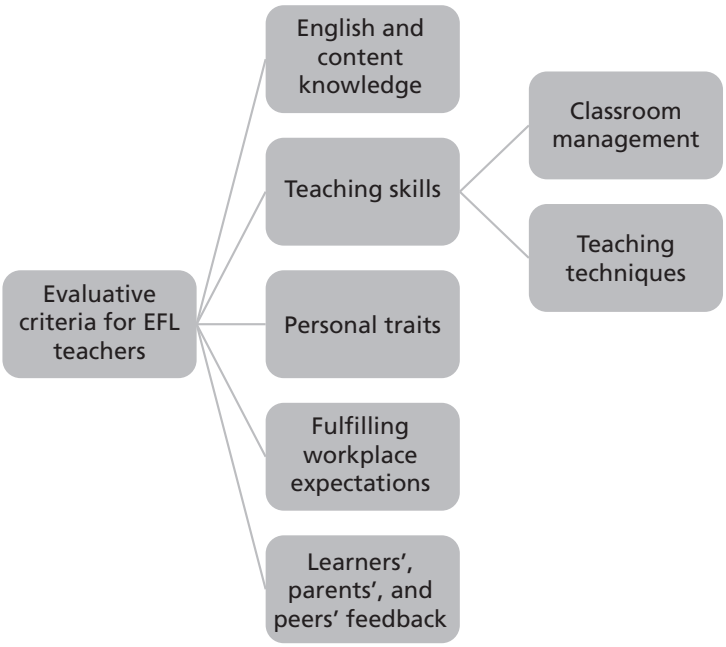
> For the first [criterion], their general English, I myself subcategorize it into seven different groups, and that is their listening skill, reading, writing, speaking, grammatical knowledge, vocabulary command, and pronunciation, though I am not super sensitive to accent.

Maryam associated this feature with the teachers' ability to answer language learners' questions, especially adults who tend to be more goal-oriented in their language learning endeavors. Viewing the EFL teacher as a role model for the learners, Shayan explained the significance of teachers' English pronunciation:

> The other important thing is the teacher's pronunciation, intonation, or enunciation. Because teachers are role models for students. Students usually learn the pronunciation of a word the way that their teachers would pronounce it; they usually go and dig it up in dictionary to see whether the teacher was right or not.

A significant share of evaluators' comments in their checklists was dedicated to teachers' grammatical errors. Moreover, teachers' Persian-accented pronunciation and intonation were highlighted as a sign of their need to attend on-the-job workshops. On the other hand, the supervisors had contradictory opinions about teachers' educational backgrounds and topical knowledge. Shayan, who holds a non-TEFL degree, denied the effects of having an academic major on English language teaching. Sarah, a TEFL degree holder, firmly believed that non-TEFL-degreed teachers, such as electrical engineers, are not familiar with methods and approaches to teaching the English language. Going one step further, she emphasized having a related academic background as one of her

Figure 1. In-Service EFL Teacher Supervision Framework



preferences for recruiting teachers. The sub-categories of this theme are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Theme 1: English and Content Knowledge

• General English knowledge
• Mastering pronunciation, intonation, and enunciation
• Topical knowledge
• Educational background
• IT/Computer literacy

Teaching Skills

Regarded as an ability that is even more valued than teachers' educational background, teaching skills were thoroughly addressed by the participants. This theme was broken down into two sub-themes: teaching techniques and classroom management (see Table 3).

Teaching Techniques

Shayan was the only supervisor who insisted on the rule of a teacher as a facilitator by employing contextualization methods:

> We are in favor of teaching everything through context. Our approach is that all students are going through a context, whether they are listening or reading an article or a conversation, and, actually, students teach themselves. The teacher is just the guide by asking the right questions at the right moment.

Shayan also noted the significance of a teacher's anticipatory skills to predict probable student- or hardware-related issues, such as a CD player breakdown or any questions learners might ask during a given session. Parsa preferred EFL teachers to be creative within the methodological boundaries of their teachers' guides rather than teaching differently from their colleagues since it might induce a sense of insecurity in learners. The concept of "techneme" was only reflected in Parsa's remarks: "Technemes are what makes teachers individual teachers and, like, makes them different. . . . They are like games, [which teachers can use to] present techniques in a creative and individualized way."

Tina magnified the importance of mastering various error correction methods rather than using the traditional ones (i.e., repeating learners' errors and providing them with correct forms). Another essential element repeatedly viewed in the supervisors' written feedback was their emphasis on reducing teacher talking time and increasing student talking time.

Classroom Management

All the supervisors emphasized the role of classroom management in evaluating teachers' professional competence. Encouraging learners to participate in class/group activities and simultaneously controlling the noise level were among the criteria mentioned by Shayan and Sina. In a similar vein, Parsa indicated the importance of keeping a balance between applying discipline in the classroom and creating a relaxed educational environment for the learners:

> We cannot push the students so hard in order for them to escape, but on the other hand, there should be discipline! So, teachers must use their voices, their looks, and their classroom scoring criteria. They can take help from me as the authority outside the class if they have to in order to manage a class.

All participants had a clear emphasis on teachers' skills in board management. Tina argued that teachers should not block students' vision and use the space efficiently while writing on the board. Sina emphasized that teachers must form the habit of regularly using the board. He reasoned that this habit would help teachers present more examples and grab learners' attention. Another highlighted factor in observation checklists involved teachers' movements in the classroom. In Sarah's words, taking specific postures, such as "walking aimlessly" and "standing like a statue in one corner," were rebuked.

Table 3. Theme 2: Teaching Skills

Sub-themes	
Teaching techniques	**Classroom management**
• Mastering various teaching approaches/ techniques	• Creating a comfortable and friendly atmosphere
• Increasing student talking time and decreasing teacher talking time	• Managing learners' arrangement, behaviors, and level of noise
• Following teachers' guidebooks	• Showing appropriate reactions
• Ability to impart knowledge	• Encouraging learner engagement
• Ability to provide remedial help	• Effective board management
• Anticipatory skills	• Making efficient eye contact
• Time management	• Posture/dynamics
• Using dictionaries	• Punishing uncooperative learners fairly

Personal Traits

The supervisors held somewhat similar expectations of EFL teachers regarding their traits. All of them seemed to be completely strict about teachers' punctuality. For instance, Sarah associated this feature with teachers' responsibility:

> [It is] important, even if they are late for two minutes, I would go crazy because I say that, as a teacher, you are responsible for the time of the students and in this way, we give permission to our students to be late too.

Maryam, Sarah's colleague, totally agreed with her. Shayan referred to punctuality as his most important criterion for evaluating EFL teachers. Tina evaluated teachers' creativity based on their ability to present various instructional aids, such as exciting games, posters, or flashcards. She said flexible teachers would adapt themselves to students' different characteristics (age, gender, level of proficiency, or personality). Adding a high weight to a teacher's voice, Tina and Parsa highlighted the importance of vocal features such as clarity, strength, authoritativeness, tone, liveliness, and audibility. Tina mentioned their voice quality would attract her attention while observing a teacher first. Parsa believed teachers should manage the class with their voices and avoid speaking monotonously.

According to Shayan, the teacher's appearance was the first but not the most crucial feature that grabbed his attention during observation. He emphasized that since the institute worked under the direct observation of Iran's Ministry of Education, teachers had to follow this organization's clothing regulations. Parsa, in agreement with Shayan, named appearance as one of his primary criteria:

> They all have to smell good, to look good, to look neat, and to be kind. They must be smiling and be likable people, I don't mean that female teachers must have more makeup or male teachers must particularly do something to their faces, but students must like them.

Sina interpreted setting a dress code as violating teachers' privacy; therefore, he was utterly against adopting strict rules for their appearance:

> I highly respect teachers. I will never destroy their dignity by asking, "Why are you wearing this kind of clothes?" And if anything wrong happens that I have never seen during my supervision experience, I will ask one of our secretaries to speak really respectfully with that person.

All supervisors believed that teachers should avoid distractions that impact students' learning (e.g., wearing very tight clothes, noise-making shoes, too

many accessories, or too much makeup/perfume). In Shayan's opinion, establishing rapport with students was regarded as somehow even more important than a teacher's knowledge:

> Another important thing about the observation is the rapport between the teacher and the students, . . . a lot of people may have the knowledge to teach, but they cannot be good teachers because they are incapable of establishing rapport with the students.

Teachers' patience and tolerance were two of Maryam's highly valued features, especially when dealing with troubled or rebellious teenagers or while eliciting responses from learners. Just one of the supervisors, Shayan, talked about the commitment of teachers. He believed that teachers must be committed to their employers and students and do their best to fulfill their responsibilities. Table 4 summarizes this theme and its components.

Table 4. Theme 3: Personal Traits

• Appearance	• Politeness
• Poise	• Tolerance
• Confidence	• Establishing rapport with learners
• Voice	• Respecting learners
• Patience	• Being humorous
• Enthusiasm	• Commitment
• Punctuality	• Honesty
• Flexibility	• Creativity

Fulfilling Workplace Expectations

Since fulfilling workplace requirements directly affect teachers' pay raises or contract extensions, they were categorized as a distinctive theme. A degree of inconsistency was observed among the supervisors in terms of their expectations from teachers. For instance, Sina frequently checked teachers' written lesson plans before starting every instructional session. Maryam took a more holistic approach toward teachers' lesson plans: "We'd like them to prepare and write a lesson plan before a term starts, and during the term, about second or third session, we would check all lesson plans and leave some notes."

However, Tina mentioned that because of her constant monitoring, it would not be necessary for the teachers to deliver their lesson plans. All supervisors unanimously confirmed banning the use of L1 in the classroom. However, Maryam and Sarah were more lenient toward using L1 for teaching abstract concepts or complicated vocabulary. They believed that teachers should use Persian to accelerate students' learning process on these occasions.

Sina enumerated a decrease in learners' registration rate to indicate teachers' poor performance. However, Shayan argued that teachers should not be penalized for any increase in attrition rates. Counting various reasons for such a phenomenon, he viewed teachers' performance as one of the probable causes for a decrease in registration. Table 5 depicts the components of this theme.

Learners', Parents', and Peers' Feedback

Although not explicitly mentioned by all the supervisors, the level of learners' satisfaction was a determining factor in evaluating the teachers. While five supervisors implicitly referred to it, Sina said that learner satisfaction was his first and most significant criterion in teacher evaluation. He used different methods to receive learners' feedback, such as contacting parents to investigate their opinions about the teachers, conducting regular face-to-face interviews with students, and administering surveys at the end of each term. To explain more, he said:

> We call parents—or in case of adult learners, themselves—regularly to give us descriptive feedback. We avoid yes/no questions and challenge them by asking, "How much Farsi was spoken in the classroom?", "How much time was dedicated to explaining grammar?"

Table 5. Theme 4: Fulfilling Workplace Expectations

• Scoring 6.5 or above in the annual IELTS mock test • Making contact with young learners' parents • Submitting a written lesson plan before each session • Not speaking in L1 and banning its use in the classroom • Active participation in workshops or on-the-job training courses	• Filling out the teacher's progress chart for each session • Giving regular quizzes • Reducing the number of requests for substitute teachers • Grading learners fairly • Learners' attrition rate

While trying to avoid "spying on teachers," Parsa used Telegram, a social media platform, to constantly communicate with learners or their parents. Moreover, he implemented a peer-observation scheme to gain more professional feedback about teachers' performance. He was the only supervisor who made teachers, regardless of their experience, observe four colleagues each term and report their observations. Maryam monitored the learners' affection toward their teachers, especially outside the classroom. She asked some questions from the learners to make them talk about their teachers. The components of this theme are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Theme 5: Learners', Parents', and Peers' Feedback

• Learners'/parents' satisfaction • Learners' outward expression of feelings toward teachers • Results of interviews with learners (both in English and Persian) • Peer-observation reports

Discussion

The present study sought to explore the criteria used by language teacher supervisors to evaluate in-service EFL teachers' performance. Thematic analysis of interview transcriptions and supervisory documents revealed numerous criteria categorized into five themes. Several different models and frameworks for teacher evaluation have been developed in both language and mainstream education from the perspectives of various stakeholders (Akbari & Yazdanmehr, 2012; Danielson, 2013; Hatamvand et al., 2020; Isoré, 2009; Marzano & Toth, 2013; Mazandarani & Troudi, 2017; Mousavi et al., 2016; Ostovar-Namaghi, 2013). The emerging themes conform to some of the criteria and standards presented in the literature. Since supervisors' perceptions, constituting the base of the evaluation hierarchy of EFL teachers, were investigated in this research, several similarities and differences were observed, which will be further elaborated.

The first explored theme was "English and Content Knowledge." Although Iranian EFL teachers' command of English is traditionally assessed through oral and written examinations before recruitment (Akbari & Yazdanmehr, 2012), supervisors have constantly assessed it through in-person or videotaped observations. Teacher knowledge for EFL teachers/lecturers is not only constrained to having fluency and accuracy, but it also entails having topical knowledge, as has been pointed out in numerous studies (Barnes & Lock, 2013; Bell, 2005; Çelik et al., 2013; Coniam et al., 2017; Griffiths & Tajeddin, 2020; Mousavi et al., 2016; Park & Lee, 2006; Wei & Hui, 2019; Yazdanipour & Fakharzadeh, 2020). The contradictory opinions of the participants regarding the effects of EFL teachers'

educational background on their teaching quality are also echoed in administrators' ideas in Yazdanipour and Fakharzadeh's (2020) study. According to their findings, having an academic degree in TEFL is not a strict prerequisite for hiring EFL teachers. Information and communications technology literacy has been reported as a favorable feature of effective English teachers (Çelik et al., 2013; Khaksefidi, 2015; Hatamvand et al., 2020; Mazandarani & Troudi, 2017), and half of the participants in the current study mentioned the necessity of having technological knowledge for the EFL teachers and showing flexibility in using online educational platforms. Similarly, Hsu (2017) stresses the need for EFL teachers to acquire highly technical skills to optimize classroom practices.

In alignment with other studies, a prominent component of effective teaching was categorized as "Teaching Skills," encompassing two sub-themes: "Teaching Techniques" and "Classroom Management." The participants considered mastering various teaching methods a decisive criterion, similar to the teachers' beliefs in the study by Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009). The supervisors gave significant value to communicative language teaching, which conforms to the teachers' perceptions about an ideal foreign language teacher in Brown (2009). One of the classroom strategies addressed by Marzano and Toth (2013) is "organizing the physical layout of the classroom" (p. 43), which has received the attention of the participants in this study as well. Like the present findings, Danielson (2013) believes that a teacher should skillfully create an environment of rapport and respect in the classroom. Likewise, both teachers and learners in Tarajová and Metruk's (2020) study attached great importance to a robust student–teacher relationship. Almost all participants in the present study agreed that learners should not feel the passage of time. Danielson (2013) also contends that teachers must monitor the smooth functioning of all routines in the classroom.

Teachers' personal qualities are subsumed under the third theme, "Personal Traits." The components of this theme have been mentioned in various contexts as eligible yardsticks for evaluating English language teachers' performance (e.g., Griffiths & Tajeddin, 2020; Khaksefidi, 2015; Mazandarani & Troudi, 2017). While none of the participants named physical features as a decisive factor when hiring or evaluating EFL teachers, it seems that this can be of high priority according to some language administrators, to the extent that they even set strict conditions for their teachers' height (Yazdanipour & Fakharzadeh, 2020). Shishavan and Sadeghi's (2009) findings revealed that EFL teachers agreed more firmly than learners on teachers' appearance as a criterion for judging their effectiveness. Fairness was the highest rank attribute in EFL teachers' traits in the findings of Çelik et al. (2013) and Tarajová and Metruk (2020); however, this feature was not even implied by the supervisors in the present study.

Another emerging theme was "Fulfilling Workplace Expectations." Some of its components have been mentioned in the fourth domain of Danielson's (2013) framework under "professional responsibilities." Despite the participants' different degrees of strictness for banning the use of L1 in the classroom, this approach has been suggested for overcoming classroom management challenges (Todorova & Ivanova, 2020). Apart from learners' and parents' feedback, peer observation was a helpful tool in one branch supervised by Parsa. In his view, teachers and supervisors benefited from this observation since it would increase cooperation among colleagues and expedite supervisors' decision-making process. Motallebzadeh et al.'s (2017) findings confirm the practicality and usefulness of peer-observatory practices for EFL teachers.

The last theme was "Learners', Parents', or Peers' Feedback." Based on the findings of Zarrabi and Brown's (2017) study, the high demand of Iranians to learn the English language has caused a significant

growth in the number of language schools. This phenomenon has created a competitive climate among different institutes, and their administrators try to satisfy the learners as much as possible. The degree of English learners' satisfaction is considered a determining factor in evaluating teachers' performance (e.g., Estaji & Shafaghi, 2018; Hatamvand et al., 2020; Zamani & Ahangari, 2016). Being entirely aware of this trend, all the supervisors devised various approaches to receive the learners' feedback. They relied on their observations and strongly believed in communicating directly with the learners or their parents (Azizpour & Gholami, 2021a). However, English teachers in Chinese schools do not entirely favor students' evaluations since their strictness level highly affects these judgments (Murphey & Yaode, 2010). The emphasis of Sina on learners' attrition rates as his most significant criterion seemed to endorse the concept of "commercialization of education," which has been addressed in Yazdanipour and Fakharzadeh's (2020) study. The same feature has been mentioned as the rate of return in Ostovar-Namaghi's (2013) findings and perceived as an unfair judgment criterion by Shayan, who believed that learners' statistics per se could not be considered a reliable criterion for teacher appraisal.

EFL teacher evaluation has multiple facets, and the effectiveness or quality of teaching is unlikely to be assessed with a single measure, such as classroom observation. A range of data will be needed to include diverging yet achievement-oriented views, attitudes, and perceptions of different stakeholders, namely supervisors, learners, parents, administrators, and teachers. Therefore, all the supervisors utilized multiple measures to evaluate the performance and competence of the EFL teachers. The same approach has been recommended by Borg (2018) to capture the complexity inherent in teaching, provide teachers with opportunities to show their performance and competence and minimize any measure's lack of reliability.

Conclusion and Implications

We aimed to explore the supervisors' criteria for evaluating in-service EFL teachers' performance. Based on the findings, the participants considered five main criteria while observing EFL teachers' practices. These included English and content knowledge, teaching skills, teacher's traits, fulfilling workplace expectations, and learners'/parents'/peers' feedback. Each of these themes embraced several components that carry specific meanings. Although these findings have been more or less addressed in the extant literature (e.g., Akbari & Yazdanmehr, 2012; Hatamvand et al., 2020; Isoré, 2009; Marzano & Toth, 2013; Mazandarani & Troudi, 2017), they still need to be interpreted based on the context of this research. Certain features of EFL teachers, highlighted in similar studies (Shishavan & Sadeghi, 2009; Tarajová & Metruk, 2020; Yazdanipour & Fakharzadeh, 2020) such as physical appearance and fairness, were not among the determining factors considered by the language supervisors in this study.

Regarding the limitations of this study, the focus was only on one language institute in Tehran. While it is impossible to generalize the findings from this specific context, they may be helpful to highlight language teacher supervisors' evaluative criteria. Moreover, only the supervisors' criteria were investigated, and other stakeholders (e.g., the institute's administrators or the EFL learners and their parents) were ignored. A contrastive study could reveal the matches/mismatches between these two groups. The effects of the supervisors' demographic information on their judgments have not been considered. Finding their biases and tendencies according to various variables, such as gender, age, or professional experience, will provide a more precise and clearer picture of their beliefs and thoughts toward evaluating the performance of EFL teachers (Ashtarian & Weisi, 2016).

Unfortunately, the observed teachers' information was not accessible due to the institute's regulations.

Further studies may benefit from exploring the effects of these features on supervisors' judgments. Most participants used the same evaluative criteria regardless of EFL teachers' teaching experience. It seems that designing an advanced EFL teacher evaluation framework tailored to teachers' experience level will be beneficial in increasing their motivation and reinforcing the fairness of supervisory processes (Gan & Yang, 2018).

References

Agheshteh, H., & Mehrpur, S. (2021). Teacher autonomy and supervisor authority: Power dynamics in language teacher supervision in Iran. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, *9*(1), 87–106. https://doi.org/10.30466/ijltr.2021.120977

Akbari, R., & Yazdanmehr, E. (2012). EFL teachers' recruitment and dynamic assessment in private language institutes of Iran. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, *3*(8), 29–51.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Irvine, C. K. S., & Walker, D. A. (2019). *Introduction to research in education* (10th ed.). Cengage.

Ashtarian, S., & Weisi, H. (2016). A comparative study of the use of affective markers in supervision comments: Case of native versus non-native supervision comments. *RELC Journal*, *47*(2), 161–173. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688216631172

Azizpour, S., & Gholami, J. (2021a). EFL teacher-supervisors' attitudes toward supervision in Iranian language schools. *Iranian Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *10*(1), 16–34.

Azizpour, S., & Gholami, J. (2021b). Exploring EFL teachers' attitudes toward teacher supervision in Iranian language schools. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Applied Literature: Dynamics and Advances*, *9*(2), 105–125. https://doi.org/10.22049/jalda.2021.27221.1300

Bailey, K. M. (2006). *Language teacher supervision: A case-based approach*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667329

Barnes, B. D., & Lock, G. (2013). Student perceptions of effective foreign language teachers: A quantitative investigation from a Korean university. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *38*(2), 19–36. https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2013v38n2.2

Bell, T. R. (2005). Behaviors and attitudes of effective foreign language teachers: Results of a questionnaire study. *Foreign Language Annals*, *38*(2), 259–270. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2005.tb02490.x

Borg, S. (2018). *Teacher evaluation: Global perspectives and their implications for English language teaching. A literature review*. British Council.

Brown, A. V. (2009). Students' and teachers' perceptions of effective foreign language teaching: A comparison of ideals. *The Modern Language Journal*, *93*(1), 46–60. https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1540-4781.2009.00827.X

Canales, A., & Maldonado, L. (2018). Teacher quality and student achievement in Chile: Linking teachers' contribution and observable characteristics. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *60*, 33–50. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.IJEDUDEV.2017.09.009

Çelik, S., Arikan, A., & Caner, M. (2013). In the eyes of Turkish EFL learners: What makes an effective foreign language teacher? *Porta Linguarum*, *20*, 287–297. https://doi.org/10.30827/digibug.18114

Chen, C. W.-Y., & Cheng, Y.-S. (2013). The supervisory process of EFL teachers: A case study. *TESL-EJ*, *17*(1), 1–21.

Coniam, D., Falvey, P., & Xiao, Y. (2017). An investigation of the impact on Hong Kong's English language teaching profession of the Language Proficiency Assessment for Teachers of English (LPATE). *RELC Journal*, *48*(1), 115–133. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688216687455

Danielson, C. (2013). *The framework for teaching evaluation instrument*. The Danielson Group.

Danielson, C., & McGreal, T. L. (2000). *Teacher evaluation to enhance professional learning.* ASCD, Educational Testing Service.

Demiröz, H., & Yeşilyurt, S. (2015). Effective foreign language teaching: Perceptions of prospective English

language teachers. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *3*(11), 862–870. https://doi.org/10.13189/UJER.2015.031112

Estaji, M., & Shafaghi, M. (2018). Teacher evaluation in EFL context: Development and validation of a teacher evaluation questionnaire. *Issues in Language Teaching*, *7*(2), 147–187.

Freeman, D. (1982). Observing teachers: Three approaches to in-service training and development. *TESOL Quarterly*, *16*(1), 21–28. https://doi.org/10.2307/3586560

Gan, Z., & Yang, C. C. R. (2018). How prepared are the preservice ESL teachers to teach: Insights from university supervisor feedback. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, *15*(1), 99–117. https://doi.org/10.18823/asiatefl.2018.15.1.7.99

Gebhard, J. G. (1990). The supervision of second and foreign language teachers. *Eric Digest*, 2–3.

Gholaminejad, R. (2020). When the evil pops in: Exploring the unheard voices of teachers working in private language schools in Iran concerning supervisory observation. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2020.1740795

Griffiths, C., & Tajeddin, Z. (Eds.). (2020). *Lessons from good language teachers*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108774390

Hallinger, P., Heck, R. H., & Murphy, J. (2014). Teacher evaluation and school improvement: An analysis of the evidence. *Education Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, *26*, 5–28. https://doi.org/10.1007/S11092-013-9179-5

Hatamvand, A., Khany, R., & Samaie, M. (2020). Using PLS path modeling for assessing a language teacher observation scale. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *30*(3), 367–389. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijal.12288

Hişmanoğlu, M., & Hişmanoğlu, S. (2010). English language teachers' perceptions of educational supervision in relation to their professional development: A case study of Northern Cyprus. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*, *4*(1), 16–34.

