



**ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER
EDUCATION STUDIES IN MEXICO**


**COMUNICACIÓN
CIENTÍFICA**

**Migdalia Elizabeth Rodríguez Rosales
Elizabeth Ruiz-Esparza**
(coordinators)

English Language Teacher Education Studies in Mexico



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Prologue

We are experiencing rapid globalization and technological advancement, and the field of English language teacher education is as a result, undergoing transformative changes. This book explores contemporary challenges and innovations in English Language Teaching research and practice that reflect the complexities of modern language teacher education and professional development.

Chapter 1 “Identity in the linguistic interaction within the use of the English language in social networks: a theoretical and methodological approach” delves into the role of identity in linguistic interactions practices with the use of English (L2) through social networks by young adult Mexican university students. It offers a theoretical and methodological lens to understand how digital platforms reshape language use and self-representation.

Building on this, chapter 2 “Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT): opportunity or imposition?” interrogates the principles of CBLT, questioning whether it serves as a genuine opportunity for learners or an imposition of rigid structures. This critical discourse study was conducted in a BA in English Language Teaching in northwestern Mexico within a well-established program. In this chapter, the attitudinal aspects of teachers towards this model and how it permeates in the educational practice in classrooms are analyzed. The educational policy and its ideological foundations are discussed as well.

The focus then shifts to pre-service teachers in chapter 3, “Teaching and learning strategies preferred by pre-service English teachers to im-

prove their language skills” who are crucial members in the shaping of future language education. This mixed methods research involved a survey and a semi-structured interview administered to 57 English Teaching undergraduate students from a Mexican public university. The chapter examines their preferred learning strategies for enhancing language skills, revealing insights into their pedagogical approaches.

In chapter 4, “State of the art: research on beliefs about writing in different contexts” takes into consideration the emotions and their influence on the writing teaching practices of a group of professors of a B.A. program in English Language Teaching at a public university in the northwest of Mexico. The discussion broadens to explore the state of research on beliefs about writing across diverse contexts. This chapter visualizes, methodological, theoretical, and practical aspects, which contribute to the knowledge of beliefs and writing in the context of higher education in Mexico, particularly in English teaching. Studies we can find in this chapter are related to *a)* teachers’ beliefs in the context of foreign language teaching and *b)* teachers’ beliefs in teaching and learning writing.

Chapter 5 “Linguistics teachers’ implementation and assessment of out-of-class teamwork” transitions to the practical realm, investigating how linguistics teachers implement and assess out-of-class teamwork, a reflection of evolving educational practices. The participants were teachers from seven different states in Mexico and belonged to the area of linguistics. This qualitative study investigated university teachers’ implementation and assessment practices of out-of-class teamwork using semi-structured interviews. Important findings are that teachers integrate socio-constructivist approaches with traditional methodologies, ensure the balance of students’ participation inside the teams and design rubrics and qualitative assessments. The participants also mentioned challenges. A proposal to guide effective out-of-class teamwork implementation is also presented.

Chapter 6 “Standardized tests for assessing young learners’ English proficiency” addresses the efficacy of standardized tests in evaluating young learners’ English proficiency, highlighting the ongoing debate over assessment practices. Language testing companies have developed tests to determine achievement, certification, progress, and proficiency. These tests are designed for audience ranging from 7 to 12 years old. This chapter

analyzes seven tests to assess English proficiency of young language learners around the world.

Finally, chapter 7 “Emergency Remote Teaching experiences of language teachers during the Pandemic in Mexico: challenges and recommendations for the new normal” offers a contemporary perspective on the online teaching experiences of language teachers in Mexico, presenting reflections and recommendations in the wake of the pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic showed us that online teaching and learning were possible. This research results show the perspectives of 257 language teachers in Mexico about online language learning during the pandemic and their recommendations after this experience. Together, these chapters provide a comprehensive overview of the dynamic landscape of English language teacher education, emphasizing the interplay between theory, practice, and emerging trends.

MIGDALIA RODRÍGUEZ-ROSALES

ELIZABETH RUIZ-ESPARZA

Book coordinators

Abstract

We are experiencing rapid globalization and technological advancement, and the field of English language teacher education is as a result, undergoing transformative changes. This book explores contemporary challenges and innovations in English Language Teaching research and practice that reflect the complexities of modern language teacher education and professional development.

Keywords: *Language Acquisition, English Study and Teaching, Social media.*

Chapter 1

Identity in the Linguistic Interaction within the Use of the English Language in Social Networks: Theoretical and Methodological Approach

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Abstract

This chapter presents a theoretical and methodological approach for the exploration of linguistic interaction practices with the use of English (L2) through social networks by young adult Mexican university students in the analysis of their identity. A theoretical approach from a sociocultural perspective is proposed to analyze the interaction (Engeström, 1996, 2001) and identity construction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, 2008, 2010). Additionally, a methodological approach is suggested, which is constituted from a qualitative view with a descriptive and an in-depth phases' study.

Keywords: *identity, interaction, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), social networks.*

Resumen

El presente capítulo presenta una aproximación teórica y metodológica hacia la exploración de prácticas de interacción lingüística con el idioma

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inglés (L2) a través de redes sociales por jóvenes estudiantes universitarios mexicanos en el análisis de su identidad. Se propone un enfoque teórico desde una perspectiva sociocultural para analizar la interacción (Engeström, 1996, 2001) y la construcción de la identidad (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, 2008, 2010). Adicionalmente, se sugiere un enfoque metodológico, el cual se constituye desde una mirada cualitativa con un estudio en fases, una descriptiva y una de profundidad.