Hsu, L. (2017). Examining EFL teachers' technological pedagogical content knowledge and the adoption of mobile-assisted language learning: A partial least square approach. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *29*(8), 1287–1297. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2016.1278024

Isoré, M. (2009). *Teacher evaluation: Current practices in OECD countries and a literature review* (OECD Education Working Paper No. 23). OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/223283631428

Khaksefidi, S. (2015). Foreign language teaching in Iran: A model for effective EFL teaching in the Iranian context. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *5*(5), 1060–1071. https://doi.org/10.17507/TPLS.0505.22

Knop, C. K. (1980). The supervision of foreign language teachers. *Teachers College Record*, *81*(6), 186–207. https://doi.org/10.1177/016146818008100611

Marshall, K. (2009). *Rethinking teacher supervision and evaluation: How to work smart, build collaboration, and close the achievement gap* (1st ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Marzano, R. J., & Toth, M. D. (2013). *Teacher evaluation that makes a difference: A new model for teacher growth and student achievement*. ASCD.

Mashhadlou, H., & Izadpanah, S. (2021). Assessing Iranian EFL teachers' educational performance based on gender and years of teaching experience. *Language Testing in Asia*, *11*, 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-021-00140-7

Mazandarani, O., & Troudi, S. (2017). Teacher evaluation: What counts as an effective teacher? In S. Hidri & C. Coombe (Eds.), *Evaluation in foreign language education in the Middle East and North Africa* (pp. 3–28). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-43234-2_1

Motallebzadeh, K., Hosseinnia, M., & Domskey, J. G. (2017). Peer observation: A key factor to improve Iranian EFL teachers' professional development. *Cogent Education*, *4*(1), 1277456. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1277456

Mousavi, M. A., Atai, M. R., Babaii, E. (2016). Exploring standards and developing a measure for evaluating

Iranian EFL teachers' professional competence in the private sector. *Iranian Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *5*(2), 30–59.

Murphey, T., & Yaode, Q. (2010). A China initiative: Portfolio-based teacher development and appraisal. In C. Coombe, M. Al-Hamly, P. Davidson, & S. Troudi (Eds.), *Evaluating teacher effectiveness in ESL/EFL contexts* (pp. 119–133). The University of Michigan Press.

Ostovar-Namaghi, S. A. (2013). Language teachers' perceptions of evaluation criteria in Iran. *The Reading Matrix*, *13*(1), 45–60.

Park, G.-P., & Lee, H.-W. (2006). The characteristics of effective English teachers as perceived by high school teachers and students in Korea. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, *7*, 236–248. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03031547

Phillips, K., Balan, R., & Manko, T. (2014). Teacher evaluation: Improving the process. *Transformative Dialogues: Teaching & Learning Journal*, *7*(3), 1–22.

Podolsky, A., Kini, T., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2019). Does teaching experience increase teacher effectiveness? *A review of US research. Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, *4*(4), 286–308. https://doi.org/10.1108/JPCC-12-2018-0032

Ponticell, J. A., & Zepeda, S. J. (2004). Confronting well-learned lessons in supervision and evaluation. *NASSP Bulletin*, *88*(639), 43–59. https://doi.org/10.1177/019263650408863905

Ponticell, J. A., Zepeda, S. J., Lanoue, P. D., Haines, J. G., Jimenez, A. M., & Ata, A. (2019). Observation, feedback, and reflection. In S. J. Zepeda & J. A. Ponticell (Eds.), *The Wiley handbook of educational supervision* (pp. 251–279). Wiley Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119128304.CH11

Rachmajanti, S. (2008). Impact of English instruction at the elementary schools on the students' achievement of English at the lower secondary school. *TEFLIN Journal*, *19*(2), 160–185.

Rashidi, N., & Forutan, A. (2015). On the Iranian in-service and pre-service language teachers' perceptions of educational supervision concerning their professional development. *Issues in Language Teaching*, *4*(2), 55–27. https://doi.org/10.22054/ILT.2015.7225

Richards, J. C., & Farrell, T. S. (2005). *Professional development for language teachers: Strategies for teacher learning*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667237

Sadeghi, K., & Richards, J. C. (2015). Teaching spoken English in Iran's private language schools: Issues and options. *English Teaching: Practice & Critique*, *14*(2), 210–234. https://doi.org/10.1108/ETPC-03-2015-0019

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Shishavan, H. B., & Sadeghi, K. (2009). Characteristics of an effective English language teacher as perceived by Iranian teachers and learners of English. *English Language Teaching*, *2*(4), 130–143. https://doi.org/10.5539/ELT.V2N4P130

Tarajová, R., & Metruk, R. (2020). Characteristics of an effective EFL teacher: Perspectives of Slovak EFL students and teachers. *European Journal of Education Studies*, *7*(12), 78–86.

Todorova, R., & Ivanova, I. (2020). Classroom management and good language teachers. In C. Griffiths & Z. Tajeddin (Eds.), *Lessons from good language teachers* (pp. 133–150). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108774390.014

Vásquez, C. (2004). "Very carefully managed": Advice and suggestions in post-observation meetings. *Linguistics and Education*, *15*(1–2), 33–58. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.LINGED.2004.10.004

Wei, W., & Hui, S. K. F. (2019). Evaluating teacher performance in language learning classes: The gap between students and department administrators. *Teachers and Teaching*, *25*(4), 486–500. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2019.1625763

Yazdanipour, N., & Fakharzadeh, M. (2020). Effective language teachers' characteristics as perceived by English language private institutes' administrators in Iran. *The Qualitative Report*, *25*(8), 3111–3128. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2020.4566

Zamani, R., & Ahangari, S. (2016). Characteristics of an effective English language teacher (EELT) as perceived by learners of English. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, *4*(14), 69–88.

Zarrabi, F., & Brown, J. R. (2017). English language teaching and learning analysis in Iran. *International Journal of Business, Human and Social Sciences*, *8*(10), 3485–3493. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1340254

About the Authors

Azadeh Hassani has an MA in TEFL from Allameh Tabataba'i University (Iran). Her research interests include second language teaching and learning, computer-assisted language learning, and teacher education.

Zari Saeedi received her PhD from the British University of Trinity (UK) and is an Associate Professor at Allameh Tabataba'i University (Iran). She has presented and published papers on various topics, including educational neuro/psycholinguistics and brain-functioning and cognitive language learning.

PROFILE

Issues from Novice Teacher Researchers

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.103916

Emotions of CLIL Preservice Teachers in Teaching Non-Linguistic Subjects in English

Emociones de profesores de AICLE en formación en la enseñanza de materias en inglés

Lucía Belmonte Carrasco
Guadalupe de la Maya Retamar
Universidad de Extremadura, Badajoz, Spain

This paper reports an exploratory, descriptive study on the emotions of content and language-integrated learning preservice teachers. The study, carried out in a Spanish university, aimed at analysing the internship experience of 19 preservice teachers in the context of a master's degree in bilingual education (Spanish–English) for primary and secondary school teachers to determine the emotions experienced and the causative factors. The participants completed a questionnaire which showed that positive emotions were more frequent than negative ones. The variable causing such feelings included the subject taught, the sex of the teaching staff, previous experience, attitudes of educational centre tutors, and the students themselves. Therefore, the study highlights the affective dimension of teaching content and language-integrated learning.

Keywords: bilingual teaching, content and language-integrated learning, emotion, preservice teacher, teaching practice

Este artículo presenta un estudio exploratorio y descriptivo sobre las emociones de futuros profesores de aprendizaje integrado de contenidos y lenguas extranjeras. El estudio, realizado en una universidad española, buscó analizar la experiencia práctica de diecinueve profesores en formación de un máster en enseñanza bilingüe (español-inglés) para la educación primaria y secundaria para determinar las emociones experimentadas y sus causas. Los participantes completaron un cuestionario cuyo análisis evidenció que las emociones positivas se experimentaron en mayor medida que las negativas, siendo la materia impartida, el sexo del profesorado, la experiencia previa, la actitud del tutor de los centros y los propios estudiantes las causas de dichas emociones. El estudio pone de manifiesto la dimensión afectiva del aprendizaje integrado de contenidos y lenguas extranjeras.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje integrado de contenidos y lenguas extranjeras, emoción, enseñanza bilingüe, profesor en formación, práctica pedagógica

Lucía Belmonte Carrasco https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8792-1536 · Email: lubelmont@alumnos.unex.es
Guadalupe de la Maya Retamar https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4201-4024 · Email: gmaya@unex.es

This article is based on the thesis completed by Belmonte Carrasco (2021). Professor De la Maya Retamar was the thesis supervisor.

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Belmonte Carrasco, L., & de la Maya Retamar, G. (2023). Emotions of CLIL preservice teachers in teaching non-linguistic subjects in English. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 185–199. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.103916

This article was received on July 26, 2022 and accepted on April 12, 2023.

Introduction

In the European and Spanish contexts, the teaching and learning of foreign languages have become a priority due to their contributions to intercultural communication and social cohesion. As a result, the development of plurilingualism, which aims at ensuring that pupils develop communicative competences in two foreign languages at the end of secondary school (European Commission, 1995), has been the determining factor of the reforms carried out by educational administrations. One of the most significant measures adopted has been the introduction of bilingual sections, in which—following the content and language integrated learning (CLIL) approach—a foreign language is used to learn and teach content and language (Coyle et al., 2010). The core feature of this approach is the concept of integration: It intertwines content and language (Custodio Espinar, 2018). Thus, this integration has a double focus: Language learning is incorporated into content classes, and the subject content is used in the language learning class. Therefore, CLIL goals are content, language, and learning skills (Mehisto et al., 2008).

The introduction of the CLIL approach in different educational contexts has been accompanied by an extensive scientific production which has been particularly interested in students' learning outcomes, primarily the linguistic domain (Navarro-Pablo, 2021; Pérez Cañado, 2018), and in the methodological developments of the approach (Coyle et al., 2010; Marsh et al., 2015; Mehisto et al., 2008). As for teachers, the research focus has been on their training with an emphasis on the need for teachers to have not only good proficiency in L2 but also in-depth knowledge of the methodological and didactic foundations of bilingual teaching (Pavón Vázquez & Ellison, 2013; Pérez Cañado, 2016). Some authors highlight the difficulty of adapting university degrees to the training demands of this new educational reality because of the slow pace at which this type of change occurs (De la Maya & Luengo González, 2015). In addition, the rapid growth of bilingual programmes in Spain meant that many teachers were faced with bilingual teaching without adequate training on the methodological changes that adopting a new curriculum based on integrating language and content areas implies. This resulted in a "great degree of uncertainty, and many experienced teachers have suffered from frustration and started to question their professional identity" (Breeze & Azparren Legarre, 2021, p. 26).

This last observation raises a recent area of interest: the affective dimension of learning and teaching due to including the affective, cognitive, and motivational processes in learning theories (Hascher, 2010). Emotions are not only present in our daily lives, but they also become visible in every teaching-learning process so that, as Schutz and Lanehart (2002) point out, "an understanding of the nature of emotions within the school context is essential" (p. 67). This new consideration of emotions has been driven by the diversification of their theoretical foundations, facilitating the study of emotions from different perspectives and methodological proposals, increasing knowledge about the role of emotions in education, and opening new ways to investigate feelings. In language teaching and learning, the role of emotions, as Méndez López (2020) notes, has gained importance in the last decades. Emotions can either help or hinder the foreign language teaching and learning process, as they influence learners' and teachers' perceptions, behaviours, and learning outcomes (Simons & Smits, 2021, p. xiii).

The above highlights the importance of discussing and examining the affective dimension in educational contexts, specifically emotions. For this reason, this article presents the results of a qualitative study that combines both fields of study: emotions and teachers, explicitly investigating the affective dimension of CLIL preservice teachers.

Literature Review

The Affective Dimension of Teaching

The role of teaching involves a considerable deal of emotional workload, both due to the sensitivity required towards the emotions of others and because of what is involved in managing one's own and others' emotions to ensure the quality of the relationships in the school context.

Since the 1990s, attention to teaching and teachers, in general, has increased. The growing interest in this area is due to several reasons. Firstly, emotions are an essential part of the daily teaching activity of teachers (Badía, 2014). Secondly, emotions provide relevant information about teachers' characteristics, which is necessary to improve teachers' lives and instructional quality. Thirdly, many studies recognise the importance of the emotional aspect in teaching (Schutz, 2014). Finally, emotions favour cognitive processes.

Golombek and Doran (2014) mention that "emotion, cognition, and activity continuously interact and influence each other, on both conscious and unconscious levels, as teachers plan, enact, and reflect on their teaching" (p. 104). In addition, as Cowie (2011) states, "how teachers deal with emotions can have a great impact on their personal growth, and the kind of emotional support that they receive from their colleagues and institution can be a major factor in their personal development as a teacher" (p. 236). Likewise, as Frenzel et al. (2015) highlight, teacher's emotions "have been shown to be critically important for the quality and effectiveness of classroom instruction and are highly relevant for teachers' psychological well-being" (p. 1).

In the classroom, teachers show a variety of emotions, from enjoyment to anxiety or anger. According to Cubukcu (2013), the emergence of these emotions can be due to several causes: achievement of the objectives, teaching requirements, knowledge about the subject matter, relationships with colleagues, classroom discipline, curriculum constraints, lesson demands, or language management. The frequency and intensity of emotions vary among teachers depending on their personal characteristics, the group of students they teach, their academic subject (Frenzel et al., 2015), and how they understand the challenges encountered in teaching. Likewise, the appropriateness of emotional experiences is highly dependent on the context and is based on fundamental institutional and cultural values, norms, and practices (Hagenauer & Volet, 2014).

Researchers have been interested in the emotions of in-service and preservice teachers and their role in constructing their professional identity. During this initial training, the practicum is recognised not only as one of the core parts of education programmes (Zabalza Beraza, 2016) but also as the most influential in the personal and professional development of preservice teachers (Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2012). During the practicum, preservice teachers face some concerns and challenges which provoke emotions and feelings about teaching focused on different areas (Badía, 2014): personal perception of oneself as a teacher, the working environment, the teachers' perception of aspects related to teaching activity and strategies, appropriate forms of expression in the classroom, and adapting teaching to the student's knowledge level, to name a few.

Emotions of English Language and CLIL Teachers

Although emotions influence the teaching process and determine—for both experienced and preservice teachers—the construction of their professional identities (Zembylas, 2004), there has been little interest in research in this field, especially in the CLIL domain. Even though the introduction of bilingual teaching has posed a considerable challenge for teachers who are not native English speakers and have to cater to students with low proficiency in the language of instruction, scarce research has been conducted on these topics. As Breeze and Azparren Legarre (2021) emphasise, this

situation can, at best, "jolt teachers out of their comfort zone, and at worst, it may lead many highly experienced professionals to doubt their own competence and feel insecure about their role in the classroom" (p. 28), with negative repercussions for the teaching/learning process and the teachers' own identity.

Emotions of English Language Teachers

Emotions in the specific context of English language teaching have been studied from two perspectives: those that students experience and those the teachers, through their professional performance, can stimulate if they are positive, or try to prevent, if they are negative (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020). The second perspective refers to the emotions that the teacher experiences during professional practice. Recently, as De Costa et al. (2018) indicate, the increase in attention regarding language teacher emotions has turned this area into "the proverbial newest kid on the SLTE (second language teacher education) block" (p. 401).

Concerning the second perspective—the most relevant to the subject matter of this article—a common aspect in research examining emotions and English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching is "a somewhat negative tone to the findings" (Cowie, 2011, p. 236). In the theoretical review carried out in her research, Cowie (2011) cites teachers' language deficiencies, lack of time, unwanted classroom observations, and negative relationships between colleagues as sources of negative emotions, especially anxiety and stress. Also, institutional problems can lead to anger and a state of persistent frustration and bitterness. Finally, Cowie notes how these emotions can negatively affect the teachers' ability to reflect on their teaching. The effects can have "long-term consequences" on both the teacher and learners (De Costa et al., 2018). However, other studies highlight the positive emotions experienced by language teachers. The results of Heydarnejad et al.'s (2017) study show that enjoyment followed by pride—both positive emotions—are the most frequently mentioned by the teachers in their sample, for whom negative emotions are experienced in a much lower percentage. In any case, as metaphorically represented by Gkonou et al. (2020), foreign language teaching can be an emotional rollercoaster, a challenge for which not all teachers are equally well prepared.

As far as preservice or novice teachers are concerned, some studies have also explored the emotions they experience, either during the practicum or in their first year of teaching (Ocampo Martínez, 2017; Wolf & De Costa, 2017). Lucero and Roncancio-Castellanos (2019) state that emotions, on those first occasions when prospective teachers face a teaching situation, contribute to the teachers' survival and enduring engagement in a practicum, and those emotions are mainly triggered by the preservice teachers' reflection on their teaching performance. Most studies show a superiority of negative emotions over positive ones (Méndez López, 2020). However, they also show how positive emotions serve as a counterbalance to help prospective teachers deal with negative experiences of the practicum (Nguyen, 2014) as a basis for new pedagogical models that allow these teachers to develop their reflexivity or negotiate emerging challenges (Wolf & De Costa, 2017). The process of adaptation, in which there is a readjustment between what they expect and what they experience in the practicum regarding emotions and situations, helps them to "reshape their incipient identity as language teachers" (Méndez López, 2020, p. 25).

Emotions of CLIL Teachers

Studies of emotions affecting in-service CLIL teachers are more recent and less extensive. They will be discussed with those focusing specifically on preservice teachers, whose life emotions have an important role.

Only a few studies, to our knowledge, have been interested in analysing teachers' emotions in this

new professional context. Pappa et al. (2017) studied how emotions influence the transformation and maintenance of teaching identities of both novice and experienced teachers by considering that "the experience of both positively and negatively tinged emotions are important for CLIL teachers' self-understanding, well-being, and job satisfaction" (p. 81). Their results revealed that the teachers' prevalent negative emotions were feelings of rushing and frustration, derived from the study plan, time issues, questioning themselves as competent professionals, or their students' negativity towards the approach. Conversely, the most common positive experiences were satisfaction and empowerment, resulting from teachers' and students' involvement, learners' progress, and the feeling of being qualified to teach CLIL or from exercising their profession. In a later study, Pappa (2021) asserts that positive and negative emotions have developmental potential, as both experiences can make the pedagogical identity more receptive to change, methodological innovation, or professional development.

Breeze and Azparren Legarre (2021), in a study with in-service training teachers, highlight how, in the case of CLIL teachers, their professional identity is threatened as they lose a clear idea of what kind of teachers they are—language or content teachers—which gives rise to negative emotions. This, together with confusion about their role in the classroom, undermines their daily satisfaction.

Gruber et al. (2020) examined the factors contributing to CLIL primary teachers' well-being in Austria. These included the conviction about CLIL, the positive relationship with the pupils, and feelings of comfort in the teaching environment. Conversely, negative beliefs related to CLIL, linguistic confidence, negative experiences with the pupils' parents, high workload, the extra time needed for bureaucratic tasks, or lack of support may negatively affect teachers' well-being.

As mentioned above, the language requirements of CLIL teachers can be a significant emotional challenge that can impact teacher identity development, as language proficiency is one of their main concerns during their training (Mearns & Platteel, 2021). Some non-native English-speaking teachers may need more self-confidence in their language skills. Horwitz et al. (1986) mentioned the existence of foreign language anxiety and the negative consequences this could have on teaching. As Mercer et al. (2016) point out, it can be a challenge for teachers to be unable to predict the path a conversation class will take or to express themselves in a foreign language with the same resources they would have in their mother tongue. These limitations affect not only their self-confidence, identity, professional competence, and well-being but also represent "a particular risk for teachers who find themselves teaching their content subject(s) through a foreign language (such as CLIL teachers)" (p. 217). In addition, the complex nature of both responsibilities and tasks in a foreign language content teaching context may be susceptible to increase stress. The results of the study by Aiello et al. (2017), carried out with teachers in Italy preparing to become CLIL teachers, revealed the existence of linguistic anxiety and low self-perceived proficiency in English, which would be related to low willingness to communicate.

In the same vein, Torres-Rocha (2017) focuses on how the teachers in his sample feel about the language requirements associated with implementing the National Bilingual Programme in Colombia and how it affects their teachers' professional identity. Positive feelings about the programme include challenge, achievement, hope, and expectancy, while negative feelings include limitations, frustrations, scepticism, and disappointment towards this policy. In his conclusions, Torres-Rocha notes that these feelings "demonstrated to be conflicting factors influencing teachers' construction and reconstruction of their identities" (p. 52) and highlights other external and

internal factors that influenced teachers' professional identity.

Based on this theoretical framework, this paper aims to investigate the emotions of students from a master's degree in bilingual education for primary and secondary school teachers during the internship period. The research aims were:

1. To know the emotions experienced by preservice teachers in teaching non-language subjects during the internship period and to analyse the causes of such emotions.
2. To identify the emotion regulation strategies the participants employ to manage emotions appropriately.

Method

According to Bisquerra Alzina (2014), qualitative research reflects, describes, and interprets the educational reality in depth to understand or transform this reality. Resorting to a qualitative and critical methodology helps inquire into the thinking of future teachers (Sandín Esteban, 2003). Therefore, to achieve this study's aims, we chose a qualitative research method, which allowed us to understand the nature of the emotions experienced by preservice teachers and what teaching in CLIL classes implies for them (Arizmendi Tejeda et al., 2016).

Context and Participants

The study context was a university in the southwest of Spain that offers a master's degree program to address the training needs for implementing bilingual experiences in Spanish compulsory education. The master's syllabus is structured around four modules: the theoretical and practical bases of bilingual education, the linguistic needs of bilingual teaching in English, the practicum placement, and the master's thesis. The five-week teaching practicum placement aims to enable future teachers to apply and complement the knowledge acquired in their academic training. The External Internship (as the practicum is called) consists of six credits and represents a 120-hour stay in a school, 25 hours of individual work, and five hours of seminars to reflect on the experience and connect theory with practice.

The participants were 19 students from the master's during the 2020–2021 academic year. The ages ranged from 22 to 36, averaging around 24. In addition, 15 participants were women, whereas four were men. Most of the participants (17) taught in primary school during the internship period without any teaching experience beyond the internships of the degree course. Of these seventeen students, three had experience in bilingual and non-bilingual schools, whereas only two had experience in one or the other kind of school, not in both types. In all cases, the experience was less than one school year. Although the required linguistic accreditation is a B2 level of English—according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001)—10% of the participants had a C1 level, higher than that required to participate in bilingual education programs.

Data Collection Instruments

This exploratory, descriptive study was carried out using a questionnaire. Since we did not find previous work addressing this particular issue, the questionnaire was elaborated, taking as a reference the interview guide of Arizmendi Tejeda et al. (2016), the questionnaire of Tachaiyaphum and Sukying (2017), and our own questions. In addition, it was subjected to expert judgment, after which some questions were included, and others were removed or redefined.

The research tool is mixed and includes some initial sociodemographic aspects as well as 20 questions. Thirteen are closed-ended and collect information on critical elements of emotions; the remaining questions are open-ended to gather additional data on the emotions experienced and to obtain a deeper understanding of the participant's feelings. The

questionnaire was completed in Spanish to facilitate participation, but the participants' answers have been translated into English for publication purposes.

The questionnaire was sent to the participants through a Google Forms link to their emails. We obtained written consent, and the anonymity of the participants was always guaranteed.

Data Analysis

Once the data were obtained, we conducted a thematic content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), organising the information into different tables. To analyse the data and to identify emotions, we consider "emotion talk" and "emotional talk" in participants' responses, in terms of Bednarek (2009). Emotion talk is understood as an apparent reference and naming of emotions (e.g., love, joy). In contrast, emotional talk is understood as language indirectly related to an emotional experience, which does not need to be identifiable. Both are considered discursive strategies rather than a form of representation of the actual internal affective state of the speaker (Galasiński, 2004).

Results

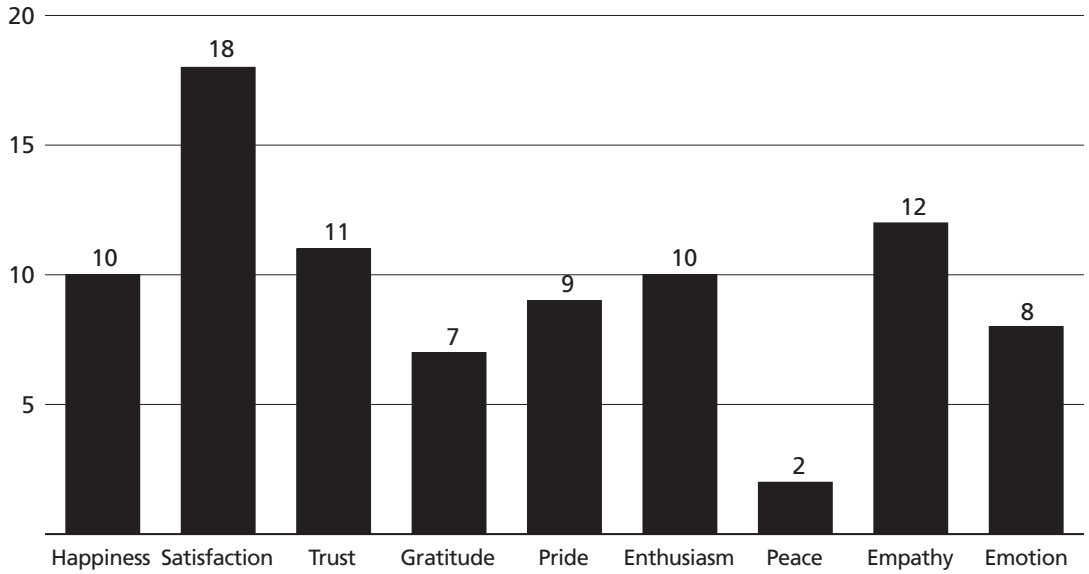
Our first objective aims to know the emotions experienced in teaching non-language subjects and their causes. We can state that preservice teachers reported diverse feelings while interacting with and teaching their students during the practicum placement.

Positive Emotions

As shown in Figure 1, which shows the frequency of positive emotions experienced by the participants, the most prevalent positive emotions were *satisfaction* and *empathy*, which are mentioned 18 and 12 times, respectively. Other emotions were *trust*, *happiness*, *enthusiasm*, and *pride*, with similar values experienced by more than half of the participants. On the opposite side, *peace* is the least felt positive emotion (only reported by two participants).

Nearly all participants were satisfied to see how well the students assimilated the subject, even though it was in a foreign language, which evidenced feelings of adequacy as they responded to what was asked of them and competence as they managed to teach the

Figure 1. Frequency of Distinct Positive Emotions



content successfully. Moreover, satisfaction is also the emotion experienced when they were able to develop their classes as CLIL teachers:

> When things went well, you used the content well, and the sequence was a success, you were overcome with a feeling of satisfaction, as on many occasions, you worked double and triple to achieve good results in this type of teaching. (Participant 15)

This participant is satisfied when the didactic intervention responds to the expected planning, especially when its preparation demands time and dedication.

Based on the participants' comments, we can argue that teachers feel more satisfied when they transform theory into practice successfully. This is evidenced in their students' positive learning results, which reinforces the feeling of satisfaction, both towards the teaching practice and the choice of profession.

Secondly, participants showed empathy when students had difficulty understanding what was being explained. When teachers frequently interact with children, they can detect whether they grasp the information through gestures. One participant pointed out that this leads to teachers putting themselves in the students' shoes. Finally, they agree that if teachers empathise with the students, a positive bond is established because the students fully trust the teacher, which may even lead them to improve their academic performance.

Regarding the remaining positive emotions, happiness and trust stand out. The first stems from seeing the children absorb and learn what is explained and when they pay attention. The second one is experienced when the participants feel able to teach in another language using the knowledge gained during the master's course, as well as with the acceptance and welcome of the teaching staff.

Negative Emotions

Among the negative emotions, *insecurity* ranks first, being mentioned in almost all the answers:

> I felt insecure due to my lack of experience in bilingual sections and my lack of mastery of some subjects. (Participant 12)
>
> I did not have CLIL training or know much about Social Sciences. (Participant 3)
>
> I felt some insecurity and fear about having to deal with a bilingual lesson . . . This is because of foreign language use and all it entails when teaching students and promoting content learning. (Participant 16)
>
> I felt insecure because I did not know if I were teaching correctly. (Participant 7)

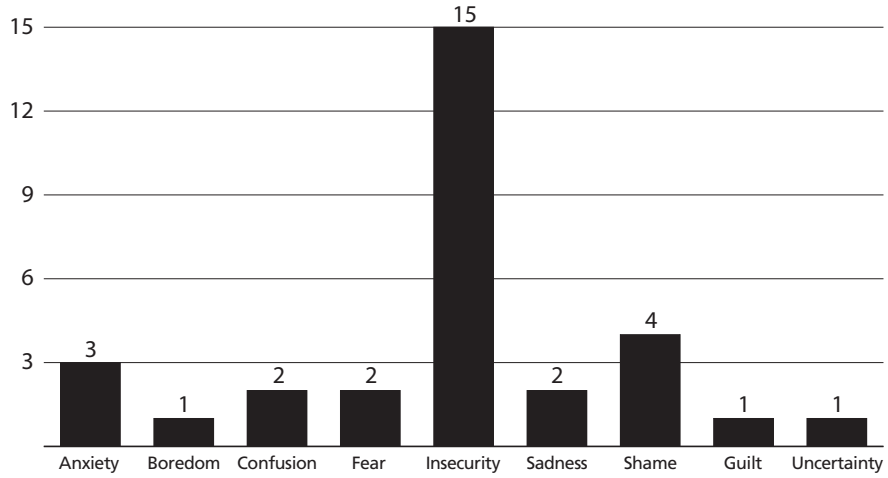
As the comments reveal, insecurity derives from several factors, such as the verbal use of a language that is not one's own or poor command of both the subject matter and the CLIL approach. Likewise, lack of students' attention, unexpected results, and not knowing whether the language is appropriate to the student's age, knowledge, and level of English are other causes of insecurity.

Teachers might also feel anxious when they want to transmit something but find it difficult due to their low proficiency in the foreign language, which may make teachers perceive that they are losing control of the class.

Secondly, the participants mentioned *shame* or *fear* of ridicule when they do not answer as expected since they are supposed to know the answers and when students correct the teachers' pronunciation mistakes. It also seems to happen when explaining the topics, as preservice teachers feel that some children are looking out for the mistakes they might make. These emotions are followed by confusion, uncertainty, fear, and sadness. Finally, boredom and guilt are the least experienced by the sample (see Figure 2). In general, preservice teachers reported positive emotions more frequently than negative ones.

Among the variables that have influenced the emotions felt, we can mention the fact of having done the internship in lower or higher grades, which can

Figure 2. Frequency of Distinct Negative Emotions



facilitate or hinder the implementation of the approach, mainly due to the student's age. Another variable is the non-linguistic subjects taught, as Natural and Social Sciences are the subjects that contribute more to the teachers experiencing emotions, particularly negative ones. Lastly, teaching experience is another of the variables mentioned since its absence causes fears due to a perceived lack of practical knowledge.

Finally, the last aspect deserving special mention is the *mentor's* attitude. If the tutor facilitates preservice teachers' integration within the daily teaching work, they will become accepted and develop their acquired skills and knowledge. A negative attitude on the part of the tutor can lead preservice teachers to reject teaching a particular subject or even their profession.

Emotion Regulation Strategies

Regarding the second objective, which aimed to identify the emotion regulation strategies employed by preservice teachers to manage emotions appropriately, we used Gross and Thompson's (2007) emotion regulation model as an analytical framework. The most notable strategy used is cognitive reappraisal, mentioned by 11 respondents (out of 19), consisting of thinking about what is uncomfortable to find the best possible solution. Thus, it can be inferred from the participants' answers that once the fundamental importance of the events has been analysed, they try to look for alternatives to improve situations of anger with the children, situations of frustration at checking that students do not fulfil the desired objectives, or even the loss of control due to lack of attention: "I tend to use cognitive reappraisal, especially in situations where you get angry about something that you rethink and it's not such a big deal. So, before I say something, I put it in perspective" (Participant 2).

The second most frequently employed strategy is modifying the situation (seven out of the 19 participants), which consists of seeking ways to prevent conflict so that everything is more cordial and bearable. The remaining strategies involve, on the one hand, attentional deployment, that is, avoiding the problem because of an unwillingness to face it or even thinking about more pleasant situations or events; and, on the other hand, situation selection, that is, choosing what is more favourable to regulate emotions. Finally, the suppression strategy involves holding back negative emotions, such as anger, because they harm the students and avoiding similar unwanted behaviours that children can imitate.

As it can be seen, most strategies are antecedent-focused and not response-focused since teachers modify emotions before they occur, except in one case in which a participant indicated that she alters emotional behaviours after the feelings have emerged. In addition, all participants believe that how emotions are managed influences the classroom climate, and, at the same time, most of them (16 out of 19) recognised the difficulty of regulating them adequately. Thus, the consequences can be both positive and negative.

From the participants' remarks, it can be deduced that the attitude of teachers when managing their emotions can be decisive in creating a pleasant and optimal atmosphere in the classroom. Thus, the inability of some people to find an adequate response to control negative emotions can lead to increased discussions between teachers and students and, therefore, chaos. Participant 15 explains the consequences of inadequate regulation of emotions: "Well, loss of control of the situation, loss of credibility, uncomfortable situations, and, in general if you don't have an emotional balance, you lose control. We are slaves of our emotions until we get to know them."

Likewise, Participant 8 adds how the teachers' emotions can, in turn, impact emotions in students: "The classroom environment can be affected, influencing the children's own emotions and interest as well as the control of the class."

This negativity can affect the student's academic performance and even their behaviour towards the teacher, leading to demotivation, insecurity, loss of control, and children's possible rejection of the subject. On the other hand, when there is an adequate response to a problem, the teacher and the students create a climate of harmony, transmitting security and confidence, which is turned into learning success.

Discussion

The main findings of the research indicate that being a teacher is emotionally demanding. Preservice teachers reported 18 emotions, including nine positive and nine negative ones. The most frequently experienced positive emotion among them was satisfaction—similar to the study by Pappa et al. (2017)—but empathy, happiness, and confidence were also mentioned. In turn, the most frequently described negative emotion was insecurity, followed by confusion and shame, emotions related, among other issues, to the linguistic demands of these programmes, as revealed in studies by Horwitz et al. (1986) and Mercer et al. (2016).

Although prior studies on preservice teachers' academic emotions have shown that positive emotions are as frequent as negative ones (Pekrun et al., 2002), our outcomes indicated that positive emotions were reported more frequently than negative ones. The fact that one type of emotion—positive or negative—is experienced to a greater extent than others is not a question that has offered unanimous results in the studies carried out, especially those on EFL teachers, since although our data agree with those obtained by Heydarnejad et al. (2017), they are opposed to those reviewed by Méndez López (2020), which show the prevalence of negative emotions over the positive ones. Concerning the causes giving rise to emotions, our results concurred with other studies (Poulou, 2007; Swennen et al., 2004) in the sense that students are the primary source of positive emotions. The findings also support the stance of Malderez et al. (2007) in considering these positive and negative episodes linked to high expectations of the teaching practice.

Therefore, this study highlights the "social nature" of teaching (Zembylas, 2005) since teachers' emotions seem to depend on pupils' behaviour and the quality of the teacher–student relationships. These factors can sometimes enhance the teacher's positive experience or transform initial positive emotions into negative ones (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012). Besides, the data also indicate evidence of emotional transfer (Hagenauer & Volet, 2014). For instance, participants reported that if students failed because they did not understand what was being explained or because of other reasons, they

felt empathy and sadness. On the contrary, learners' achievement made both learners and teachers happy. This is what Clark et al. (2003) refer to as "empathic emotions," which originated from the "contagious" nature of emotions (Fischer, 2007).

Likewise, there are differences in the non-language subject; the course taught, the teaching experience, and the internship tutor's attitude, which is consistent with the findings of the study by Brígido et al. (2010).

Regarding the strategies employed to regulate emotions, when cognitive revaluation prevails, teachers are committed to not being influenced by indifference but, on the contrary, facing problems and looking for solutions that lead to conciliation and creating a relaxed atmosphere. This research shows that while positive emotions can be a means for the entire educational community, negative emotions can hinder collaboration and learning. CLIL, due to its flexibility and versatility, allows one to acknowledge and experience a range of emotions (Pappa et al., 2017). Specifically, the time and support invested in responding to CLIL curriculum goals and teaching practice are two issues that must be reconsidered. Our findings highlight that these preservice teachers noted that implementing CLIL in the school requires large amounts of lesson planning and teaching time, as it involves a particular language focus. Teachers spend a long time choosing the appropriate content, designing activities, and adapting and preparing materials (Tachaiyaphum & Sukying, 2017). Therefore, all participants agreed that CLIL is not easy to implement as it is time-consuming (Mehisto et al., 2008) and requires much effort from the teachers. Hence, teacher collaboration becomes essential (Guillamón-Suesta & Renau Renau, 2015).

Finally, as far as teacher training is concerned, participants believed that they need proper training with the help of specialists to become qualified CLIL teachers, that is, to be trained in terms of emotions, language, cooperation among content and language teachers, and knowledge about the CLIL approach to cope with any circumstances that they might experience in the classroom. Results also revealed that preservice teachers need oral English skills training as they have problems communicating in class efficiently because they are not proficient in the language. They also claim that despite having received training on the approach in the master's, they still find CLIL difficult to implement. As mentioned by Çekrezi (2011), it is convenient to start training preservice teachers at the university level through workshops, guided discussions, or reading circles (Pappa et al., 2017).

Conclusions

The findings of this study highlight the affective dimension of teaching in CLIL. Research of emotions in teaching non-linguistic subjects through CLIL can provide data to make teachers aware of the importance of their emotions and emotional vulnerability and improve teacher training so that they can know their emotions in depth and know how to control and self-regulate them. Negative emotions are often an obstacle to the teaching process of different disciplines. Therefore, the challenge is transforming these emotions into positive ones through strategies that contribute decisively to students' progress and learning.

Emotions are an integral part of CLIL teaching; therefore, they are present within the teaching activity (Zembylas, 2004). Preservice teachers need to acknowledge the power of their emotions as they shape the student's learning and the classroom environment and directly influence emotions. These teachers devote significant amounts of time to preparing lessons, and sometimes they forget their happiness and well-being, as evidenced by the high burnout rates often seen in the teaching profession (Evers et al., 2004). Therefore, preservice teachers must acknowledge their emotions for their student's well-being and themselves. Hence, teacher training programmes should provide prospective teachers "with the self-regulatory and

socio-emotional skills needed to manage their own levels of stress, emotions, motivation, and general professional well-being" (Mercer et al., 2016, p. 225), being this one of the main implications of our research. Future teacher training should instruct teachers in strategies of affective regulation that will allow them to manage their emotions adequately. Seminars during internships can be the perfect moment to connect theory with practice and to make the teachers' emotions visible, share and reflect on them. Developing micro-skills (appropriate emotional expression, regulation of emotions and feelings, coping skills, and self-generation of positive emotions; Bisquerra Alzina, 2009) will provide preservice teachers valuable tools to manage and regulate their emotions in CLIL contexts.

However, this study has some limitations. The sample and context are limited: All respondents belonged to the same master's, and their placements were mainly in primary education. Therefore, extending the study sample to include more participants and preservice teachers from other contexts and different levels of education would be valuable. Also, it would be interesting to diversify the instruments used, including interviews, for further studies to focus on some of the aspects highlighted in this study. Another research line could be to deal with the strategies for regulating emotions in classroom management and to delve deeper into how the teacher's emotions influence students.

In conclusion, being a CLIL teacher requires solid disciplinary, linguistic, and methodological training and psychological preparation that allows these teachers to face the emotional challenges and changes in their professional identity demanded by the CLIL teaching context.

References

Aiello, J., Di Martino, E., & Di Sabato, B. (2017). Preparing teachers in Italy for CLIL: Reflections on assessment, language proficiency and willingness to communicate. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *20*(1), 69–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2015.1041873

Arizmendi Tejeda, S., Gillings de González, B., & López Martínez, C. L. (2016). How novice EFL teachers regulate their negative emotions. *How Journal*, *23*(1), 30–48. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.23.1.299

Badía, A. (2014). Emociones y sentimientos del profesor en la enseñanza y la formación docente. In C. Monereo (Coord.), *Enseñando a enseñar en la universidad* (pp. 62–90). Octaedro/ICE-UB.

Bednarek, M. (2009). Emotion talk and emotional talk: Cognitive and discursive perspectives. In H. Pishwa (Ed.), *Language and social cognition: Expression of the social mind* (pp. 395–432). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110216080.3.395

Belmonte Carrasco, L. (2021). *The emotions of CLIL preservice teachers in the teaching of non-linguistic subjects in a foreign language* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Universidad de Extremadura.

Bisquerra Alzina, R. (2009). *Psicopedagogía de las emociones*. Síntesis.

Bisquerra Alzina, R. (2014). *Metodología de la investigación cualitativa*. La Muralla

Boiger, M., & Mesquita, B. (2012). The construction of emotion in interactions, relationships, and cultures. *Emotion Review*, *4*(3), 221–229. https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073912439765

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a

Breeze, R., & Azparren Legarre, M. P. (2021). Understanding change in practice: Identity and emotions in teacher training for content and language integrated learning (CLIL). *International Journal of Language Studies*, *15*(3), 25–44.

Brígido, M., Bermejo, M. L., Conde, M. C., & Mellado, V. (2010). The emotions in teaching and learning nature sciences and physics/chemistry in primary pre-service teachers. *US-China Education Review*, *7*(12), 25–32. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED514884.pdf

Çekrezi, R. (2011). CLIL and teacher training. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *15*, 3821–3825. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.04.379

Clark, M. S., Fitness, J., & Brisette, I. (2003). Understanding people's perception of relationships is crucial to understanding their emotional lives. In G. J. O. Fletcher & M. S. Clark (Ed.), *Blackwell handbook of social psychology: Interpersonal processes* (pp. 250–278). Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470998557.ch10

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge University Press.

Cowie, N. (2011). Emotions that experienced English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers feel about their students, their colleagues and their work. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *27*(1), 235–242. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.08.006

Coyle, D., Hood, P., & Marsh, D. (2010). *CLIL: Content and Language Integrated Learning*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009024549

Cubukcu, F. (2013). The significance of teachers' academic emotions. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *70*, 649–653. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.01.105

Custodio Espinar, M. (2018). *Los principios metodológicos AICLE (aprendizaje integrado de contenido y lengua) en las programaciones docentes del Programa Bilingüe de la Comunidad de Madrid: un estudio empírico* [Doctoral dissertation, Universidad Complutense de Madrid]. https://eprints.ucm.es/55485/1/T41128.pdf

De Costa, P., Rawal, H., & Li, W. (2018). Broadening the second language teacher education agenda: International perspectives on teacher emotions. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *41*(4), 401–409. https://doi.org/10.1515/cjal-2018-0030

De la Maya, G., & Luengo González, R. (2015). Teacher training programs and development of plurilingual competence. In D. Marsh, M. L. Pérez Cañado, & J. Ráez Padilla (Eds.), *CLIL in action: Voices from the classroom* (pp. 114–129). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Dewaele, J.-M., & Dewaele, L. (2020). Are foreign language learners' enjoyment and anxiety specific to the teacher? An investigation into the dynamics of learners' classroom emotions. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *10*(1), 45–65. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2020.10.1.3

European Commission. (1995). *White paper on education and training: Teaching and learning – Towards the learning society*. European Commission. https://bit.ly/3ZM4e1m

Evers, W. J. G., Tomic, W., & Brouwers, A. (2004). Burnout among teachers: students' and teachers' perceptions compared. *School Psychology International*, *25*(2), 131–148. https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034304043670

Fischer, A. H. (2007). Emotional contagion. In R. F. Baumeister & K. D. Vohs (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of social psychology* (pp. 291–293). SAGE Publications. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412956253

Frenzel, A. C., Becker-Kurz, B., Pekrun, R., & Goetz, T. (2015). Teaching this class drives me nuts! Examining the person and context specificity of teacher emotions. *PloS ONE*, *10*(6), e0129630. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0129630

Galasiński, D. (2004). *Men and the language of emotions*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230510128

Gkonou, C., Dewaele, J.-M., & King, J. (Eds.). (2020). *The emotional rollercoaster of language teaching*. Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/GKONOU8335

Golombek, P., & Doran, M. (2014). Unifying cognition, emotion, and activity in language teacher professional development. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *39*, 102–111. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2014.01.002

Gross, J. J., & Thompson, R. (2007). Emotion regulation: Conceptual foundations. In J. J. Gross (Ed.), *Handbook of emotion regulation* (1st ed., pp. 3–25). Guilford Press.

Gruber, M.-T., Lämmerer, A., Hofstadler, N., & Mercer, S. (2020). Flourishing or floundering: Factors contributing to CLIL primary teachers' well-being in Austria. *CLIL Journal of Innovation and Research in Plurilingual and Pluricultural Education*, *3*(1), 19–34. https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/clil.24

Guillamón-Suesta, F., & Renau Renau, M. L. (2015). A critical vision of the CLIL approach in secondary education: A study in the Valencian community in Spain. *Latin American Journal of Content and Language Integrated Learning*, *8*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.5294/laclil.2015.8.1.1

Hagenauer, G., & Volet, S. (2014). 'I don't think I could, you know, just teach without any emotion': Exploring the nature and origin of university teachers' emotions. *Research Papers in Education*, *29*(2), 240–262. https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2012.754929

Hascher, T. (2010). Learning and emotion: Perspectives for theory and research. *European Educational Research Journal*, *9*(1), 13–28. https://doi.org/10.2304/eerj.2010.9.1.13

Heydarnejad, T., Fatemi, A. H., & Ghonsooly, B. (2017). An exploration of EFL teachers' teaching styles and emotions. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, *4*(2), 26–46. https://bit.ly/3iNbhpZ

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, *70*(2), 125–132. https://doi.org/10.2307/327317

Lucero, E., & Roncancio-Castellanos, K. (2019). The pedagogical practicum journey towards becoming an English language teacher. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *21*(1), 173–185. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v21n1.71300

Malderez, A., Hobson, A. J., Tracey, L., & Kerr, K. (2007). Becoming a student teacher: Core features of the experience. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *30*(3), 225–248. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619760701486068

Marsh, D., Pérez Cañado, M. L., & Ráez Padilla, J. (Eds.). (2015). *CLIL in action: Voices from the classroom*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Mearns, T., & Platteel, T. (2021). Exploring teacher support for a content and language integrated modern languages curriculum. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, *34*(3), 207–223. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2020.1809665

Mehisto, P., Marsh, D., & Frigols, M. J. (2008). *Uncovering CLIL: Content and language integrated learning in bilingual and multilingual education*. Macmillan Education.

Méndez López, M. G. (2020). Emotions attributions of ELT pre-service teachers and their effects on teaching practice. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *22*(1), 15–28. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v22n1.78613

Mercer, S., Oberdorfer, P., & Saleem, M. (2016). Helping language teachers to thrive: Using positive psychology to promote teachers' professional well-being. In D. Gabryś-Barker & D. Gałajda (Eds.), *Positive psychology perspectives on foreign language learning and teaching* (pp. 213–229). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-32954-3_12

Navarro-Pablo, M. (2021). The impact of CLIL on FL grammar and vocabulary. In M. L. Pérez Cañado (Ed.), *Content and language integrated learning in monolingual settings: New insights from the Spanish context* (pp. 119–140). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-68329-0_7

Nguyen, M. H. (2014). Preservice EAL teaching as emotional experiences: Practicum experience in an Australian secondary school. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *39*(8), 62–84. https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2014v39n8.5

Ocampo Martínez, D. (2017). *Emotions of first-year English teachers* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Universidad de Quintana Roo.

Pappa, S. (2021). Identity and emotions in teaching CLIL: The case of primary school teachers in Finland. In K. R. Talbot, M.-T. Gruber, & R. Nishida (Eds.), *The psychological experience of integrating content and language* (pp. 16–32). Multilingual Matters.

Pappa, S., Moate, J., Ruohotie-Lyhty, M., & Eteläpelto, A. (2017). CLIL teachers in Finland: The role of emotions in professional identity negotiation. *Journal of Applied Language Studies*, *11*(4), 79–99. https://doi.org/10.17011/apples/urn.201711144252

Pavón Vázquez, V., & Ellison, M. (2013). Examining teacher roles and competences in content and language integrated learning (CLIL). *Linguarum Arena*, *4*, 67–80.

Pekrun, R., Goetz, T., Titz, W., & Perry, R. P. (2002). Academic emotions in students' self-regulated learning and achievement: A program of quantitative and qualitative research. *Educational Psychologist*, *37*(2), 91–105. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15326985EP3702_4

Pérez Cañado, M. L. (2016). Teacher training needs for bilingual education: In-service teacher perceptions. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *19*(3), 266–295. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2014.980778

Pérez Cañado, M. L. (2018). CLIL and educational level: A longitudinal study on the impact of CLIL on language outcomes. *Porta Linguarum*, (29), 51–70. https://doi.org/10.30827/Digibug.54022

Poulou, M. (2007). Student-teachers' concerns about teaching practice. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *30*(1), 91–110. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619760600944993

Sandín Esteban, M. P. (2003). *Investigación cualitativa en educación. fundamentos y tradiciones*. McGraw & Hill Interamericana.

Schutz, P. A. (2014). Inquiry on teachers' emotion. *Educational Psychologist*, *49*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2013.864955

Schutz, P. A., & Lanehart, S. L. (2002). Introduction: Emotions in education. *Educational Psychologist*, *37*(2), 67–68. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15326985EP3702_1

Simons, M., & Smits, T. (Eds.). (2021). *Language education and emotions: Research into emotions and language learners, language teachers and educational processes*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003019497

Swennen, A., Jörg, T., & Korthagen, F. (2004). Studying student teachers' concerns, combining image-based and more traditional research techniques. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *27*(3), 265–283. https://doi.org/10.1080/0261976042000290796

Tachaiyaphum, N., & Sukying, A. (2017). EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions of CLIL. *Asian Education Studies*, *2*(4), 44–56. https://doi.org/10.20849/aes.v2i4.283

Timoštšuk, I., & Ugaste, A. (2012). The role of emotions in student teachers' professional identity. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *35*(4), 421–433. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2012.662637

Torres-Rocha, J. C. (2017). High school EFL teachers' identity and their emotions towards language requirements. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *19*(2), 41–55. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v19n2.60220

Wolff, D., & De Costa, P. I. (2017). Expanding the language teacher identity landscape: An investigation of the emotions and strategies of a NNEST. *The Modern Language Journal*, *101*(s1), 76–90. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12370

Zabalza Beraza, M. A. (2016). El practicum y las prácticas externas en la formación universitaria. *Revista Practicum*, *1*(1), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.24310/RevPracticumrep.v1i1.8254

Zembylas, M. (2004). The emotional characteristics of teaching: An ethnographic study of one teacher. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *20*(2), 185–201. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2003.09.008

Zembylas, M. (2005). *Teaching with emotion: A postmodern enactment*. Information Age Publishing.

About the Authors

Lucía Belmonte Carrasco is a primary English teacher with a master's degree in Bilingual Teaching for Primary and Secondary Education from the Universidad de Extremadura (Spain).

Guadalupe de la Maya Retamar holds a PhD in Education from Universidad de Extremadura (Spain) and is a Senior Lecturer at the same University. Her main research lines focus on training of foreign language teachers, vocabulary acquisition, and learning of third and additional languages.

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.104627

Teachers' Agency Development When Adapting the Colombian English Suggested Curriculum for High School

Desarrollo de la agencia docente en la implementación del currículo sugerido de inglés

Cindy Valdelamar González
Luzkarime Calle-Díaz
Universidad de Córdoba, Montería, Colombia

This case study reports how three high-school teachers from two state schools in Colombia enacted the National English Suggested Curriculum by the Ministry of Education. The teachers' trajectories of action were analyzed through semi-structured interviews, teachers' narratives, and lesson observations. Using the ecological model of agency as a framework, we situated teachers' steps within projective, iterational, and practical evaluative dimensions of agency. In this paper, we provide additional dimensions of teacher agency, which can help to expand theoretical and empirical knowledge in the field. Findings show that teachers cope with the changes derived from policy differently. The analysis presented in this paper can inform the creation and promotion of future curriculum policies in similar contexts.

Keywords: curriculum implementation, language policy, national suggested curriculum, teacher agency

Este estudio de caso reporta la agencia de tres profesoras de inglés de dos instituciones educativas públicas en Colombia en la adaptación del Currículo Sugerido de Inglés del Ministerio de Educación Nacional. Se analizaron las trayectorias de acción de las docentes a partir de entrevistas semiestructuradas, narraciones y observaciones de clase. Usando una adaptación del modelo de agencia docente, situamos las acciones de las docentes en las categorías iterativa, práctico-evaluativa y proyectiva. En este artículo presentamos dimensiones adicionales de agencia docente, con lo que buscamos contribuir al desarrollo empírico y teórico del campo de estudio. Los hallazgos demuestran que las docentes abordan la adaptación curricular de forma distinta. El análisis presentado puede aportar a la creación de políticas curriculares en el futuro.

Palabras clave: agencia docente, currículo sugerido de inglés, implementación curricular, políticas lingüísticas

Cindy Valdelamar González https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6081-1954 · Email: cindyvaldelamarg@correo.unicordoba.edu.co
Luzkarime Calle-Díaz https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1459-8974 · Email: luzkarimec@uninorte.edu.co

This article is based on the master's thesis completed by Valdelamar (2022). Professor Calle-Díaz was the thesis advisor.

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Valdelamar González, C., & Calle-Díaz, L. (2023). Teachers' agency development when adapting the Colombian English suggested curriculum for high school. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 201–216. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.104627

This article was received on September 5, 2022 and accepted on April 17, 2023.

Introduction

English language teachers, who specifically adopt English as a foreign language (EFL) policies, provide valuable information about the constraints or accomplishments involved in implementing successful or unsuccessful EFL policies. Hence, increasing interest has been in describing EFL teachers' challenges as they interpret, enact, or resist policy discourses. In Asia and Europe, several authors have addressed teachers' agency and its influence on teachers' activities in the classroom (Hamid & Nguyen, 2016; Liu et al., 2020; Priestley et al., 2012; Verástegui Martínez & Úbeda Gómez, 2022).

Although foreign language education has undergone numerous reforms in Latin America over the last few years (Cronquist & Fiszbein, 2017), research that addresses the specific actions carried out by teachers at the micro level in response to language curriculum reforms still needs to be explored. In the case of Colombia, a significant body of literature addresses the relationship between EFL policy and stakeholders' adaptations (Araque Cuellar, 2022; Le Gal, 2018; Miranda, 2021). However, there is still limited knowledge in varied contexts where the curriculum was implemented about how teachers specifically coped with the challenges of EFL policy reform.

In 2016, the Colombian Ministry of Education (MEN, for its acronym in Spanish) issued the Basic Learning Rights and English Suggested Curriculum (ESC) for middle and high school (Grades 6 to 11 in the Colombian school system), addressed to English teachers, education secretaries, and schools (MEN, 2016a, 2016b). Working as a complementary plan to support curriculum development and language teaching at state schools, the ESC proposes English learning goals influenced by elements of peace, health, environment, and democracy (MEN, 2016b). Likewise, the ESC states that teachers possess curricular autonomy to analyze and adapt each element within its suggested scope and objectives (MEN, 2016b).

Although some studies have described the experiences of public-school teachers when implementing the reforms derived from the adaptation of new English language policies (Araque Cuellar, 2022; Quintero Polo & Guerrero Nieto, 2013), none of them has inquired into the influence of the ESC when adopted in Colombian EFL classrooms.

We believe the exercise of teachers' agency can only be described by analyzing teachers' decisions and the reasons behind their action patterns, described in detail in their own oral and written narratives. This study explored these aspects as we interpreted how each teacher developed their own framework for action. This, in turn, provided varying results based on how teachers enacted the ESC for high school. Although the curriculum being implemented was the same, the uniqueness of each participant teacher provided a stance on how their agency influenced curriculum implementation. The analysis could also conclude convergence and divergence across the three participant teachers.

Literature Review

Agency is the ability to evidence responsiveness to situations conceived as problems within the present and influenced by past and future orientations (Biesta & Tedder, 2006; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). This ecological notion of agency describes how an individual acts considering paths that influence development, decisions, and actions. This perspective of agency addresses the actions performed rather than the qualities or aspects waiting to be awakened in people (Priestley et al., 2015).

This study takes this ecological notion of teacher agency as the primary construct to address agency theory. We adopted a model of teachers' agency put forward by Priestley et al. (2015). This model, also known as the Chordal Triad of Agency, describes the development of teacher agency within three dimensions: (a) iterational (past orientations); (b)

practical-evaluative (present orientations), and (c) projective (future orientations).

The relationship between teacher agency and policy adaptation within EFL teaching reflects a significant connection between teachers' adaptation of policy discourses and classroom practices. Recent years have witnessed an increase in new learning curricula in various contexts, so teachers are expected to take roles that reflect the policies in their teaching practices. This view considers the role of teachers as an indicator of successful or unsuccessful EFL policy implementation (Goodson, 2003; Hamid & Nguyen, 2016; Nieveen, 2011; Priestley et al., 2011). This shift in responsibility from the macro (policymakers) to the micro level (policy actors) results in a critical discard of the duty shared between the two levels.

A different perspective by Priestley et al. (2012) describes the responsibility of teachers when they engage in policy adaptation as an opportunity to exercise their professional agency. Teachers are usually given autonomy in teaching practices rather than deprofessionalized by imposed methods and institutionalized teaching procedures. Constraints, change, and activism within classroom life can foster agency development in teachers. Therefore, teachers' adaptation to the EFL policies also results from the interplay among teachers' perceptions of the policy discourse, motivations, and the contextual elements fostering or hindering their professional practice.

Teachers engage in dialogues between their paradigms and the outer world to construct a consistent guideline for policy adaptation (Hamid & Nguyen, 2016; Sannino, 2010). Teachers' individual practices display a certain level of variation based on a teacher's capacity to interpret policies, and transformation of teachers' practices at the micro-level occurs as they exercise their agency to enact the new policy discourses. Hence, the process of EFL policy adaptation begins with policy writers (macro level), moving towards the role of researchers and communities (meso level), and finally being reshaped by teachers and students at the micro level. The last few years have seen emerging local studies addressing policy actors' adaptations and teachers' agency development at the classroom level in Colombia (Fandiño-Parra, 2021; Gómez Duque, 2020; González, 2007; Guerrero & Camargo-Abello, 2023; Mosquera Pérez, 2022).

The unique view on each teacher's policy interpretation explains why some teachers successfully adapt it while others fail. Teachers adjust the policy in their work setting to respond to the constraints or enablers in policy discourse. Hence, the actions and decisions of teachers might restrict the school's methodology and ethos (Hamid & Nguyen, 2016; Liu et al., 2020; Robinson, 2012).

Similarly, teachers' agency makes a difference in students' learning outcomes. A mismatch between students' cultural background and curriculum expectations meets at the micro-level, and the teacher's activities play a fundamental role in responding to it. Teachers' mediation is a tool to transform policy discourse into what can be defined as performative action or agency work in the classroom context.

In Colombia, policymakers have traditionally promoted a top-down approach to policy writing, dismissing that teachers' work lies at the core of policy implementation (Ayala Zárate & Álvarez, 2005; Cárdenas, 2006; González, 2010). This is reflected in the way policies have been designed and implemented. Language policies in Colombia do not start at the core of reforms implemented by teachers (from the bottom-up) or informed by contextual information that nurtures how the policies should be designed, written, and published; instead, some authors argue that policy discourses in Colombia follow a bureaucratic model (top-down) that has institutionalized teacher's practices with few considerations of their role in a variety of contexts (Correa & Usma Wilches, 2013; de Mejía, 2011). In addition, Hernández Varona and Gutiérrez Álvarez (2020) state that the nature of education in

Colombia remains distorted as it regards teachers as policy consumers rather than policy creators, which deprofessionalizes teachers' activities and leaves little space to navigate the impact of teacher's work within policy implementation.

Therefore, considering that research on teacher agency development in EFL contexts is a novel trend in Colombia (Hernández Varona & Gutiérrez Álvarez, 2020), the current study analyzed three teachers' agency development to contribute to the understanding of how state school teachers in the country enact or resist policy discourse implementation, specifically, the ESC.

Method

This study followed a qualitative case study research design (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Denzin et al., 2006), which allowed us to study the issue of teacher agency by analyzing three cases in a bounded system (participant teachers in the state school system).

We were external to the research context. Author 1 was a master's student when the data were collected and is currently a university teacher. Author 2 is a graduate professor. Both researchers participated in data collection and analysis.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, lesson observations, and teachers' narratives. The interviews allowed access to the teachers' interpretation of the policy (ESC) as well as further descriptions of the nature of their actions in the past, present, and possible future influencing their teaching process. The interview questions were open-ended to get as many details from the teachers' experiences as possible and to allow the participants to elaborate on their responses.

Lesson observations, on the other hand, aimed at exploring the enactment of the ESC as the participants acted upon policy adoption and adaptation dynamics within classroom life. Information gathered through lesson observation also served as an entry point to validate or contrast teachers' expressed agency development from the interviews. This ultimately allowed us to analyze how the teachers' trajectories of action were reflected in day-to-day decisions at the micro-level (the EFL classroom).

Finally, we used teachers' narratives to assess a more in-depth depiction of their teaching decisions and agentic moves when enacting the ESC in their educational context. The narratives provided an account of the participants' discourses and perceptions of their teaching practices as portrayed in their own words, retrospectively, and in detail. We sought to identify the interplay of the three dimensions of agency embedded in their experiences, as these reflect trajectories of action.

Context and Participants

Two state schools in Montería, Colombia, were selected based on their recognition for being part of bilingualism projects promoted by national and local educational authorities, including implementing the ESC. School 1 has been implementing EFL policies since 2008, which means the schoolteachers have had different professional development opportunities to enhance their knowledge in English language teaching. School 2 has been recognized due to its high scores in state exams that test students' proficiency levels in various subjects.

Three high school female teachers were purposefully selected for this study: Dorcas, Yua, and Mirabel.[1] Dorcas and Yua are teachers in School 1, while Mirabel teaches in School 2. Teachers' selection was based on three primary criteria: (a) seniority (teachers with over eight years of experience); (b) role (in-service English teachers belonging to the language department at the selected schools); and (c) closeness to curriculum creation (teachers who did not participate in the writing, evaluation, or piloting of the ESC).

1 Pseudonyms are used throughout the paper to protect the teachers' identities.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data, we followed a two-step analytical procedure. First, we adopted the teacher's Chordal Triad of Agency Development model, as defined in Priestley et al. (2015). It served as a framework that guided part of the data collection process since the categories were considered for structuring the interview and subsequent data analysis. Accordingly, we situated the data within the three dimensions of teachers' agency (iterational, practical-evaluative, and projective) in codes and themes derived from the semi-structured interviews, lesson observations, and narratives. Second, we used thematic analysis, as new categories from each teacher's framework for action emerged from the data to analyze the report of the participants' experiences and strengthen the use of the model for teacher agency. This involved following a deductive approach guided by the steps defined in Braun and Clarke (2006), namely: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and finally, writing up.

Interviews were transcribed. One interview was conducted in English and two in Spanish, based on the participants' preferences. The latter was translated from Spanish to English and analyzed using a color-coding technique, first using the chordal triad of agency and then following thematic analysis, as described above. The same procedure was applied to teachers' narratives. Lesson observations were first recorded using a protocol for lesson observation we designed based on the lesson stages derived from the ESC. The protocol allowed the systematization of data by registering a synthetic description of lesson stages that included teachers' and students' doings. The instrument was validated using the member-checking technique (Birt et al., 2016) with the participants after data collection. Lesson observations were then coded following the same two-step analytic procedure described above.

Findings

Teachers recontextualized the ESC influenced by autonomous decisions derived from their teaching experience, students' needs, and institutional context. This section presents three models that reflect the elements involved in teachers' adaptations of the ESC. Each teacher's framework for action is described and analyzed separately. First, we present a comprehensive visual representation that summarizes each teacher's framework for action. Then, we describe each element in the framework, supported by instances found in the data. Additional general interpretations are made at the end of the section.

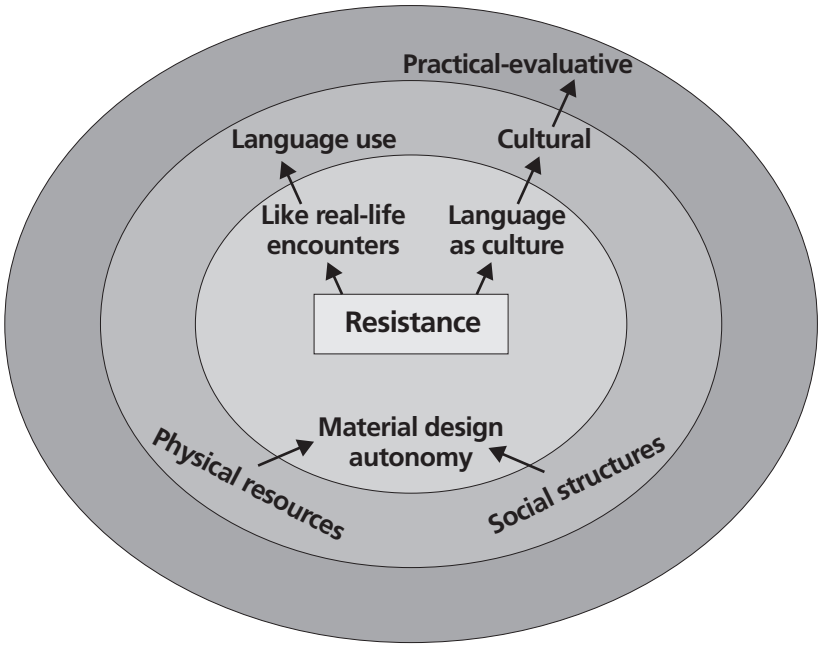
Mirabel's Framework for Action

Mirabel's adaptation of the ESC was permeated by critical views on policy documents, substantial autonomy over her work, and low alignment with the objectives of the ESC. We define it as the interplay of resistance, autonomy, and the evidence that teachers' agency, in particular cases, can become a constraint for successful language policy adaptations.

Figure 1 represents the orientations Mirabel brought into her teaching. The outer circle represents how the teacher's model is situated within the practical-evaluative dimension of teacher agency, as proposed by Priestley et al. (2015). The middle circle displays the categories already existing within the dimension and undertaken by the teacher. The inner circle represents the intersection of the elements pertinent to Mirabel's framework for action, which permeate her recontextualization of the ESC.

Language as Culture. The ESC includes cultural knowledge by motivating teachers and learners to evaluate the main pitfalls or dilemmas around the country's situation. Globalization, health issues, and environmental problems are some of the critical scenarios the curriculum presents. In this respect, Mirabel opposed the "Colombian-oriented" approach: "Every time I say, 'OK, don't talk about Colombia, do

Figure 1. Mirabel's Framework for Action



the research about Asia…Europe,' so, I always try to force them to do something overseas."

In this perspective, Mirabel pushed her students to be culturally aware of other ways of living beyond contextual information. These views motivated students to go overseas without ignoring the cultural elements involved in language learning and how these shape forms of life within varied countries and realities. The implications these adaptations have on policy enactment can be translated as high interest from the teacher to help their students based on their needs, lacks, and wants.

Material Design Adaptation and Autonomy. When referring to using textbooks for English language learning at her school, Mirabel stated: "We don't use the books that the government sends…We don't use them because our students are a little bit higher level."

As noted, in her use of the word "we," teachers decided as a team the type of textbooks that would suit their context, as opposed to the books the government designed and sent for use. Teachers reacting to the constraints of the inaccuracy of materials for students' use resulted in acting out together to create instruments that would help them opt for a different book: "We had a bunch of books, so we were using the checklist, and then we got together and, so it came out [*sic*] to two books."

We evidenced high usage of the book selected, including other teaching materials such as a webpage and a worksheet. Mirabel expanded on the stages involved in her lessons' development: "First, I need to pinpoint the goals of what I will be teaching, then, I'd try to get some knowledge into [the students'] current state (diagnostic); I'd try to define the stages and materials."

None of the steps directly states that Mirabel considers the themes addressed by the ESC when planning, claiming autonomy over material use, and lesson development. Her perceptions towards enacting the ESC portrayed a critical view on the type of practices occurring at her school, talking about the

role of teachers when adapting the policy or stating her thoughts towards the work done. Hence, when moving towards choosing another book for EFL learning at her workplace, Mirabel disagreed with the option selected and finally went against the collective agreement. There was a shift from one type of agency (collaborative) to another (individual). From including herself within the group of teachers, to finally stating that she separated from her coworkers and chose something else, as evidenced in the following extract:

> I was the only one who wasn't really happy with [the book]…so [my coworkers] chose the other [book], and I don't like it, I hadn't worked with it. I only worked with it one year. and then when I worked with it, I was like, "no, I don't think it is appropriate."

The extract reflects how much a teacher's thinking patterns influence what ultimately goes into the classroom. Despite what the policy stated, Mirabel chose her path to enact the EFL policy even against what her fellow teachers decided as a team. Although Mirabel built up a strong awareness of collaborative work, her agentic moves were characterized by individuality and deep-rooted beliefs opposed to other teachers' views.

This experience, where teachers take the initiative to adapt EFL policies to their classrooms, lies beyond policymakers' control. Thus, with or without the school administrators' knowledge, the teachers lead a process that moves beyond the policy text and opens spaces for change within schools. Ultimately, the students are directly exposed to the teachers' policy adaptations.

Motivating Language Use in Real Life. In terms of students' language learning development and usage, Mirabel sought to help students go beyond the basic grammatical structures that were usually taught, involving students in the reality of the language as it influenced their lives. In this respect, she stated: "I'm always like, 'use it in your real life, say something related to your own personal experience.'"

Mirabel motivated students to think about the use of a second language since she thought about language learning as something that transcended the classroom context: "I always try to look for that kind of activities and exercises and tasks that are like, from real life or that will help them, you know."

How Mirabel approached language development in her school context was motivated by her desire to inspire students to use the language in situations from the real world. When contrasting her strategies against what is stated on the ESC, Mirabel aligned with the curriculum regarding using real-life issues to promote language use.

On the other hand, the ESC serves four dimensions in which health, environment, education, and democracy are widely explored to guide the students' critical thinking on their country's development situations. However, Mirabel's curriculum implementation diverted from the dimensions presented, including different topics in her chosen materials. She claimed:

> I think they are just taking things that are fashionable worldwide and then bringing them to Colombia with no research whatsoever, and it's just that they say, "Oh, everybody else is doing it, so we have to use it here," yeah, but they don't really see that we need more background.

This also resulted from the perceptions she had about the curriculum, and that permeated the adaptation process of the ESC.

Dorcas' Framework for Action

Dorcas' work became a guide for other teachers to rely on, as she designed strategies beforehand, brought forth new ideas, and became the first to design and implement teaching materials that other teachers later used as a reference for their teaching practice. Her framework for action was shaped by a view of teaching permeated by collaboration with others. This perception of teaching aligns with a new view of agency that goes beyond analyzing individual duties

involved in policy implementation and considers the analysis of collective work when teachers rethink and adapt policies. The following themes derive from the construction of Dorcas's framework and promote evidence on how networks of teachers are relevant in EFL policy enactment.

Dorcas's framework for action (see Figure 2) describes the interrelation among her leadership roles; interest in participating in curriculum design, reform, and implementation; the conception of students' needs as the core of her teaching; and promotion of the presentation of products in the school community.

Leadership Roles. Dorcas's agency construction was mainly characterized by acting upon ideas and roles that made her a pioneer in several aspects of EFL policy enactment. When referring to her role among networks of teachers at her workplace, she stated: "I'm always going a little bit ahead because I'm more intense."

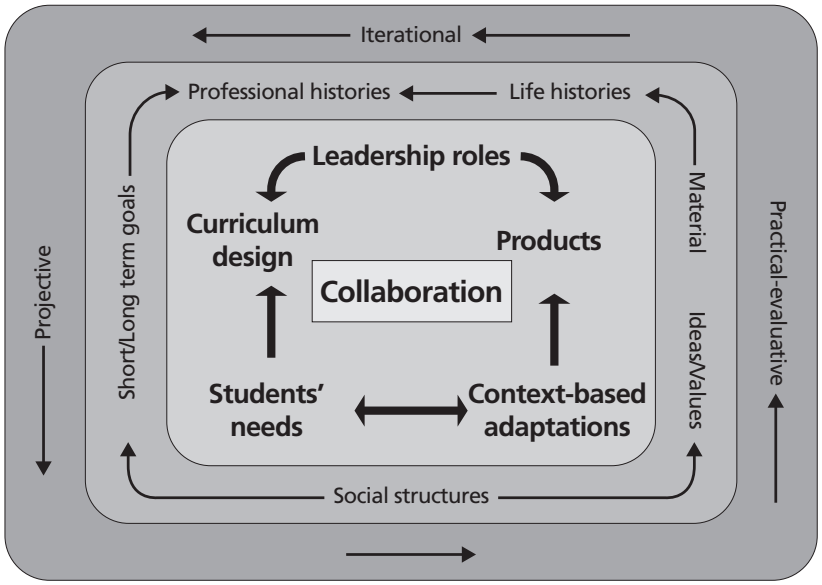
This is supported by a second comment in which she stated that, during the pandemic, "I was the first that designed the English worksheets, and I gave all [the other teachers in the team] my guidelines; then, based on my format, everyone worked on their guidelines."

Although Dorcas begins by describing her efforts, she includes them within the umbrella of teamwork. In the statement, she reflects upon the changes that the pandemic brought and the enactment of the policy that demanded public-school teachers create worksheets to help students advance their education remotely.

This leadership is linked to teaching experience derived from management roles in the past. She recognized that, while working at a private school, she gained the "basis for school organization"; therefore, the roles taken at her current workplace were influenced by that expertise. Connections between past decisions and present challenges reflect the role of professional histories and previous experiences in shaping teachers' agency development. They reflect teaching flexibility as an exercise that is not always steady or limited to the present constraints.

Teachers move across past and future projections to define trajectories of action. Therefore, Dorcas's views about school curriculum, teaching, and schoolwork

Figure 2. Dorcas's Framework for Action



influenced how she enacted the curriculum, not from an individual role but considering collaboration among other groups of teachers as well.

Curriculum Design. Dorcas's framework for action brought forth an understanding of how teachers at her workplace designed, adapted, and used their teacher knowledge to create curricular guidelines before the ESC was introduced and adapted: "We had created before the education ministry released a suggested curriculum, we had come up with curricular English learning guidelines for the city."

Derived from the necessity of having organized and clear guidelines when she arrived at the new public school, Dorcas and her colleagues worked together to help. This resulted in a series of documents that motivated English teaching from a different perspective. For example, she mentioned that she had designed a curriculum structure for the grades she taught, ensuring the scope of topics to instruct English at the school. She recognized: "I felt out of place . . . we need to have a route and know how we are going to teach what students must know in sixth, seventh, eighth…we have to sit down and create a syllabus." Therefore, when the ESC was brought to their workplace, she commented: "We had already been working, super! Let's integrate it to what we have."

Teamwork among her colleagues also was enhanced by the necessity of going beyond teaching by the book. When referring to adaptations to the ESC, Dorcas stated: "I don't like working with a book, so we left it beyond the book." In her narrative, she continued: "At that time, we were thinking about functions of the language more than grammar, so when the ESC came, it was a perfect match for what we expected. We adapted it to our specific needs and context, and now we are working with the results."

Whatever Dorcas's vision for the school promoted changes in how the ESC was conceived and adapted, rethinking the role of teachers' aspirations might provide valuable evidence on why they achieve more than is expected, even as the context is filled with constraints. Teachers often act upon interests and necessities unknown by policymakers and school administration, only tangible when their work's high or low quality is visible.

Similarly, integrating the ESC into their local curriculum reflected how each teacher's vision influenced how EFL policies were adopted. Dorcas commented how colleagues embraced their role as English teachers from the "bilingualism program," reflecting the affection placed on how they worked since they were called to implement the EFL policy. In this respect, she commented: "Well, the truth is that in 2009 the school began with the bilingualism program; since then, we are always working on anything so that students learn." Dorcas considered students' needs the core of the EFL teaching and learning process.

Context-Based Adaptations. Dorcas's lesson development evidenced a high usage of context-based knowledge. Her teaching moves were framed using questions to promote students' participation. This dynamic is aligned with institutionalized policies within the school context, in which the learning model encourages questioning. Considering policy guidelines (the ESC and the school pedagogical model) at the micro-level denoted the influence of policy text on the classroom's reality. However, as Dorcas's narrative further describes, most of the adaptation process remains hidden. She stated that lesson development involved a complex process: "I think and think about possible activities: fun, academic, modern, challenging, interesting, related to Saber test.[2] Then I plan, adapt, implement…I feedback myself and start all over again." Hence, she reshaped further moves informed by the

2 The Saber is a national standardized test administered by the Colombian Institute for the Enhancement of Higher Education (ICFES in Spanish). The test assesses students' learning and performance across levels (3rd, 5th, 9th, and 11th). The test at the end of high school determines the students' achievement of learning basic standards and competences. The test also serves to measure the performance of schools across the country.

role of her teaching in given situations within the past and present.

Along the same lines, Dorcas's work in her lesson evolved around language and was framed by vocabulary-oriented activities and collective-task development. These orientations were characterized by including topics addressed in the ESC and following the pre-, while, and post-task sequence, as suggested in the ESC. Similarly, the grammatical structures she used during the lesson aligned with the ESC, and she motivated group work and critical analysis of topics such as poverty, education, and climate change.

Products in the School Community. In Dorcas's perspective, English teaching needs to transcend into the community. Therefore, teachers designed activities transcending the classroom, making learning products accessible to the community. For instance, she referred to a song festival in which students participated each year. Teachers motivate students to choose songs with a specific topic based on the four ESC curriculum areas. This exercise requires students to select and practice songs that talk about health, peace, democracy, or social justice. In this respect, she commented: "The song festival always has a core topic, so the student can focus on those four pillars that we were working on throughout the year." Therefore, the objectives of the ESC were reoriented to students' interests, promoting activities that transcended the classroom and fostering the development of skills to use English for a specific purpose, like singing and performing.

Although it is unclear whether this dynamic was permeated by past teaching experiences or orientations toward the future, Dorcas displayed a high level of consciousness of the impact of language learning on her students. When analyzing the song festival's role in fostering students' language acquisition process, we noted that more than an activity, it became an experience for students, who ultimately brought more than the usually taught skills into their performances.

Student's Needs. Dorcas recognized that students are most influential in determining what is taught and reshaped. In this respect, she commented: "I can take the idea from the ESC guidelines . . . for example, let's work on health, but I adapt depending on the population I have."

Dorcas reconsiders what, when, and how to teach based on the modifications needed for students to learn the language. Despite the curriculum presenting a selected number of topics and objectives, the teaching points were determined by students' strengths, weaknesses, or learning styles. In addition, the constraints within the context permeated her practice. When addressing the issue of large classes, for instance, she commented:

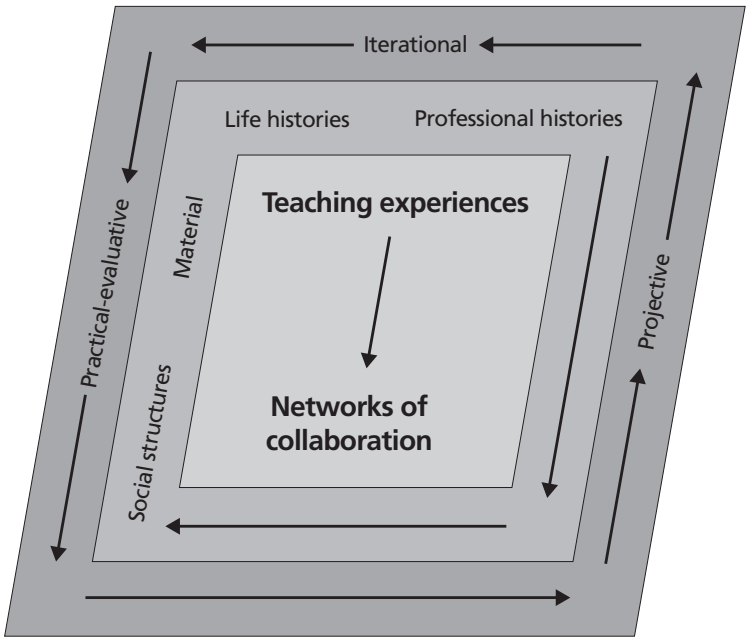
> The challenge is to know that all of your students won't be able to participate because there is not the time and there are too many students in a single classroom. You would spend the whole school term trying to do one thing, trying to listen all of them, then you see that the ones who dare are the ones who will outstand, and the shy ones will remain lagging because there is not the possibility.

Dorcas tackled students' needs by proposing alternatives that help them develop language skills. She added, "You mediate as you go; you mediate according to the population you have."

Yua's Framework for Action

Strong relationships with other teachers and collaboration determined Yua's approach to policy enactment. However, her speech was not as explicit as the other participants due mainly to time constraints during the interview; her past experiences influenced how she enacted the policy and coped with the changes from implementing the ESC. Hence, her model for policy adaptation was framed within three main aspects: teaching experience influence, acting out the policy, and collaboration (see Figure 3). The elements displayed in the model show the relation-

Figure 3. Yua's Framework for Action



ship among the iterational, practical-evaluative, and projective dimensions of agency. Her framework includes the role of Yua's life and professional stories in constructing experiences that mostly permeated her practice.

Teaching Experience. Yua commented that her first teaching experience tested what she could handle as an educator: "It was a little traumatic at the beginning. I said, oh God, I'm not going to be able to. I felt frustrated when I started." In this first teaching experience, most of her students had personal issues, and teaching demanded more than adapting objectives taken from the ESC. In this respect, she gained a perspective in which her actions depended on her knowledge of the English subject and were influenced by the degree of incidence the context had on learners. She said: "I had sixth graders that were over the standard age, they should be in 10th or 11th grade; students on drugs and all that kind of things…aggressive…then, it was a challenge."

In terms of overcoming the experience, she stated what it meant for her: "One learns different types of strategies, let's say, the methodology is not the same, you learn how to know the kids, you learn that you will not always find the same type of students."

Yua drew upon her experiences to make well-informed decisions, as these experiences also enriched her capacity to act. As an experienced teacher who has enacted the ESC for various years, her perspectives on teaching are deeply influenced by her previous teaching background. This shapes how her lessons develop and how she acts toward students. This element aligned with her present decisions, correlating her previous background and possible trajectories of action growing when facing current constraints and dilemmas.

Influence of Contextual Factors. Yua's approach illustrated how variations at her workplace triggered changes in the ESC: "Whenever I start to work with a class, I realize that the topic is maybe too advanced for students' level, then, I have to readjust it." Similarly, she

stated that the curriculum documents were adopted, adapted, and adjusted depending on the population. She explained: "It suggests, it guides, but it is not totally compatible." This resulted in high autonomy over her work, influenced by the thought that "education is evolving, times are changing, the students are changing." Thus, Yua adapted the policy based on contextual factors such as the students' level and the evolution of education.

Additionally, she highlighted that "in face-to-face learning, one of the aspects that [has an influence is] the mood of the students." She commented that she made learning entertaining, avoiding students' boredom during the lessons. Similarly, she pointed out how she acts as a teacher and the main elements she considers when teaching: "I am also a very sensitive teacher that cares a lot about my students' problems. I try to take into account their weaknesses and strengths as well as their interests and learning styles when planning my classes."

Collaboration. The analysis revealed that Yua built up a strong awareness of collaborative work. In this perspective, her agentic moves were characterized using pronouns referring to groups when talking about her work:

> It's what we have done this year; actually, this year we were already working and making some adjustments because sometimes we saw that the topics repeated too much, the topics we will teach, so we had to make various adaptations of this kind.

Autonomy over her work included consulting other colleagues on activities and instructional tasks to be carried out in the classroom. Framed by networks of collaboration among other teachers in her context, her framework developed across the three dimensions of agency with a high retrospection towards her teaching experience and life/professional histories. Similarly, social structures and material resources were prominent since her students' moods influenced her adaptations to the ESC.

Likewise, Yua collaborated with other teachers to make informed decisions to foster students' learning process. Based on what previous teachers accomplished with the students, she could gain a perspective on the future elements that could be worked on. In this regard, she commented:

> The coworker that had [the students] the previous year always gives me feedback: they are like this, these students have these specific traits…then, well, that helps a lot in fostering the language learning process, right, the level, because we take into account what the teacher did, where he got to in order to continue the process. Until now, that has given us good results.

This sense of collaboration among coworkers fostered students' scaffolding across different levels of learning. Based on Yua's comments, teachers consider the results of other colleagues' practices to address the specific needs of learners.

The Agency Vessel

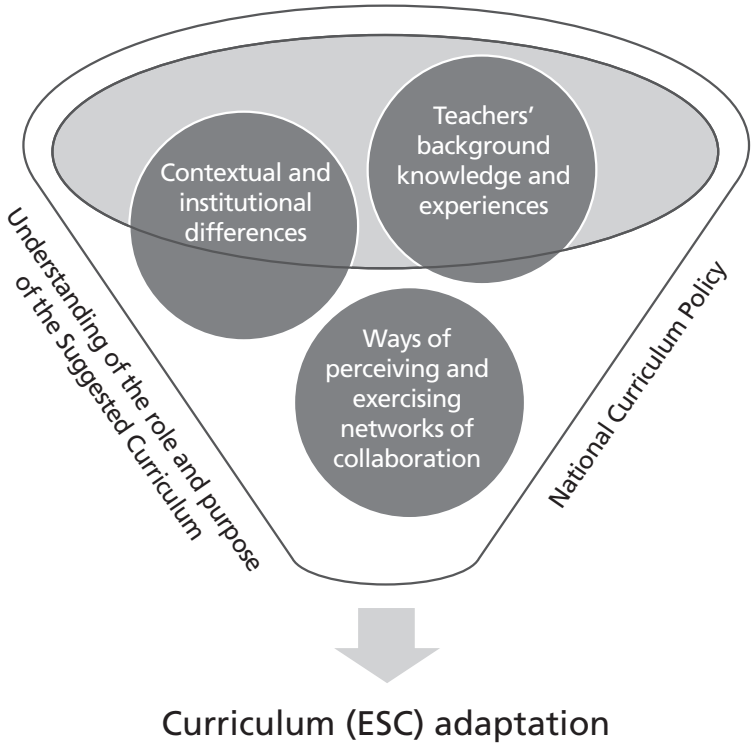
Figure 4 visually summarizes the agency development aspects shared among the three participants. Likewise, it addresses the divergences in their trajectories of action, influenced by their iterational, practical-evaluative, and projective agency. Teachers' unique ways of managing the implementation of the ESC varied across their practices since they introduced elements from their background knowledge and life experiences into the adaptations they made. In other words, teachers did not come to the adaptations empty-handed but were filled with the vital elements they gained from their worldviews and past experiences.

Figure 4 represents the teacher's agency in the form of a vessel. The elements surrounding the vessel are those aspects that converge based on the data analysis: the national policy (the curricular guidelines), teachers' understanding of the policy's role, and the national ESC's position in their practice. In this sense, the three teachers agreed on the role of the ESC, not as an imposition but

as a guide permeated by the adaptations the schools and teachers made of it. In general, they considered the objectives, activities, and proposed aims of the ESC, but made changes informed by the context, ultimately influencing students and the school community. From this perspective, the elements surrounding teachers' adaptations must be considered as the interrelation between introspective and retrospective elements that affect teachers' lives and, ultimately, teaching.

In terms of divergence, three elements were crucial: the different ways teachers may conceive and exercise collaboration networks, contextual particularities, and teachers' background knowledge and past experiences. Although teachers worked along networks that fostered collaboration, the reality of what they brought to the classroom was shaped by the transitions among iterational elements derived from their experiences, lives, and present situations. The study on teacher agency by Priestley et al. (2015) concluded that the type of school influences how teachers react to the constraints or demands when facing policy implementation. Teachers are shaped by the kind of teaching experiences they have, whether these are supported, encouraged, or ignored. Dorcas's school, although not directly promoting how teachers could cope with the ESC policy, held a culture of recognition of the English language, supported by the high level of freedom teachers had to exercise their agency. The school emphasized the role of collaboration by grouping teachers based on the subject they taught—known as "nucleus"—which widely influenced their teamwork approaches. This was evident when Dorcas spoke from the team perspective instead of individual characterization. On the contrary, Mirabel repeatedly opposed the notion of teamwork, denoting discontent towards what her

Figure 4. Convergence and Divergence in Agency Development



team did. Aligned with what was stated in Priestley et al. (2015), Mirabel held a "repertoire for maneuver," as her experiences (even beyond teaching) influenced what went into the classroom as well.

In addition, subgroups of teachers inside schools provide evidence that collaboration promotes or hinders change. In the current study, both perspectives are reflected by the participants. Two teachers recognized collaboration as positively influential in fostering the ESC's adaptations, while the other resisted change, opposing cooperation with other teachers and exerting autonomy over her work. These discrepancies in the role of collaboration reflect how different the positions taken by teachers within different schools are, increasing the necessity of analyzing the realities of schools from the perspectives of teachers and their experiences when adapting any new foreign language curriculum.

Conclusions

This paper has described three high school teachers' approaches to curriculum policy adaptation. Since each teacher possessed unique ways of interpreting, adapting, and adopting the ESC, we gained a perspective of the different roles, actions, and thinking patterns that permeated what they ultimately brought into the classroom. We also explained how these adaptations converged and differed, summarizing the most prominent elements in what we called the agency vessel. In this study, we drew essential elements from teachers' discourses, which can help to explain how several aspects of their context serve as enablers or constraints of their agency, resulting in the construction of their frameworks for action and working upon trajectories of adaptation permeated by their past, present, and future decisions. Additionally, we described the transitions between individual and collective teacher agency, evident during the ESC adaptation process.

Limitations in the data collection process included the length of the teachers' discourse to further nurture the analysis of patterns across the data. For example, although the prompts encouraged detailed descriptions in the written narratives, recounting elements of their experience was relatively short. However, the data collected allowed us to obtain insights into each participant's agency development. Analyzing how teachers cope with the changes derived from policy discourse enactment provides significant information that can inform how future EFL policies are created and promoted. Rarely are teachers consulted on adapting the policies, leaving aside the valuable knowledge they can provide to shed light on future EFL reforms and aspects that might nurture their teaching practice.

Hence, it becomes fundamental to investigate the influence, design, and assembly of the teachers' practices at the micro-level. Further research could analyze the nature of these adaptations in rural contexts or schools that lack networks that foster collaboration or where teachers struggle to reshape policy discourse. This suggestion stems from the necessity of exploring the impact of reforms in peripheral contexts in a country where policymaking is often centralized in the big cities.

In terms of teachers' agency theory, this paper contributes to its ongoing development by undertaking an existing model and using it to analyze agency development in three teachers. The conclusions gathered from each participant can provide a robust understanding of teacher agency development and its role in EFL practices or adopting new curricula in Colombia. Looking further into how teachers enact, adapt, or resist policy can also inform future curriculum developments in Latin America and across global contexts at a time of increasing interest in teachers' agency development.

References

Araque Cuellar, V. (2022). *Exploring EFL teacher agency in language policy: The case of a schoolteacher's appropriation of the National Program of Bilingualism* [Bachelor's thesis, Universidad del Valle, Colombia]. Universidad del Valle. http://hdl.handle.net/10893/22324

Ayala Zárate, J., & Álvarez, J. A. (2005). A perspective of the implications of the Common European Framework implementation in the Colombian socio-cultural context. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, (7), 7–26. https://doi.org/10.14483/22487085.162

Biesta, G., & Tedder, M. (2006). *How is agency possible? Towards an ecological understanding of agency-as-achievement*. University of Leeds; University of Brighton; University of Stirling; University of Exeter.

Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? *Qualitative Health Research*, *26*(13), 1802–1811. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316654870

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a

Cárdenas, M. L. (2006). *Bilingual Colombia: Are we ready for it? What is needed?* [Paper presentation]. 19th Annual English Australia Education Conference, Sydney.

Correa, D., & Usma Wilches, J. (2013). From a bureaucratic to a critical-sociocultural model of policymaking in Colombia. *How Journal*, *20*(1), 226–242.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.

Cronquist, K., & Fiszbein, A. (2017). *English language learning in Latin America*. The Dialogue: Leadership for the Americas. https://bit.ly/2ql7ml8

de Mejía, A.-M. (2011). The National Bilingual Programme in Colombia: Imposition or opportunity? *Apples-Journal of Applied Language Studies*, *5*(3), 7–17.

Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y. S., & Giardina, M. D. (2006). Disciplining qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *19*(6), 769–782. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518390600975990

Emirbayer, M., & Mische, A. (1998). What is agency? *American Journal of Sociology*, *103*(4), 962–1023. https://doi.org/10.1086/231294

Fandiño-Parra, Y. J. (2021). Decolonizing English language teaching in Colombia: Epistemological perspectives and discursive alternatives. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *23*(2), 166–181. https://doi.org/10.14483/22487085.17087

Gómez Duque, D. (2020). *The elements that the teacher aligns in the adaptation and implementation of the suggested English curriculum of transition to fifth grade in an official school of the rural context in El Carmen de Viboral* [Bachelor's thesis, Universidad Católica de Oriente]. https://bit.ly/3MDBKm9

González, A. (2007). Professional development of EFL teachers in Colombia: Between colonial and local practices. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *12*(18), 309–332. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.2722

González, A. (2010). English and English teaching in Colombia: Tensions and possibilities in the expanding circle. In A. Kirkpatrick (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of world Englishes* (pp. 332–351). Routledge.

Goodson, I. F. (2003). *Professional knowledge, professional lives: Studies in education and change*. McGraw-Hill.

Guerrero, A. L., & Camargo-Abello, M. (2023). Teachers' agency in the implementation of an early childhood education policy program in schools in Bogotá, Colombia. *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy*, *17*, 2, https://doi.org/10.1186/s40723-023-00104-9

Hamid, M. O., & Nguyen, H. T. M. (2016). Globalization, English language policy, and teacher agency: Focus on Asia. *The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*, *15*(1), 26–44.

Hernández Varona, W., & Gutiérrez Álvarez, D. F. (2020). English language student-teachers developing agency through community-based pedagogy projects. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *22*(1), 109–122. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v22n1.76925

Le Gal, D. (2018). English language teaching in Colombia: A necessary paradigm shift. *Matices en Lenguas Extranjeras*, *12*, 156–190. https://doi.org/10.15446/male.n12.73267

Liu, Y., Wang, H., & Zhao, R. (2020). Teacher agency and spaces in changes of English language education policy. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *21*(5), 548–566. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2020.1791532

Ministerio de Educación Nacional, MEN. (2016a). *Basic learning rights: Grades 6th to 11th*.

Ministerio de Educación Nacional. (2016b). *Suggested curriculum structure: Grades 6th to 11th: English for diversity and equity*.

Miranda, N. (2021). Appropriation of Colombian ELT policy in a targeted school: The creation of an "elite" yet needy school in the public education system. In K. M. Bailey & D. Christian (Eds.), *Research on teaching and learning English in under-resourced contexts* (pp. 72–84). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003057284-6

Mosquera Pérez, J. E. (2022). Scholars raising their voices up: An approximation to discourses of hegemony and resistance in ELT in Colombia. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *27*(3), 725–743. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.v27n3a08

Nieveen, N. (2011, September 14). *Teachers' professional development in curriculum design in the Netherlands* [Paper presentation]. European Conference for Educational Research, Berlin, Germany.

Priestley, M., Biesta, G., & Robinson, S. (2012). *Teachers as agents of change: An exploration of the concept of teacher agency*. Teacher Agency and Curriculum Change Project.

Priestley, M., Biesta, G., & Robinson, S. (2015). *Teacher agency: An ecological approach*. Bloomsbury.

Priestley, M., Miller, K., Barrett, L., & Wallace, C. (2011). Teacher learning communities and educational change in Scotland: The Highland experience. *British Educational Research Journal*, *37*(2), 265–284. https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920903540698

Quintero Polo, Á., & Guerrero Nieto, C. H. (2013). "Of being and not being": Colombian public elementary school teachers' oscillating identities. *How Journal*, *20*(1), 190–205.

Robinson, S. (2012). Constructing teacher agency in response to the constraints of education policy: Adoption and adaptation. *The Curriculum Journal*, *23*(2), 231–245. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585176.2012.678702

Sannino, A. (2010). Teachers' talk of experiencing: Conflict, resistance, and agency. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *26*(4), 838–844. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.10.021

Valdelamar González, C. (2022). *The role of agency development in Colombian teachers' adoption of the ESC of secondary school* [Master's thesis, Universidad de Córdoba, Colombia]. Repositorio Universidad de Córdoba. https://repositorio.unicordoba.edu.co/handle/ucordoba/6444

Verástegui Martínez, M., & Úbeda Gómez, J. (2022). El papel del conocimiento en la agencia docente: un modelo teórico de comprensión. *Teoría de la Educación: Revista Interuniversitaria*, *34*(2), 237–255. https://doi.org/10.14201/teri.26953

About the Authors

Cindy Valdelamar González holds an MA in English language teaching and is an English language instructor at Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia. Her research practices are oriented toward describing the effects of English language policies on state schools, addressing the perspectives and practices of several stakeholders.

Luzkarime Calle-Díaz holds a PhD in Education from Universidad del Norte (Colombia). She is a graduate professor at Universidad de Córdoba and Universidad del Norte (Colombia). Her research interests include EFL research and practice, curriculum development, and the connection between discourse studies, language and literacy development, and peace education.

P R O F I L E

Issues Based on Reflections and Innovations

https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.102812

Indigenous Students and University Stakeholders' Challenges and Opportunities for Intercultural Decolonial Dialogue

Desafíos y oportunidades para el diálogo intercultural decolonial entre estudiantes indígenas y la comunidad universitaria

José Aldemar Álvarez Valencia
Andrés Valencia
Universidad del Valle, Cali, Colombia

This article presents critical intercultural dialogue as a necessary curricular, pedagogical, and decolonial practice to engage and value Indigenous students' cultural semiotic resources in higher education. Drawing from social semiotics, critical interculturality, and decolonial theory, the article analyzes Indigenous students' structural barriers to accessing and completing their undergraduate programs. Using examples from pedagogy courses taught in English and reflections and learnings from a research project with Indigenous students, the article underscores and extends lessons to mobilize Indigenous students' learning paths, sociocultural practices, and languages, showcasing intercultural dialogue within a public university. Reflections on the tensions, constraints, and possibilities to facilitate university stakeholders' engagement at multiple levels are discussed.

Keywords: critical interculturality, decoloniality, higher education, Indigenous students, social semiotics

Este artículo presenta el diálogo intercultural crítico como una práctica curricular/pedagógica y decolonial necesaria para valorar los recursos semióticos culturales de los estudiantes indígenas universitarios. Basándose en la semiótica social, la interculturalidad crítica y la teoría decolonial, se analizan las barreras que enfrentan los estudiantes indígenas para acceder y completar sus carreras. Utilizando ejemplos de cursos de pedagogía en inglés y reflexiones/aprendizajes de una investigación con estudiantes indígenas, el artículo destaca lecciones para operacionalizar las trayectorias de aprendizaje de los estudiantes indígenas, sus prácticas socioculturales y lenguas, ilustrando el diálogo crítico en la universidad pública. Finalmente, se discuten reflexiones sobre las tensiones, limitaciones y posibilidades de fomentar la participación de la comunidad universitaria en un diálogo intercultural.

Palabras clave: decolonialidad, educación superior, estudiantes indígenas, interculturalidad crítica, semiótica social

José Aldemar Álvarez Valencia https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2736-8457 · Email: jose.aldemar.alvarez@correounivalle.edu.co
Andrés Valencia https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7044-1181 · Email: valencia.andres@correounivalle.edu.co

How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.): Álvarez Valencia, J. A., & Valencia, A. (2023). Indigenous students and university stakeholders' challenges and opportunities for intercultural decolonial dialogue. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *25*(2), 219–237. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v25n2.102812

This article was received on May 23, 2022 and accepted on March 12, 2023.

Introduction

As of the enactment of the Political Constitution in 1991, Colombia became a democratic and social state where ethnolinguistic, racial, and religious differences were acknowledged, valued, and preserved within a multicultural frame. However, educational, socioeconomic, and political equality have been elusive, especially for racialized, minoritized populations, such as Indigenous, African-Colombian, and Gipsy Roma peoples (Viáfara López, 2017). The "structural subordination" (Grande, 2004) of racialized populations in the Americas and the Colombian context—our locus of enunciation—is the aftermath of the intricate dynamics of colonization, which "persistently impose particular conceptions of what it means to be human and defines what counts as cultural difference" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2012, p. 42). In Latin America and the Caribbean, the White-Mestizo[1] population has imposed its republican, Anglo-Eurocentric values over the rest of the population, enforcing technologies of sexual, racial, and social disciplining to manufacture "subject positions," limiting human encounters to the aspirations of this hegemonic ethnoclass (Foucault et al., 1988).

Adopting critical intercultural and decolonial perspectives can facilitate more humane encounters with difference. These encounters help us overcome the "colonial horizon" (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2012) marked by racism, heteropatriarchalism (sociocultural and political systems where heterosexuality and patriarchy are deemed natural and the norm), heteronormativity (social construction that normalizes heterosexuality as the default, only legitimate sexual orientation), phallogocentricity (logic that configures reality around male perspectives and categories) (Cixous & Clément, 1975/1986), and the instrumental rationalities (the assumption that any means is valid to achieve one's ends) of conventional schooling.

Higher education (HE) in developing countries suffers from the geocultural subalternization of knowledge and the imposition of policies and discourses that favor particular ways of producing knowledge and administering education. University stakeholders, especially teachers, are called to adopt critical views about how universities operate at the administrative and educational levels. This challenge raises the question of whether stakeholders, especially teachers, can use counter-hegemonic practices to reverse the colonial resonances inherent in HE. One first step is to recognize the populations historically suffering from a lack of access, recognition, and participation in HE, including African descendants, Indigenous communities, peasants, and LGBTQ community members. A second step is to work with these communities and establish an intercultural dialogue to identify needs and paths of action to improve their conditions. In this article, we draw on the experience of conducting research with Indigenous university students, a historically (Waller et al., 2002) and structurally (Usma et al., 2018) marginalized population in HE. We analyze their barriers to access and complete their studies and propose some actions to make HE more diverse and accessible to this population.

In this reflective paper, we adopt social semiotics, critical interculturality, and a decolonial stance to discuss how stakeholders and teachers could foster intercultural encounters and understandings to facilitate Indigenous student engagement in sustainable intercultural dialogues. Next, we provide a brief theoretical overview and discuss some barriers. Indigenous students face in HE. Finally, we propose strategies to ameliorate Indigenous students' experiences from our perspective as English language educators.

1 "The term 'White-Mestizo' or 'non-ethnic' population refers to the aggregate of people who in the Colombian case do not recognize themselves as Indigenous, or as Afro-descendant/Black or Mulatto or under another ethnic category" (Urrea-Giraldo, 2019, p. 29).

Conceptual Framework

Social Semiotics

Social semiotics examines the structure, processes, and effects of the design, reception, and dissemination of meanings enacted by agents of communication (Kress, 2010). At the heart of social semiotics is meaning-making, emerging from intersecting individual, social, historical, material, ideological, and cultural dimensions. Culture is central to social semiotics. It constitutes an open and dynamic repertoire of semiotic resources (material and symbolic beliefs, discourses, ideologies), constructed through processes of regularization, ritualization, and conventionalization of social practices, which become sedimented through time and acquired during processes of socialization (Álvarez Valencia, 2021). Semiotic resources refer to any artifact (e.g., sculptures, books), activity, event, or behavior (e.g., buying, flirting) and way of thinking (ideas, beliefs) that we use, deploy, or enact in designing meanings. Language is another semiotic resource central to communities because it is used to construct, disseminate, and reshape semiotic resources needed for community adherence and preservation.

Individuals develop a repertoire of cultural semiotic resources deployed in any social situation throughout their lifespan. This repertoire of resources is built within the multiple communities and social and cultural groups wherein individuals participate, which are determined by geographic, linguistic, national, racial, ethnic, sexual, gender, religious, institutional, political, physical, and socioeconomic dimensions. By participating in diverse social and cultural groups, individuals develop affiliations and *appropriate* semiotic resources proper of these groups (e.g., male behaviors and visions of masculinity), ultimately shaping their identity. In turn, individuals' semiotic resources are intersectional because practices, values, aspirations, and discourses of multiple cultural groups take a particular shape and are enacted by an individual. Therefore, every interaction between individuals involves a negotiation of their repertoires of cultural semiotic resources and is, by nature, an intercultural encounter (Álvarez Valencia, 2021).

Interculturality and the Decolonial Perspective

Interculturality refers to a perspective on the process, conditions, and effects of the encounter of members of various cultural groups. In social semiotics, this perspective on interculturality articulates with a decolonial orientation representing a political project for critical, liberatory, and emancipatory action (Walsh, 2009). Interculturality constitutes an ideological principle for a political process and project "in continuous insurgence, movement, and construction, a conscious action, radical activity, and praxis-based tool of affirmation, correlation, and transformation" (Walsh, 2018, p. 59). The decolonial perspective embraced here is inspired primarily by the Indigenous social movements of Abya-Yala (or the American continent); however, we adopt a dialogic approach where voices from the Global South and Global North engage and interact critically (Guilherme & Souza, 2019).

The decolonial perspective aims to transform, reconceptualize, and refound semiotic resources (e.g., ideologies, practices, products) and the meanings that shape hegemonic structures, institutions, and forms of interaction that perpetuate the colonial matrix of power, knowledge, being, and mother nature. A decolonial view prompts us to delegitimize the meanings that naturalize racial, political, gender, and social hierarchies implanted through the coloniality of power (Quijano, 1992) and to reject imaginaries that position the colonized as cognitively, emotionally, and spiritually inferior (coloniality of being; Maldonado-Torres, 2007). Likewise, decoloniality invites us to re-envision our broken relationship with nature, characterized by our

exploitative, consumerist, and accumulative logic (coloniality of mother nature; Walsh, 2009).

At the educational and pedagogical level, a decolonial orientation articulates with critical (Freire, 1968/1970; Giroux, 2009), asset-based, and multimodal pedagogies (Álvarez Valencia, 2021; Stein, 2007), for they share a critical view of education and a commitment to pluriversal views. Such articulation facilitates the encounter of diverse cultural semiotic resources, including frameworks of interpretation, cultural practices, ways of learning and knowing, acting, thinking, being, and living, and "contribute to the creation of new comprehensions, coexistences, solidarities, and collaborations" (Walsh, 2018, p. 59). While critical pedagogies highlight the need to challenge broader social structures of power by examining "the role that schools play as agents of social and cultural reproduction" (Giroux, 2009, p. 47), asset pedagogies—such as culturally sustaining pedagogies (Alim & Paris, 2017)—conceive of schooling as a site for sustaining the cultural ways of being of minoritized cultural groups and provide options to respond "to the many ways that schools continue to function as part of the colonial project" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 2). Multimodal pedagogies focus on re-sourcing (rearticulating, recovering, and legitimizing) students' cultural semiotic resources (e.g., linguistic varieties, gender identities, cultural practices) that have been disenfranchised or silenced by hegemonic forces and semiotic regimes operating in educational institutions (Álvarez Valencia, 2021; Stein, 2004). In short, these pedagogical perspectives, combined with principles of a decolonial perspective, strive for recognition, social justice, openness, and reflection through critical intercultural dialogue.

Critical Intercultural Dialogue

We understand critical intercultural dialogue as a reflexive, subjective positioning where interlocutors from diverse cultural groups engage in solidary interactions with attitudes of openness toward recognizing the self and the other's cultural semiotic resources. This reflexive process is critical because it intends individuals to examine the gaps in cultural practices, experience, and history and "engage each other in a mutually educative and critical manner" (James, 1990, p. 589). By critical, we understand the capacity of interlocutors to assess their cultural semiotic resources, identify the social, political, historical, and economic forces that inform their assessment, and, finally, take a position that enables full or partial agreement regarding meanings or perspectives being negotiated. For critical intercultural dialogue to happen, interlocutors must recognize the equal or unequal conditions under which this dialogue is conducted and should strive to generate fair conditions that all parties involved can accept and revise as the participants and circumstances change (James, 1990).

We present some examples of how these pedagogical perspectives contribute to the decolonial intercultural project below, although a discussion of the situation of Indigenous students in HE is in order first.

Indigenous Students' Barriers to Access and Complete Higher Education

Previous studies show that Indigenous students face similar challenges in accessing and completing their university degrees despite the geographic distance (Álvarez Valencia & Wagner, 2021). A case in point is Colombia, an ethnolinguistic and culturally diverse country with over 102 Indigenous groups that speak 65 Amerindian languages distributed across 788 Indigenous reservations (Agencia Nacional de Tierras, n.d.; see Figure 1). Besides Spanish, there are "two Creole languages, two varieties of Romani, and [the] Colombian sign language, which also has two varieties" (Usma et al., 2018, p. 233). Even though at the national level, the percentages of Black and Indigenous populations are considerably lower (Black,

Figure 1. Indigenous Reservations in Colombia

Note. Adapted from Portal de Datos Abiertos de la ANT, by Agencia Nacional de Tierras, n.d. (https://bit.ly/3Uvxy9A). CC BY 4.0

9.34%; Indigenous, 4.4%) compared to White-Mestizo (86.25%), cultural *métissage* is high (DANE, 2019).

The state has established education policies for Indigenous communities. Since the 1970s, it has encouraged creating and implementing "ethnic schools" with either an Indigenous or African-Colombian/Black-oriented curriculum (see Decree 1142, 1978). The policy intends to support education in the Amerindian or Creole (for Blacks) languages spoken in the territories to safeguard, maintain, and promote ethnolinguistic and cultural diversity. Regarding HE, even though state-funded universities assign admission quotas for marginalized, Indigenous, African-descendant populations, and for victims of violence, among others, these policies fall short when addressing the financial, cultural, academic, and psychological factors that these populations endure to succeed in HE (Álvarez Valencia & Miranda, 2022; Álvarez Valencia & Wagner, 2021; Usma et al., 2018).

Spanish is the official language in Colombia, and Amerindian languages are co-official in Indigenous territories, but some of these languages have become extinct despite preservation efforts (e.g., Pasto, Guajiba, and Pijao; Pineda Camacho, 2000).

English is also part of the equation since it is included in the national entry test for HE admission. Since 2004, language policies have set proficiency standards for high school and university students following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Miranda & Valencia Giraldo, 2019). English constitutes a barrier to accessing HE, especially for Indigenous students who have received indigenous education in their reservations and for whom Spanish is already their second/foreign language.

Below, we present some barriers that hinder Indigenous students' access, permanence, and completion of HE and impinge on the possibilities of engaging in intercultural dialogue between them and the campus community.

Structural Barriers

The worldview arriving from Europe in 1492 started the colonial matrix of knowledge, power, and being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007) that continues to mediate White-Mestizo and Indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples' socioeconomic, cultural, and political relationships in the Americas. The effects of the colonial matrix are particularly notorious in education. A review of the literature in the US (Waller et al., 2002), Canada (Ottman, 2017), Mexico (Chávez Arellano, 2008), Brazil (David et al., 2013), Colombia (Álvarez Valencia et al., 2021; Usma et al., 2018), and Chile (Merino, 2012) "indicates that even though enrolment of IS [Indigenous students] in postsecondary education has increased, they remain underrepresented at levels commensurate to the population and suffer from higher attrition rates and the lowest graduation statistics compared to other populations" (Álvarez Valencia & Wagner, 2021, p. 7).

Different authors have characterized Indigenous students' journeys in HE in terms of "structural subordination" (Grande, 2004), "intercultural mobility/immobility and roadblocks" (Álvarez Valencia & Wagner, 2021), or "systemic barriers" (Waller et al., 2002). All coincide with the alienation, underrepresentation, and overall disenfranchisement of Indigenous students' cosmogonies, identities, languages, and learning styles which have lower symbolic exchange value when circulated in the "property system of Western knowledge" (Ahmed, 2000, p. 148).

Financial Barriers

Even though in Latin American countries (Mato, 2018), Canada (Ottman, 2017), and some U.S. states (e.g., Arizona; see Waller et al., 2002), affirmative action legislation aims at providing financial support to Indigenous students, budgets do not suffice to cover their tuition, accommodation, transportation, meals, and educational materials to complete their programs. According to Restoule et al. (2013), Indigenous students

receive "inadequate financial resources" for their transition/relocation from reservations to universities in urban centers. In some cases (such as Mexico), Indigenous students' families invest all capital and land to fund their daughter's/son's HE (Merino, 2012) or engage in onerous student loans, turning a financial difficulty into a psycho-affective and emotional one. In Colombia, financial constraints among Indigenous students lead to off-campus employment, negatively impacting their academic performance by lowering their GPA, dropping classes, and prolonging program completion (Álvarez Valencia & Miranda, 2022; Álvarez Valencia et al., 2021).

Cultural Barriers

Indigenous students experience cultural discontinuities between their onto-epistemological constructions and the White-Mestizo culture as they "enter university and face the systemic and structural colonial resonances latent in the campus climate and stakeholders' minds as well as the bureaucratic organization of universities that perpetuate covert discrimination, invisibilization, acculturation, and marginalization" (Álvarez Valencia & Wagner, 2021, pp. 11–12). Such discontinuities are marked by the "ethnocentric, conservative, and inflexible" (David et al., 2013, p. 118) curricula that neither include Indigenous languages, ways of knowing, being, and learning in teacher education programs or other disciplines nor question the inherent racism/colonialism in the academic/scientific disciplines.

Pedagogically, the lack of cultural awareness of Indigenous students' differences implies romanticizing, homogenizing, and objectifying them by approaching them as "human museums" (Tróchez Tunubalá, 2017). Tróchez Tunubalá (2017) contests the view that portrays Indigenous communities as frozen in the deep past, incapable of changing and adapting to the demands of modernity. In most cases, teachers either neglect or disregard Indigenous students' cultural and sociohistorical contexts while promoting "academicist" (the only valid and legitimate knowledge is the academic one), "transmissionist" (limiting learning to Western unidirectional logics where meaning is imposed rather than negotiated); and "assimilationist multicultural education approaches that sustain the historical legacy of exclusion of IS in higher education" (Waller et al., 2002).

Psychological Barriers

Indigenous students' identities and cultural semiotic resources have historically been excluded in the Americas, "portrayed as negative, and even ridiculed" (Usma et al., 2018, p. 240). The cultural and linguistic discord caused by the new dynamics of city and campus life distresses Indigenous students, affecting their confidence and motivation and increasing feelings of inferiority and academic inadequacy (Álvarez Valencia et al., 2021), uprootedness (Waller et al., 2002), alienation, and social isolation (Ottman, 2017). These situations evidence the gap between affirmative actions and their implementation. By promoting this discrepancy, governments treat Indigenous students "more humanely" though not "fully humanely," reinstituting "the very coloniality that yielded present conditions" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2012, p. 45).

Academic Barriers

Both curricular and pedagogical segregation in universities originate in their inability to understand Indigenous students' diverse literacy and numeracy practices. From Canada to Chile, research reports Indigenous students' low language proficiency in the dominant language, including English (Ottman, 2017; Restoule et al., 2013), Spanish (Álvarez Valencia et al., 2021; Chávez Arellano, 2008; Usma et al., 2018), and Brazilian Portuguese (David et al., 2013). Research shows that Indigenous students struggle to understand and write academic texts, manage time in Western terms (Ottman, 2017), and participate in academic discussions with peers or instructors (Álvarez Valencia et al., 2021).

Indigenous students encounter greater challenges in learning English compared to Spanish. For example, Álvarez Valencia et al. (2021) report that Indigenous students from the Misak community in Colombia consider Spanish a foreign language. Thus, the requirement of English as a second/foreign language in HE disregards their sociolinguistic and language acquisition paths. For them, English becomes a barrier to completing their degrees because the proficiency level demanded in the courses ignores that their access to English classes, materials, and exposure to the language was limited during high school.

Indigenous students' low English proficiency offshoots feelings of frustration and demotivation that lead to the abandonment of their English classes, which, along with the other barriers discussed above, translates into high attrition rates. Their GPA is affected by courses like English, where they feel disadvantaged compared to their Mestizo peers. Álvarez Valencia et al. found that Indigenous students' GPAs in their university in 2010–2020 were 3.4 out of 5.0.

Figure 2 summarizes the barriers to genuine intercultural dialogue between members of Indigenous communities and university stakeholders. Below, we discuss how to promote, strengthen, and facilitate meaningful intercultural encounters between Indigenous students and the university community.

Initial Ideas on How to Construct and Develop Intercultural Dialogue

We focus on two main areas that will contribute to ameliorating Indigenous students' access to HE: their permanence and the full enjoyment of the university experience. We propose that this can be achieved based on critical intercultural dialogue where the university community and Indigenous students exchange, negotiate, and contest cultural semiotic resources that perpetuate inequity. We describe two processes that will facilitate *permanence* and *sustainable critical intercultural dialogue*, highlighting our experience as English language teacher educators and providing examples from our classes; however, many of these ideas apply to other curriculum areas.

Facilitating Permanence

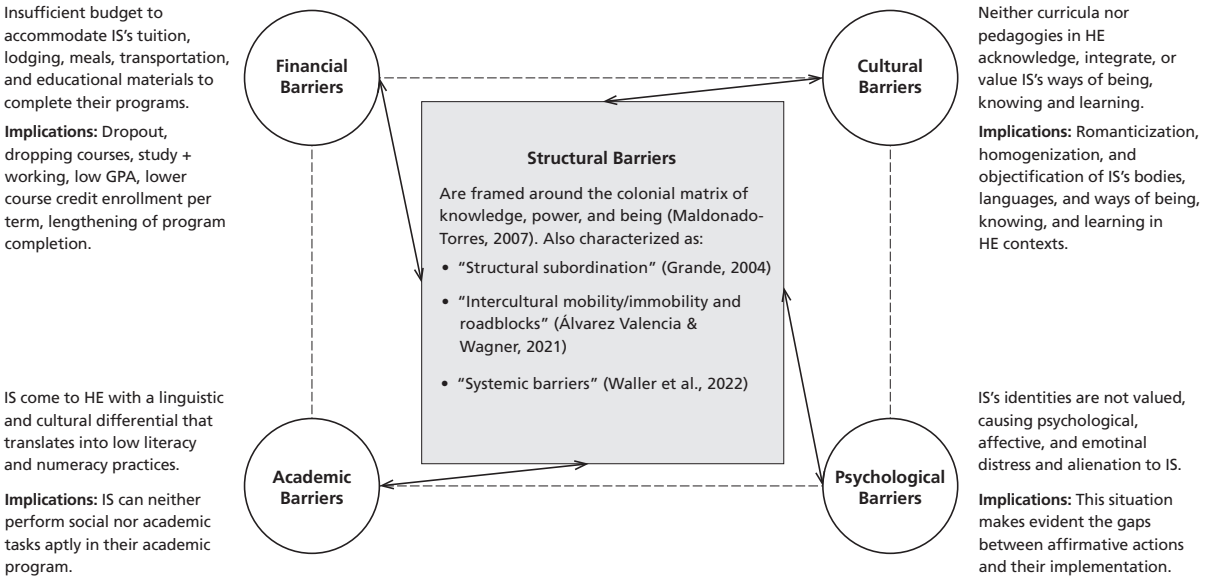
Permanence and Retention

To facilitate the permanence and retention of Indigenous students, the university community needs to draw unequivocally on an intercultural orientation. It must recognize the historical debt owed to Indigenous peoples in terms of providing equal opportunities and access to education, but more importantly, improving conditions for their success. This recognition cannot be reduced to admission quotas or financial aid; it requires recognizing the diversity of Indigenous students' practices and linguistic, symbolic, and material-semiotic resources. This process involves disrupting the dynamics of a monocultural and monolingual campus and accepting and including Indigenous cosmogonies, spiritualities, and ways of teaching and learning.

One point of departure is addressing the economic, academic, psycho-affective, and cultural barriers that hinder Indigenous students' academic performance and timely degree completion. Although they pay lower tuition fees, their primary challenge concerns affording life in the city. One way to guarantee a source of income is by increasing financial aid and on-campus job positions such as administrative and research assistantships.

Upon beginning their university studies, most Indigenous students report being academically behind their peers who had K–12 education in urban centers. They reported little instruction regarding English, while access to learning resources was limited (Álvarez Valencia et al., 2021). One way academic programs can facilitate student adaptation and academic leveling is by offering "bridging" programs (Usma et al., 2018) in different literacy practices. In several universities,

Figure 2. Indigenous Students' Barriers to Higher Education



Note. HE = Higher education, IS = Indigenous students

tutoring centers have successfully supported students from multiple disciplines, including special tutoring for minoritized/racialized communities. Such initiatives must be accompanied by counseling and mentorship to identify students' needs and follow up on their performance and progress throughout their university experience.

Counseling should focus not only on students' academic needs but also on students' psycho-affective dimensions. Indigenous students' disorientation after leaving their territories and families and the feelings of marginalization in a foreign cultural context are also other causes of low performance and low-degree completion (Waller et al., 2002).

Participating in Curriculum Design

Another area that will enhance retention and intercultural dialogue is more involvement in curriculum planning and, at the pedagogical level, consideration of Indigenous students' ways of learning. At Universidad del Valle, for instance, the Indigenous Council (*Cabildo Indígena Universitario*, CIU) has negotiated with the administration offering one Indigenous language (Nasa Yuwe) and two content-based courses about Indigenous cosmogonies and epistemologies. Including Indigenous courses is a step toward recognizing Indigenous communities, but more is needed for meaningful intercultural dialogue. Indigenous languages, cosmogonies, and epistemologies should be incorporated into academic programs, not limited to specific courses. In doing so, the possibilities of engaging in intercultural dialogue would expand since the semiotic resources proper of Western disciplines could be discussed in terms of Indigenous perspectives and vice versa.

One example is how we conceive of languages in contrast to Indigenous students' views. In the Western tradition, second language acquisition has been dominated by a verbocentric, monolithic, and cognitive-oriented view where language is at the center

of meaning-making and is situated in the mind of its "users" (Firth & Wagner, 2007). By contrast, the Misak community, an Indigenous *pueblo* in southwestern Colombia, conceptualizes language in three ways: *Namtrik*, which refers to the way people usually understand language as a formal system; *Namuy wam*, which denotes the voices of the territory manifested, for instance, through the chirps of the birds and the "voice of the wind"; and *Kampa wam*, which refers to the voices of their elder spirits found, for example, in figures of stones (Manuel Ussa, an Indigenous university student. Personal communication, September 25, 2019). Given the complexity of this perspective, language teachers must consider how their language assumptions can dialogue with those of their students in class.

Including Indigenous knowledge in the curriculum is a decolonial practice that allows non-Indigenous students to recognize alternative ways of thinking, doing, and staying in the world. Including other perspectives in a class and the syllabus can take different shapes. Depending on the course, some topics can contribute to expanding the course themes by looking at them from an Indigenous perspective. Guest speakers from Indigenous communities and Indigenous students enrolled in the classes can facilitate and strengthen this intercultural dialogue. One illustration of this approach is a pedagogy course that we have taught in the context of a foreign language teacher education program. In our course, several Western perspectives on education and pedagogy are studied; however, the course includes a unit on Indigenous and African descendants' pedagogies. The unit closes with a colloquium where teachers of ethnic-racial communities discuss their philosophies and pedagogical practices with our students.

Getting to Know Students and Their Learning Paths and Practices

Consideration of Indigenous students' learning practices is necessary for intercultural dialogue. One Indigenous student commented that he was reprimanded for not taking notes in one of his classes because he sat and knitted instead. Indigenous communities value oral tradition more than writing to harness concepts and preserve knowledge (Rocha-Buelvas & Ruíz-Lurduy, 2018; Tumiñá, 2019). For Indigenous students, there is a connection between listening and knitting because learning is an act of knitting the "word." This anecdote emphasizes the need to rethink our pedagogies in diverse classrooms. Exploring our students' cultural semiotic repertoires, such as their learning habits, classroom behaviors, and backgrounds, could offer insight into how to shape our pedagogical practice.

Several instruments could be used to engage in dialogue with our students and learn more about them. Teachers can use informal chats, surveys, and class activities and draw on classroom observations to inquire about students' learning styles, practices, and cultural identifications. One strategy we have used in our Pedagogy course is asking students to introduce themselves through an identity text (Cummins & Early, 2011). Students have produced multimodal texts such as PowerPoints, video games, crosswords, posters, and even poetry that have become a window to their personal meanings and repertoire of cultural semiotic resources, including ethnic affiliation, affinity groups, gender identifications, and worldviews. The identity text in Figure 3 was produced by an Indigenous student of the Nasa community in 2016. Had we asked him to write who he was, we would not have gotten this rich, culturally embedded, semiotic, and symbolic resource.

In this identity text, the student explains who he is in relationship to his ancestral culture and the land. He questions the linearity of time and its split into past, present, and future, proposing a non-linear, mutually shaping conceptualization that conflates time and identity. He also acknowledges how land coproduces his identity and his sexed body. Pablo (a pseudonym) explains:

Figure 3. Indigenous Student Identity Text

> I don't think I have an answer to the question, "who am I." I think I'm under construction. I prefer to say who I am being. . . . Why the corn [as part of the head]? Because as you know, the corn is ancestral...is the ancestral fruit of our aboriginal people. That is my past, so I wanted to start by that . . . my head is an universe . . . As my universe could be the future, could be the past because when I go to the future, when I think in the future, I discover more about my past, my ancestral culture, my language. That's why I say my future is in the past also. . . . The left hand is the symbol of resistance and is the force that prepares the right hand. The right hand for me is very important because it's the hand . . . that creates many ideas. . . . This part [his sex] is like a seed, like a tree that shelters life. . . . Those are my feet. The left foot is a *trapiche* (mill). Because for me this is like, like we have to be in touch with the land to know what is our society, what our reality is. . . . But the right foot is different because even if you are a realistic person, you have to dream. For that reason, it's like a leaf, and it represents the opposite of heavy (the left foot). [*sic*]

Re-Sourcing Students' Cultural Semiotic Resources to Create Safe Spaces

Our pedagogical approach to language teaching is informed by multimodal pedagogies, critical pedagogy, and culturally sustaining pedagogies. We highlight the centrality of cultural semiotic resources as frameworks of interpretation that engage in dialogue and negotiation of meaning in the encounter between people and their repertoires of semiotic resources. As such, we look at the theories and contents of our class as cultural semiotic resources that are incomplete and contestable and which, therefore, need to be chronotopically, socially, and culturally situated and examined with critical lenses. We make the argument that one step in decolonizing English language classrooms is by questioning the status of language as the central meaning carrier and, instead, we give relevance to other modes of communication (e.g., image, sound, non-verbal elements; Álvarez Valencia, 2021; Stein, 2007). Expanding students' representational resources, including their native languages, registers, styles, and social dialects, and welcoming their multimodal, multisensory, and embodied meaning-making practices in the form of arts, music, and visuals make the classroom a more just and equitable space (Stein, 2004, 2007). Thus, the language classroom not only welcomes students' linguistic, cultural, and symbolic resources but also enables transemiotizing and translingual practices, implying a movement across semiotic resources that encompass not only the linguistic modality but also multimodal (e.g., gesture, space, gaze, image, color, typography, sound, music) resources (Álvarez Valencia, 2022).

Teachers need to develop pedagogical practices that create safe spaces for the performance of minoritized students' cultural semiotic resources and their identities. For example, in our teacher education program, as part of the teaching practice, three of our students (one mestizo and two Indigenous) designed language skills clubs targeted to Indigenous students of the university (see Figure 4). This initiative intends to strengthen students' confidence, given the frustration they experience in their classes. These clubs also bring Indigenous students' meaning-making practices and identities into the English language classroom through situated topics more attuned to their lives.

We have also implemented other strategies to make language classrooms safe spaces for the performance of students' diverse identities. One strategy common to our pedagogical perspectives is re-sourcing resources because semiotic resources have uneven exchange values (Stein, 2004). The colonial matrix operating in Western education systems assigns a lower exchange value to Indigenous communities' cultural practices and languages. The same applies to other categories, such as gender, where heterosexuality receives a higher

Figure 4. Promotional Posters of English Courses Targeted to Indigenous Students

exchange value than homosexuality. Re-sourcing semiotic resources intends to balance the exchange value of students' cultural resources by making them visible, integrating them in the curriculum, and drawing on appropriate pedagogical strategies that invite students to participate and strengthen their identity.

One example of this initiative was evidenced in one of our classes of Pedagogy mentioned above. At the beginning of the semester, two students who phenotypically appeared to be of Indigenous origin did not identify themselves as such when showcasing their identity texts. However, at the end of the semester, they designed multimodal projects highlighting their Indigenous identities (one documentary about Indigenous women on campus and a sketch of the 21st-century classroom for Indigenous students). When asked why they had not initially made any reference to their Indigenous identity, Juana (pseudonym) explained:

> Yes, I recognize myself as an Indigenous woman… However, I am not that active and that is embarrassing because I don't know much about my culture. . . . The topics seen in class made me think and that is why I say that I recognize myself as an Indigenous person and if I did not name it much in class it was because, as I mentioned before, I am not so active with the activities, the cosmovision, etc. of the Indigenous council. So, I felt ashamed of my ignorance...When we touched on the topic of multimodal pedagogies, and also the topic of colonization, it was like it inspired me to know a little more about myself. (Personal communication, January 19, 2021).

The examples presented in this section demonstrate that English language and content courses can be venues for recognizing and resourcing students' cultural semiotic resources. Classrooms can become collective territories that sustain and enrich students'

cultural practices and identity affiliations so that the "outcome of learning is experienced as additive rather than subtractive" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 1). In the case of the pedagogy courses, the intercultural and dialogic approach adopted by the teachers inspired the students to embrace their Indigenous identity and embody it with pride. The class supported students' self-recognition and identity affirmation, which evokes Freire's (2005) understanding of what critical pedagogy should afford in educational spaces: "Only as learners recognize themselves democratically and see that their right to say 'I be' is respected will they become able to learn the dominant grammatical reasons why they should say 'I am'" (p. 89).

Facilitating Engagement in Intercultural Dialogue

At Universidad del Valle, Indigenous students have claimed spaces to express their identities. Álvarez Valencia and Wagner (2021) describe several of these achievements, including a temporary student residence for new Indigenous students, a *chagra* or space for Indigenous students to grow medicinal plants and other crops, a place called "*Tulpa del Lago*" where the community carries out cultural or political events and an office for the Indigenous council. All Indigenous *pueblos* of the university integrate the council. Members of the council are elected every year, and just as they would do it in their territories, the ceremony of inauguration is replicated on campus. Besides this event, the Indigenous council organizes other cultural and political events to share their cosmogonies, political struggles, rituals, and languages with the academic community. By bringing the cultural practices of their territories, languages, and overall cultural semiotic resources, Indigenous students reterritorialize the campus in what could be considered not only an invitation to engage in intercultural dialogue but also a counterhegemonic reconfiguration of the university, which they see as a colonial space (Álvarez Valencia & Wagner, 2021).

Despite the inclusion of the three courses in the university academic offer and of spaces for Indigenous students to carry out their events, for them, these benefits do not necessarily mean gestures for intercultural dialogue. On many occasions, they referred to these as achievements that were the product of their political struggle rather than initiatives of the university administration (Álvarez Valencia & Miranda, 2022). The university needs to create spaces for Indigenous students to perform their rituals and for other academic community members to participate and engage dialogically with the richness of Indigenous communities' cultural semiotic resources. Facilitating intercultural dialogue does not only depend on the university community, but it is also a challenge that both parties have to negotiate regarding what it will be about and how it can take place under conditions that are fair to both (James, 1990). Intercultural dialogue requires, as suggested by Usma et al. (2018), a critical intercultural purview that considers all dimensions (social, cultural, political, economic, historical) that intertwine in intercultural exchange and underlie beliefs, stereotypes, and prejudice against others.

Language teachers can promote intercultural dialogue with other communities on campus. One good example of this is an initiative of our university's Center of Languages and Cultures that, in partnership with the CIU, the Cultural Unit of the university's library, and our research group, organized the Week of Ancestral Languages. During this week, teachers of English for academic and specific purposes courses offered to all the undergraduate programs in the university took their students to various events. Some of these events included "*Círculos de Palabra*" (an ancestral activity where people gathered around a circle to listen to each other and discuss specific topics), knitting workshops, music, dance demonstrations, and the design of comics about Indigenous narratives (see Figure 5).

The Week of Ancestral Languages was meaningful for students since they expanded their views of

Figure 5. Week of Ancestral Languages Snapshots at Universidad del Valle (2019)

Note. From left to right, students at a weaving workshop; music and dance demonstration; and fanzine produced at the workshop on comic strip design about ancestral narratives (Trans. Origin of the Misak Community).

language and could engage in dialogue with members of Indigenous communities. They understood that although English is an important semiotic resource, in our country, there is a wealth of languages and cultural practices that are unknown to them. This first encounter with Indigenous communities' cultural semiotic resources and their meanings was the first step toward potential engagement in intercultural dialogue characterized by openness, respect, and commitment to maintaining the university's linguistic and cultural diversity. These activities crystalize decolonial actions in that they intended to re-source Indigenous communities' semiotic resources. This event also made the general student population aware of the cultural, cosmogonic, and epistemic richness of our Indigenous *pueblos* and the underlying politics of invisibilization to which these populations have been subjected.

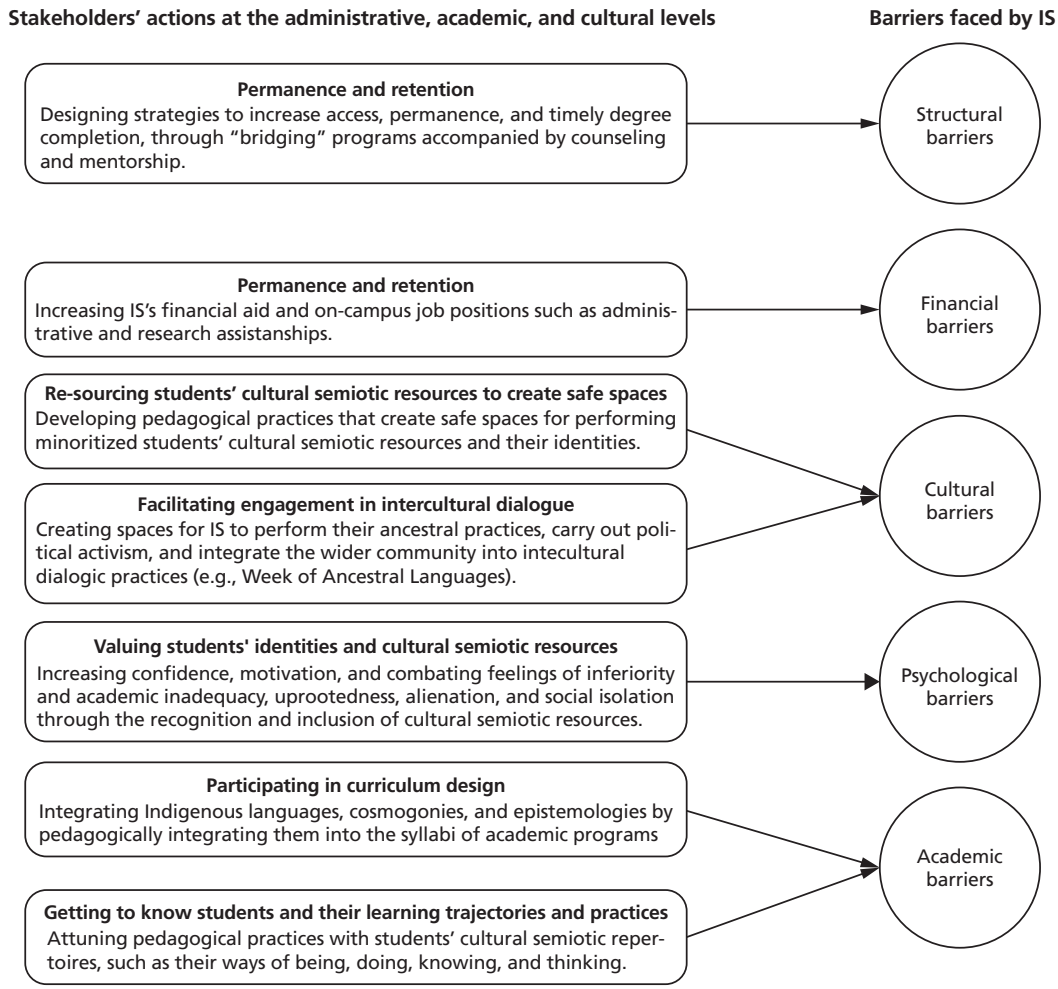
Facilitating intercultural dialogue can also be enhanced at the investigative level. As an illustration, the reflections in this article are the result of a research study in which the CIU and teachers of the foreign language department at our university collaborated (Álvarez Valencia & Miranda, 2022). The study makes part of a macro-project that aims to increase Indigenous students' retention and graduation rates. In designing the study, we thought that one way to engage in critical intercultural dialogue and to construct a decolonial way of conducting research was by working together with Indigenous students throughout the research process (research design, data collection, and analysis) and by shifting the traditional objectifying interactional dynamics between researchers and participants. Although space limitations preclude delving into the findings of the project's first stage (see Álvarez Valencia et al., 2021), the emphasis here is the possibility of promoting and facilitating intercultural dialogue through research.

Although there may be more actions to enhance intercultural dialogue in educational institutions, we point to the most meaningful based on our experience at Universidad del Valle. Figure 6 synthesizes the barriers and actions that can be implemented to promote intercultural dialogue.

Conclusion

Integrating a decolonial and an intercultural perspective in education is still a challenge since education is still grappling with understanding what these two perspectives mean and how they can be articulated, not only at the curriculum level but also at the practical level in the classroom. In this reflective paper, we discuss some of the main barriers Indigenous students face in HE and propose actions that stakeholders and teachers could undertake to facilitate their permanence and

Figure 6. Stakeholders' Actions to Enhancing Intercultural Dialogue With Indigenous Students (IS)



engagement in sustainable intercultural dialogue. Our observations and proposals emerge from our experience as teacher educators in a public university in Cali, one of the most diverse cities in Colombia. We also draw on the research conducted with Indigenous students, and, most importantly, we are inspired by their narratives and the moments shared with them in our classes and as part of the activities of the CIU.

Reaching equitable access to HE for Indigenous students requires a concerted effort that includes multiple stakeholders. From the administrative perspective, conditions should be provided for Indigenous students to complete their degrees, including proper counseling and academic accompaniment. Additionally, universities must design strategies that facilitate students' access to information about their programs and guidance on how to submit applications. At the curricular level, teachers are called to increase the presence of Indigenous students' cultural practices, cosmogonies, and epistemologies that would contribute to the recognition of their semiotic resources. Overall, the university campus should be an open space for the manifestation of Indigenous students' political and cultural activism, inviting the academic community to intercultural

encounters and dialogue. Spaces for intercultural encounters are essential since institutional rulings can change the status of minoritized groups on paper, but they cannot permanently remove the colonial mindset of individuals. Actual intercultural exchanges and negotiation of cultural semiotic resources are central to engagement in intercultural dialogue.

We propose to adopt principles of multimodal pedagogies, critical pedagogies, and asset-based pedagogies to re-source Indigenous students' languages and ways of being and learning. These pedagogies allow classrooms to become equitable spaces where recognition, inclusion, and social justice are discussed and embodied. More work must be done in incorporating principles from these pedagogical proposals into various courses across the curriculum. This opens avenues for research that explore: How can a decolonial perspective and asset-based pedagogies be integrated with different curriculum areas? What decolonial activities, materials, and strategies can be designed in foreign language classes? What kinds of semiotic resources of minoritized communities should be included in the curriculum? What tensions do teachers and students face in integrating a decolonial perspective in their classes? These and many other questions emerge as we consider decolonial intercultural education's possibilities.

References

Agencia Nacional de Tierras. (n.d.). Resguardos indígenas en Colombia. *Portal de Datos Abiertos de la ANT*. Retrieved April 22, 2021, from https://bit.ly/3Uvxy9A

Ahmed, S. (2000). *Strange encounters: Embodied others in post-coloniality* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Alim, H. S., & Paris, D. (2017). What is culturally sustaining pedagogy and why does it matter? In D. Paris & H. S. Alim (Eds.), *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 1–21). Teachers College Press.

Álvarez Valencia, J. A. (2021). Practical and theoretical articulations between multimodal pedagogy and an intercultural orientation to second/foreign language education. In J. A. Álvarez Valencia, A. Ramírez Espinosa, & O. Vergara Luján (Eds.), *Interculturality in teacher education: Theoretical and practical considerations* (pp. 41–69). Programa Editorial Universidad del Valle.

Álvarez Valencia, J. A. (2022). Transemiotizing and re-sourcing resources in language education: Towards a multimodal social semiotic perspective on intercultural communication. In N. Miranda, A.-M. de Mejía, & S. Valencia Giraldo (Eds.), *Language education in multilingual Colombia: Critical perspectives and voices from the field* (pp. 172–187). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003155263-16

Álvarez Valencia, J. A., & Miranda, N. (2022). Indigenous students' agency vis-à-vis the practices of recognition and invisibilization in a multilingual university. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *27*(4), 470–488. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2022.2053952

Álvarez Valencia, J. A., Miranda, N., Mora, L. E, & Valencia, A. (2021). *Reporte final del proyecto de investigación: Descripción del perfil sociolingüístico y académico de estudiantes indígenas en la Universidad del Valle*. Universidad del Valle. https://bit.ly/3SrGD1k

Álvarez Valencia, J. A., & Wagner, M. (2021). Roadblocks to intercultural mobility: Indigenous students' journeys in Colombian universities. *Intercultural Communication Education*, *4*(1), 6–21. https://doi.org/10.29140/ice.v4n1.445

Chávez Arellano, M. E. (2008). Ser indígena en la educación superior ¿desventajas reales o asignadas? *Revista de la Educación Superior*, *37*(148), 31–55.

Cixous, H., & Clément, C. (1986). *The newly born woman* (B. Wing, Trans.). University of Minnesota Press. (Original work published 1975)

Cummins, J., & Early, M. (2011). *Identity texts: The collaborative creation of power in multilingual schools*. Trentham Books.

DANE. (2019, September 16). *Grupos étnicos: información técnica*. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from https://bit.ly/2qmBqjX

David, M., Melo, M. L., & Malheiro, J. M. da S. (2013). Challenges of multicultural curriculum in higher education for

Indigenous people. *Educação e Pesquisa*, *39*(1), 111–124. https://doi.org/10.1590/S1517-97022013000100008

Decreto 1142 de 1978 [Decree 1142], Ministerio de Educación Nacional (1978). https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/articles-102752_archivo_pdf.pdf

Firth, A., & Wagner, J. (2007). On discourse, communication, and (some) fundamental concepts in SLA research. *The Modern Language Journal*, *91*(s1), 757–772. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2007.00667.x

Foucault, M., Martin, L. H., Gutman, H., & Hutton, P. H. (Eds.). (1988). *Technologies of the self: A seminar with Michel Foucault*. Tavistock.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. Bergman Ramos, Trans.). Continuum. (Original work published 1968)

Freire, P. (2005). *Teachers as cultural workers: Letters to those who dare teach* (D. Macedo, D. Koike, & A. Oliveira, Trans.). Taylor & Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429496974

Gaztambide-Fernández, R. A. (2012). Decolonization and the pedagogy of solidarity. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, *1*(1), 41–67.

Giroux, H. A. (2009). Critical theory and educational practice. In A. Darder, M. P. Baltodano, & R. D. Torres (Eds.), *The critical pedagogy reader* (2nd ed., pp. 27–51). Routledge.

Grande, S. (2004). *Red pedagogy: Native American social and political thought*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Guilherme, M., & de Souza, L. M. T. M. (Eds.). (2019). *Glocal languages and critical intercultural awareness: The South answers back*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351184656

James, M. R. (1990). Critical intercultural dialogue. *Polity*, *31*(4), 587–607. https://doi.org/10.2307/3235237

Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to communication*. Routledge.

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). On the coloniality of being: Contributions to the development of a concept. *Cultural Studies*, *21*(2–3), 240–270. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162548

Mato, D. (2018). Educación superior y pueblos indígenas y afrodescendientes en América Latina: aspectos sociales y normativos, experiencias, logros, aprendizajes y desafíos. In D. Mato (Ed.), *Educación superior, diversidad cultural e interculturalidad en América Latina* (pp. 15–36). UNESCO-IESALC.

Merino, M. E. (2012). Educación docente e integración cultural en programas de estudio de universidades chilenas: un estudio de caso. *Encounters/Encuentros/Rencontres on Education*, *13*, 111–129. https://doi.org/10.24908/eoe-ese-rse.v13i0.4366

Miranda, N., & Valencia Giraldo, S. (2019). Unsettling the 'challenge': ELT policy ideology and the new breach amongst state-funded schools in Colombia. *Changing English*, *26*(3), 282–294. https://doi.org/10.1080/1358684X.2019.1590144

Ottman, J. (2017). Canada's Indigenous peoples' access to post-secondary education: The spirit of the 'New Buffalo.' In J. Frawley, S. Larkin, & J. A. Smith (Eds.), *Indigenous pathways, transitions and participation in higher education: From policy to practice* (pp. 95–117). Springer Open. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-4062-7_7

Pineda Camacho, R. (2000). *El derecho a la lengua: una historia de la política lingüística en Colombia*. Ediciones Uniandes.

Quijano, A. (1992). Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad. *Perú Indígena*, *13*(29), 11–20.

Restoule, J.-P., Mashford-Pringle, A., Chacaby, M., Smillie, C., Brunette, C., & Russel, G. (2013). Supporting successful transitions to post-secondary education for Indigenous students: Lessons from an institutional ethnography in Ontario, Canada. *International Indigenous Policy Journal*, *4*(4). https://doi.org/10.18584/iipj.2013.4.4.4

Rivera Cusicanqui, S. (2012). *Violencias (re)encubiertas en Bolivia*. Otramérica.

Rocha-Buelvas, A., & Ruíz-Lurduy, R. (2018). Agendas de investigación indígena y decolonialidad. *Izquierdas*, (41), 184–197. https://doi.org/10.4067/S0718-50492018000400184

Stein, P. (2004). Re-sourcing resources: Pedagogy, history and loss in a Johannesburg classroom. In M. R. Hawkins (Ed.),

Language learning and teacher education: A sociocultural approach (pp. 35–51). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853597657-005

Stein, P. (2007). *Multimodal pedagogies in diverse classrooms: Representation, rights and resources*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203935804

Tróchez Tunubalá, L. A. (Director). (2017). *Na, Misak* [Documentary]. Ministerio de Cultura. https://www.rtvcplay.co/cortometrajes-documentales/na-misak

Tumiñá, L. (2019, November 6–8). *La oralidad en comunidades indígenas* [Conference session]. XVII Minga Político-Cultural "Memoria de Tulpas, Taitas y Kasrak," Universidad del Valle, Cali.

Urrea-Giraldo, F. (2019). The demographic transition in the Nasa-Indigenous and Black populations of northern Cauca (Colombia). In J. Anson, W. Bartl, & A. Kulczycki (Eds.), *Studies in the sociology of population* (pp. 27–53). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-94869-0_2

Usma, J., Ortiz J., & Gutiérrez, C. (2018). Indigenous students learning English in higher education: Challenges and hopes. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *23*(2), 229–254. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.v23n02a03

Viáfara López, C. A. (2017). Movilidad social intergeneracional de acuerdo al color de la piel en Colombia. *Sociedad y Economía*, (33), 263–287. https://doi.org/10.25100/sye.v0i33.5632

Waller, M. A., Okamoto, S. K., Hankerson, A. A., Hibbeler, T., Hibbeler, P., McIntyre, P., & McAllen-Walker, R. (2002). The hoop of learning: A holistic, multisystemic model for facilitating educational resilience among Indigenous students. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, *29*(1), 97–116. https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.2789

Walsh, C. (2009). Interculturalidad crítica y pedagogía de-colonial: Apuestas (des)de el insurgir, re-existir y re-vivir. In V. M. Candau (Ed.), *Educação intercultural na América Latina: entre concepções, tensões e propostas* (pp. 14–53). 7Letras.

Walsh, C. (2018). Interculturality and decoloniality. In W. Mignolo & C. Walsh (Eds.), *On decoloniality: Concepts, analytics, praxis* (pp. 57–80). Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822371779-004

About the Authors

José Aldemar Álvarez Valencia, PhD (University of Arizona), is a professor in applied linguistics at the School of Language Sciences at Universidad del Valle, Colombia. He chairs the Major in ELT Education in the Interinstitutional Doctoral Program at Universidad del Valle. His research interests include critical intercultural education, decolonial theory, multimodal pedagogies, and multilingualism.

Andrés Valencia, MA (University of Toronto), is an assistant professor in applied linguistics at the School of Language Sciences at Universidad del Valle, Colombia. His research interests lie at the intersection of critical and queer pedagogies, anticolonial, anti-oppressive, and anti-discriminatory practices, with language literacies education.

Guidelines for Contributors

PROFILE

Issues in Teachers' Professional Development

This journal is led by the PROFILE research group at Departamento de Lenguas Extranjeras—Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá campus. It is a publication mainly concerned with sharing the results of classroom research projects, reflections, and innovations undertaken by teachers of English as a second or foreign language as well as by teacher educators and novice teacher-researchers. Starting from the assumption that our professional knowledge is enriched by different members of our academic community, the journal welcomes papers from different parts of the world, diverse educational levels, and wide-ranging contexts. In sum, the *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development* journal (Henceforth *Profile*) belongs to the area of education; it deals with topics regarding the learning and teaching of English as a second or foreign language and teacher education in the same field. It is addressed to an international readership of pre- and in-service teachers.

Profile is registered in Scopus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, Latindex, EBSCO, Informe Académico, Academic OneFile, Red Iberoamericana de Innovación y Conocimiento Científico - REDIB, the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), and Dialnet. It is indexed in the MLA International Bibliography, Educational Research Abstracts online (ERA), the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), The Emerging Sources Citation Index (Clarivate Analytics), The European Reference Index for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (ERIH PLUS), IRESIE, LatAm Plus, the Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts database (LLBA), Redalyc, SciELO Citation Index (Web of Science), CLASE, The Education Resources Information Center – ERIC, Publindex-Minciencias (classified in category A1), and SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) 2022: Quartile 1 (Linguistics and Language), Quartile 2 (Education).

Our Purpose

The *Profile* journal is published twice a year (January and July). Its main goal is to share the results of research carried out in the field of English language teaching and learning. As such, this publication can be classified in the big areas of Language Education and Applied Linguistics. This journal accepts mainly three types of documents: research articles, articles of revision, and reflections. Research approaches can have a qualitative or mixed orientation and they include but are not limited to, action research, narrative inquiry, discourse analysis, case studies, statistical analysis, and so on. The journal also includes articles written by teacher educators and guest teachers who are willing to disseminate their reflections, innovations, and research findings.

Sections of the Journal

Issues from Teacher Researchers: This section includes in-progress and final research reports.

Issues from Novice Teacher Researchers: This section contains articles based on research conducted by new teachers as part of the monographs they prepared to obtain their BEd or BA degrees or for the theses to obtain a master's degree.

Issues Based on Reflections and Innovations: This section gathers reflections about a specific topic with analytical, interpretative or critical perspectives that are supported by different sources. Innovations include justifying, describing, explaining and providing examples of pedagogical interventions in specific teaching fields.

Submitting an Article

Submission, review, and publication of manuscripts in the *Profile* journal are free of charge for authors. To be considered for publication, you should complete the submission process via our platform. There, you should upload your manuscript, the consent form—if applicable—the submission form, and the figures, tables, etc. Go to the web page of the journal and register as a user: http://www.revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile

Please follow the "register" option at the top of the page. You will be asked to fill in a form with your information. Please do not forget to choose, at the end of the form, the option "Register as: Author". This option will allow you to upload your submission. As stated in our Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement, authors must send contributions that are original (not previously published), valid (containing data that can be replicated and processed according to given method and processes), and relevant (information that advances the knowledge in the field).

Once you are registered as an author, you can start the five-step submission process. Be careful to follow each step and to upload your manuscript and all of the complementary files as requested in the checklist for submissions.

You do not have to send printed copies. *Profile* does not accept multiple submissions from the same author (or coauthor). Authors must wait until an editorial decision has been made on their active submission before submitting a new one. Please keep this in mind in your academic chronogram.

Paper Format

The manuscript should be saved in single-column format, double-spaced as a Word document, in Times Roman 12, and have margins of three centimeters. Block quotations and samples taken from data should be in Times Roman 10 and indented at 1.25 centimeters. Only use single spacing for the contents of footnotes, appendices, figures and tables. Number all pages of the manuscript. Insert the page number at the top of the page. Indent the first line of every paragraph. For consistency, use the tab key, which should be set at 1.25 centimeters. Do not do this in the abstract, block quotations, titles, headings, tables and figures titles. Please use titles and subtitles judiciously to clearly identify the different sections and subsections in your manuscript. Avoid labeling titles with numbers or letters. Instead, please use the levels of heading recommended by APA:

First Level Heading Centered

Second Level Heading Flush Left

Third Level Heading Flush Left

Fourth level heading. Indented and with text following the period.

Do not include your name or biographical data within the article. Manuscripts should contain an abstract of no more than 120 words and should include keywords (no more than five). Avoid the use of abbreviations and references in the abstract. Remember that a good abstract offers a succint account of the problem, methods, findings, and conclusions of the study. The abstract and the keywords should be in both Spanish and English. Keywords should be organized in alphabetical order. To guarantee the impact of the keywords, authors are advised to contrast them with a thesaurus (two samples of online, free access thesauruses are those by UNESCO and ERIC). Similarly, the complete bibliographic information for each citation must be included in the list of references following the American Psychological Association (APA) style, 7th Edition (see some samples of references below).

Translate all excerpts, appendices, quotes, and other long pieces of information into English, indicating in a footnote the original language and that the translation was made for publication purposes. Keep the original language of excerpts only when it is necessary for the objectives of the study; in this case, provide the English translation as well. When the samples from

participants are just texts, these should be transcribed. Please avoid pasting text as images unless the characteristics of the study require it.

All quoted material must be cited as such in the text. All references cited in the text must be in the list of references, and all works included in the references section must be cited in the text. Please cite only primary sources, that is, the works you actually consulted when composing your manuscript. Do not include in the list of references material that is cited within an excerpt or a direct quotation except when such material is also a primary source in the manuscript.

Besides the guidelines included here, manuscripts are expected to follow the standards of high quality academic papers as regards structure, clarity of language, and formal style. Manuscripts lacking these basic elements will not be included in the process of evaluation.

Plagiarism and Self-Citation

Self-citation should not be over 15% of all of the material quoted throughout the text. However, failure to properly cite your own previous work, when this is used within the article, will result in self-plagiarism, with the same consequences as in plagiarism cases. Manuscripts will be screened with a similarity detector software at two points: When they are first submitted to the journal and after the evaluation process is finished and the Editor and reviewers recommend publication.

Profile will reject papers with evidence of plagiarism, and its decision will be final. Manuscripts by authors whose articles have been rejected because of plagiarism will not be considered for evaluation in future issues.

Number of Words

Papers cannot exceed 8,000 words, including the abstract, keywords, references, appendices, footnotes, authors' biodata, and acknowledgements (the last two should only appear in the submission form, not in the manuscript). Footnotes should appear on the same page, not at the end of the document. Please indicate the number of words at the end of the article. The title of the manuscript should have a maximum of 13 words.

Graphics, Tables, and Figures

When possible, design the figures or graphs directly in Microsoft Word or Excel. Regarding images (photographs, pictures), please send them as independent files and with high resolution in a standard graphic format (e.g., JPG, PNG). Inside the manuscript, you can paste the images with a lower resolution (black and white versions will be used in print). Please, make sure you have the necessary authorization to reproduce images that are copyrighted. In this case, attach the permission as a suplementary file.

Tables should be created in Microsoft Word (because tables must be included in the word count of the document, please do not paste them as images). Appendices, figures, and tables should include a title. They should be centered and follow these models:

Table 1. Ways of Doing Compositions

Figure 2. Results of the Diagnostic Survey

Appendix A: Lesson Plan Sample

Write your text in good English (American or British usage is accepted, but not a mixture of these) and make sure grammar, punctuation, and style have been revised. Italics are not to be used for expressions of Latin origin; for example, in vivo, et al., per se.

Ethical Issues

One of the requirements for the publication of articles about teaching or research experiences in which others have participated is to have a consent form signed by them or their parents—if they are under 18—to authorize the use of the information in the publication.

If your article contains information provided by participants, please obtain consent forms and send the format used to get them to the editor, together with your manuscript. *Profile* does not provide the forms; they are the ones designed by the teachers while they do their projects. Identify samples from participants using labels or pseudonyms (e.g., Participant 1, Student 4) to maintain anonymity. Be consistent in doing so and follow samples included in our latest issue.

If acknowledgements are included, do so in a short paragraph of no more than 100 words at the end of the submission form (not in the manuscript).

Submission Form

Please fill in the submission form specifying the following: title of the article (in both English and Spanish; the title in English with a maximum of 13 words), author's(s') name(s), orcid, institution, address, a short biographical statement (biodata) of no more than 50 words per author, and the date or period of time the document was written. Please note that the way your name is written in the biodata (pen name) is the one that will be followed once the article is published. For multiple authors, the order in which they are mentioned in the biodata will also correspond to the order in the published article (order of authorship). If the paper presents initial or final results of a project, please indicate so. Include the name of the code number (if there is one) and the name of the institution that sponsored the project. Similarly, if the paper is based on an unpublished thesis or dissertation, please clarify this in a note and indicate the kind of thesis work (undergraduate, master's, doctoral dissertation), the degree obtained, and the university that granted such degree. Additionally, you must include a statement indicating that your article has not been submitted to another publication and that it has not already been published elsewhere.

The submission form must contain the list and the order of authorship approved by all authors. Modifications to the list or the order of authors are not allowed after submission. Otherwise, the manuscript will be withdrawn from the editorial process and the authors should present it as a new submission.

All the requirements mentioned above will be checked, and no evaluation will start until all of them are met. Delay in complying with our policies will have an impact on the time required for the evaluation process.

References

For the list of references use a hanging indent (the first line of each reference is flush left and subsequent lines are indented.) Only sources that can be accessed or recovered in any way (even when access is restricted) should appear on the reference list. Treat sources that cannot be recovered by the reader as personal communications. The following samples illustrate some common cases. For more examples, please check the APA Style website (https://apastyle.apa.org/) or our latest issue, in its electronic version, on our website: http://www.revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile

Book

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. Bergman Ramos, Trans.). Bloomsbury. (Original work published 1968)

Ministerio de Educación Nacional. (n.d.). *Lineamientos curriculares para el área de idiomas extranjeros en la educación básica y media* [Curriculum guidelines for foreign language teaching in basic and secondary education]. https://bit.ly/3d2by05

Chapter in an Edited Book

Richards, J. C. (2012). Competence and performance in language teaching. In A. Burns & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to pedagogy and practice in second*

language teaching (pp. 46–56). Cambridge University Press.

Conference Session or Paper Presentation

Inbar-Lourie, O. (2017, July 17–21). *Language assessment literacies and the language testing community: A mid-life identity crisis?* [Conference session]. 39th Language Testing Research Colloquium, Bogotá, Colombia. https://www.iltaonline.com/page/2017InvitedPlenaries

Proceedings Published in Book Form

Bailey, K. M. (2004). Plenary: Language teaching journals and reflective teaching. In A. Pulverness (Ed.), *IATEFL 2003 Brighton Conference Selections* (pp. 80–91). International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language.

Entry in a Dictionary

Provide a retrieval date for sources from the Internet that are likely to be continuously updated or that are meant to change over time.

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Feedback. In Merriam-Webster.com *dictionary*. Retrieved January 28, 2020, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/feedback

Journal Article

Mesa Villa, C. P., Gómez-Giraldo, J. S., & Arango Montes, R. (2020). Becoming language teacher-researchers in a research seedbed. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, *22*(1), 159–173. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v22n1.78806

Dissertations and Thesis

Unpublished dissertations or theses are only available in print in an institution's library.

Ariza, A. (2004). *EFL undergraduate students' understanding of autonomy and their reflection in their learning process* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas.

Risto, A. (2014). *The impact of texting and social media on students' academic writing skills* (Publication No. 3683242) [Doctoral dissertation, Tennessee State University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

Webpage on a Website

A URL shortener may be used for long or complex URLs (see first example below). If you want to refer to a complete website, do so in text (there is no need to add a reference entry), for instance: the New York Public Library website (https://www.nypl.org/). For specific pages within a website, you have to provide a reference entry:

Sigee, R. (2020, January 16). *Are authentic accents important in film and tv?* BBC. https://bbc.in/2uBtygp

UNICEF. (n.d.). *Education under attack*. Retrieved January 19, 2020, from https://www.unicef.org/education-under-attack

Evaluation and Publication

Each new submission is initially reviewed by the editor to determine the suitability of a manuscript and to identify whether all the requirements have been met. The approved manuscripts go through a double blind peer review process that takes four to five months, provided that there are no unexpected delays. Reviewers' names will not be made available to authors under any circumstances. Similarly, the authors' identities are concealed from reviewers during the evaluation process. Authors should wait approximately four to five months until notification of a decision by the editor. If your article is accepted after having been read by at least two external reviewers, you should be ready to revise it if necessary and to meet deadlines established by the editor to complete the editing processes. The *Profile* editor reserves the right to make editorial changes in the manuscripts recommended for publication for the purpose of clarity, concision, or style.

Evaluators will have four weeks to prepare their feedback and they can give one of three possible recommendations after reviewing a manuscript: accepted,

revise and resubmit, rejected. If the concepts from the two reviewers are at odds, the following scenarios may arise:

Recommended for publication + Revise and resubmit = The manuscript will be sent to the author for revision and resubmission.

Rejected + Revise and resubmit = The manuscript will be rejected.

Recommended for publication + Rejected = The article will be sent to a third reviewer. Only the two concepts that are similar at the end of the review will be taken into account to reach a final decision.

If major changes are required by the evaluators or the editor, the article will be returned to you for amending, indicating that revision and resubmission is required. The improved version should be submitted within three weeks. After this period, the article will be regarded as a new submission.

The revised version of the manuscript should be sent to the editor together with a cover letter. It should include the authors' explanations of how they addressed (or did not address) the reviewers' comments. The resubmission will then be submitted again for evaluation. Once the manuscript has been recommended for publication by both reviewers, it will be reviewed by the Editorial Commitee to reach a final decision. The Editorial Committee will take into account the reviewers' recommendations and will decide whether the article can be published. The date of publication will depend upon the amount of time taken for revision and resubmission.

Once the article is accepted, the edited version will be sent to you for approval. Upon publication, authors will receive a PDF copy of their articles. *Profile* does not provide printed versions of the article or of the complete issue to authors. If authors are interested in acquiring a printed version of the journal, they should contact the editor.

Copyright

Once your article is accepted, you should authorize us to reproduce the full text on the Internet and in any other source sponsored by Universidad Nacional de Colombia. This will entail filling in a nonexclusive publication license as indicated by the editor. Authors retain the intellectual property of their manuscripts with the following restriction: first publication is granted to the *Profile* journal.

If you wish to use the article again in a publication written or edited by you, you may do so provided that its original publication in the *Profile* journal is acknowledged.

Sending Contributions

We accept submissions all year round, and manuscripts are reviewed in order of arrival. Date of publication of a manuscript, if accepted, depends on the duration of the peer-review process which lasts, at least, four months.

Letters to the editor should be sent to the following address:

Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development
Departamento de Lenguas Extranjeras,
Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Ciudad Universitaria. Carrera 30 # 45-03, Bogotá, Colombia and to: rprofile_fchbog@unal.edu.co
Phone: 57(601) 316-5000 ext. 16780.

Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement

PROFILE

Issues in Teachers' Professional Development

Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development journal is committed to following the international standards for scientific publications, guaranteeing the ethical and fair use of the content submitted to and published in the journal. To this end, the following guiding aspects, based on the recommendations by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), have been identified to facilitate and clarify the work of the editor, the authors, and the reviewers.

Editor

The Editor is responsible for the overall quality of the journal (content, editorial processes, design and publication) and should ensure that the articles published are relevant to the academic community and that the journal in general complies with accepted publication guidelines for scientific journals.

The Editor must follow practices of "fair play" in the sense that manuscripts are evaluated for their intellectual content without regard to the race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, institutional affiliation, or political philosophy of the authors.

The Editor should maintain constant and prompt communication with authors and reviewers throughout the evaluation process to keep them informed about the state of any given manuscript.

The Editor assigns reviewers based on their expertise in the topic of a given manuscript. Initially, each manuscript is revised by two reviewers. However, if the concepts from the two reviewers are at odds, the Editor should assign a third reviewer to help reach a decision. The Editor takes into account the reviewers' suggestions, but the final decision on accepting or rejecting a paper lies with the Editor.

The Editor must ensure that the information gathered during the evaluation of a manuscript (evaluation forms, reviewers' comments) is kept confidential and disclosed only to those involved in the process.

In collaboration with the editorial staff and/or the publisher (Universidad Nacional de Colombia), the Editor must decide how to proceed in cases of a legal nature (libel, copyright infringement, plagiarism). In the case of plagiarism, the Editor will proceed according to the journal's guidelines and policies.

Author

Authors must send contributions that are original (not previously published), valid (containing data that can be replicated and processed according to given methods or processes), and relevant (information that advances the knowledge in the field). Falsification and manipulation of data are unethical and unacceptable practices. Manuscripts must also be written with clarity, and authors are encouraged to proofread their manuscripts before submission.

Parallel submission (submission of a manuscript to more than one journal at a time), plagiarism, and self-plagiarism are unacceptable practices and may result in the retraction of an article. Manuscripts by authors whose articles have been rejected because of these practices will not be considered for evaluation in future issues.

Authors must carefully read the "Guidelines for authors" and prepare their submissions accordingly. Any submission that fails to comply with the guidelines will not be sent for evaluation until the problems are addressed by the authors.

As expressed in the "Guidelines for authors", authors must include in the list of references and properly acknowledge throughout the manuscript all of the works that were directly consulted in the composition of the paper.

Authorship of a manuscript can be granted only to the people who made significant contributions either during the development of the study or in the composition of the manuscript. Practices such as including "guest" or "ghost"[1] authors must be avoided. People who made contributions that were not as important as those of the author(s) can be treated as collaborators, and their help may be acknowledged in a note at the end of the manuscript. *Profile* accepts submissions of articles by a maximum of three authors. In the case of multiple authors, they all need to previously agree on the version of the manuscript that will be submitted (or resubmitted when reviewers ask for changes to be made).

As stated in the "Guidelines for authors", the consent form used to ask for permission from participants to use their data must be provided by authors. In case the participants are underage, the consent form must be signed by their parents or legal guardians. It is highly advisable that in the manuscript, the participants' identities always be concealed by the use of either pseudonyms or codes. Authors are also responsible for obtaining permission to replicate any copyrighted material used within the manuscript.

Authors must disclose any potential conflict of interest[2] that may arise during the evaluation of their manuscript. Authors are requested to provide information about the sources that funded their study.

Authors should maintain respectful and professional communication with the Editor. They are entitled to appeal a review if they consider it to be poorly performed or without enough arguments.

After publication, authors still hold the copyright for their manuscript (the right to first publication being granted to *Profile*), and therefore, it is their responsibility to notify the Editor if they find any error. They will work with the Editor on how to better address the error, whether through an erratum or, in an extreme case, by retracting the article.

If the work described in the manuscript involves animal subjects, psychological procedures, or any hazardous element (e.g., chemicals), the authors must provide the necessary information to verify that they followed the international ethical standards for these cases.

Reviewer

Based on their expertise, reviewers should assist the Editor in evaluating and selecting manuscripts.

Reviewers must respond promptly to the Editor's evaluation requests, whether to accept them or decline them.

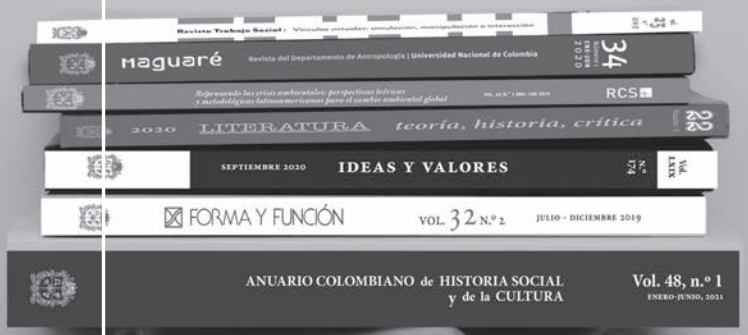
Reviewers must comply with the deadline established by the Editor to complete the review. The corresponding evaluation form must be adequately filled in, and reviewers are also entitled to write comments to the authors directly on the manuscript. Reviewers must perform their evaluations in a respectful and objective manner, attempting to provide the necessary arguments to support their comments or suggestions.

As part of the evaluation process, reviewers must treat the information used or produced with confidentiality.

Reviewers must also disclose any potential conflict of interest as well as any other major problem that they may detect during evaluation (falsification of data, plagiarism, parallel submission, etc.).

1 "Guest authors" are those who are included because of their supposed prestige or enforced by an outside party (such as the institution where the authors work). "Ghost authors" are those who actually made a significant contribution but who, for some reason, are not listed as authors of the manuscript.

2 An instance of conflict of interest is when the authors have some kind of relationship (relative, work) with a journal's reviewer. The authors should inform the Editor of this situation when submitting the manuscript.



NUESTRAS REVISTAS

Facultad de Ciencias Humanas
Portal de revistas Universidad Nacional de Colombia
www.revistas.unal.edu.co

PROFILE: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development
Vol. 25, N.º 2 • julio-diciembre 2023
Departamento de Lenguas Extranjeras
www.profile.unal.edu.co
rprofile_fchbog@unal.edu.co

Revista Colombiana de Psicología
Vol. 31, N.º 2 • julio-diciembre 2023
Departamento de Psicología
www.revistacolombiana psicologia.unal.edu.co
revpsico_fchbog@unal.edu.co

Forma y Función
Vol. 36, N.º 2 • julio-diciembre 2023
Departamento de Lingüística
www.formayfuncion.unal.edu.co
fyf_fchbog@unal.edu.co

Cuadernos de Geografía: Revista Colombiana de Geografía
Vol. 32, N.º 2 • julio-diciembre 2023
Departamento de Geografía
www.cuadernosdegeografia.unal.edu.co
rcgeogra_fchbog@unal.edu.co

Anuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de la Cultura
Vol. 50, N.º 2 • julio-diciembre 2023
Departamento de Historia
www.anuariodehistoria.unal.edu.co
anuhisto_fchbog@unal.edu.co

Literatura: Teoría, Historia, Crítica
Vol. 25, N.º 2 • julio-diciembre 2023
Departamento de Literatura
www.literaturathc.unal.edu.co
revliter_fchbog@unal.edu.co

Ideas y Valores
Vol. VXXII, Núm 181 • julio 2023
Departamento de Filosofía
www.ideasyvalores.unal.edu.co
revideva_fchbog@unal.edu.co

Revista Maguaré
Vol. 37, N.º 2 • julio-diciembre 2023
Departamento de Antropología
www.revistamaguare.unal.edu.co
revmag_fchbog@unal.edu.co

Revista Colombiana de Sociología
Vol. 46, N.º 2 • julio-diciembre 2023
Departamento de Sociología
www.revistacolombianasociologia.unal.edu.co
revcolso_fchbog@unal.edu.co

Trabajo Social
Vol. 25, N.º 2 • julio-diciembre 2023
Departamento de Trabajo Social
www.revtrabajosocial.unal.edu.co
revtrasoc_bog@unal.edu.co

Desde el Jardín de Freud
N.º 21 • enero-diciembre 2021
Escuela de Estudios en Psicoanálisis y Cultura
www.jardindefreud.unal.edu.co
rpsifreud_bog@unal.edu.co

Matices en Lenguas Extranjeras
N.º 14 -2 • enero-diciembre 2020
Departamento de Lenguas Extranjeras
www.revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/male
revlenex_fchbog@unal.edu.co

PUNTOS DE VENTA

UN la librería, Bogotá Plazoleta de Las Nieves • Calle 20 N.º 7-15 • Tel. 601 3165000 ext. 29494 | **Campus Ciudad Universitaria** Edificio Orlando Fals Borda (205) • Edificio de Posgrados de Ciencias • Humanas Rogelio Salmona (225) • Auditorio León de Greiff, piso 1 • Tel.: 601 316 5000, ext. 20040
www.unlalibreria.unal.edu.co | libreriaun_bog@unal.edu.co

Todas nuestras revistas académicas se pueden consultar *on-line* bajo la modalidad de acceso abierto.

CENTRO EDITORIAL
Edificio de Posgrados de la Facultad de Ciencias Humanas (225), sótano • Tel: 601 3165000 ext. 16139, 16141
editorial_fch@unal.edu.co | www.humanas.unal.edu.co

P R O F I L E

The current issue was printed
in July 2023
in Bogotá D.C., Colombia.

Printed by Pendiente
Ancizar, Minion Pro and Frutiger
fonts were used.