Palabras clave: *identidad, interacción, Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (ILE), redes sociales.*

Introduction

The social media hosted on the Internet currently provides spaces for the development of users and learners of a second language identities in any context. The significance of this phenomenon, known worldwide, lies in the possibilities for the development of individuals' literacy and awareness of data that serve for the updating and innovation in understanding second language acquisition processes (Reinhardt, 2019).

This chapter shows the theoretical and methodological approach used in a research study conducted in a specific context, in northern Mexico, where different phenomena related to learning or using a foreign language (L2) and using social networks are being developed. In this study the English language is referred as L2; although it was learnt in a context of foreign language, it has been used in a broader context through social networks, the limits are blurred.

Particularly, young university students with a full schooling trajectory in the Mexican Education System have been exposed to educational strategies such as an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning program, in a context where Spanish (L1) is the official language, and an Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) learning program in all levels of study since almost three decades ago. Though, it is known that technologies have been diversified and evolved to an endless of electronic and digital resources in the past years, it is reported here that some identities ap-

peared in relation to their learning process but also identity construction in the social network community.

Therefore, these youths hold digital culture practices and interact everyday through social media using the English language or expressions to communicate with others. In this respect, it is intended to shed some light on the identity in the interaction with the use of English through social networks within this background of that previous exposure to the language and technologies.

It should be noted that this matter has been little explored in Mexico, although it is an incipient topic in research. Based on generalized data, it is possible to say that the Mexican population has poor knowledge of English, perhaps due to the heterogeneity of the population and the diversified implementation of strategies by educational agencies in each locality. However, it is claimed that the reality in the north of the country might be different due to the proximity to an English-speaking country or to the effect of the above-mentioned educational strategies have somehow had on the identity of these young people. The knowledge of these processes is considered relevant to the field of second language acquisition (SLA) as well as in the exploration of realities or new realities, which leads to benefits in pedagogical issues, curriculum design, traditional, hybrid, virtual or online instructional modalities.

The primary objective of this study is to propose a method for identifying practices that reveal the identity of young learners and users of the English language. This is achieved through their linguistic interactions on social media platforms, which are situated within a global context. This context is characterized by the evolving complexity of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) activities, which are particularly favored by today's youth (Reinhardt, 2019; Thorne, 2003).

Theoretical Approach

There have been notable elements of literature review in relation to the exploration of identity (Guitart, Nadal, & Vila, 2007; Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008) it can be observed that the socio-cultural perspective has

been widely applied with some emphasis on actions with language (Chen, 2013; Depew, 2011; Fong, Lin, & Engle, 2016; Klimanova & Dembovskaia, 2013; Pasfield-Neofitou, 2011; Schreiber, 2015).

Additionally, identity has been explored through the activity and interaction in linguistic and communicative practices (Bagarukayo, Ssentamu, Mayisela, & Brown, 2016; Crovi, 2016; Kitade, 2014; Kulavuz-Onal & Vasquez, 2018; Lam, 2004; Satar & Akcan, 2018; Warner & Chen, 2017).

From these investigations, it was also identified that data used to describe activity in interactions have been actions in social networks (interactional data). Mainly, posts that mark preferences through communicative exchanges, patterns of code selection and social themes related to identity construction can be noticed. The most explored digital environments had been the social networks, Facebook the most frequent and some didactic platforms. Although, it is known that there are other platforms that have developed the culture such as TikTok nowadays.

In addition, in some studies about identity, the use of theoretical and methodological approaches, such as language ecology, have been found (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2008; Thorne, 2004). Also, the interactional sociolinguistic approach, and the activity theory in multilingual contexts have been considered in identity studies (Bagarukayo, Ssentamu, Mayisela, & Brown, 2016; Kitade, 2014; Lam, 2004). Additionally, content analysis, critical discourse of linguistic practices (interactions, rhetoric, as well as computer-mediated discourse or web content analysis), and the framework of identity analysis through interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) were implemented in Klimanova and Dembovskaia (2013). The latter is of a special interest because it was the basis in the present study due to the flexibility of concepts that have been observable and applicable in the study of language interaction practices, giving the visibility of social network users' identity.

Identity

Thus, from the approach to identity in the field of second language acquisition, in which it is considered fluid and constructed in social and linguistic interaction, it is assumed that identity (social or linguistic) practices

and resources are mutually composed (Block, 2003, 2007; Crovi, 2016; Norton, 2000, 2013; Norton & McKinney, 2011; Norton & Toohey, 2011).

The framework for analyzing identity as produced in linguistic interaction developed by Bucholtz and Hall (2005, 2008, 2010) provides five principles that can be observed in social interaction with the language. The *emergence* principle refers to identity as the view and representation of a subject's internal state of mind through their speech; it also relates to the macro side of identity in social categories such as gender, age, race, and social status. The *positionality* principle refers to how identity encompasses positions or roles from the macro categories mentioned in the previous principle to more local and cultural positions, as well as temporally and interactively marked positions. The *indexicality* principle can be observed as the 'mechanism' to place identity through the linguistic forms that are chosen to articulate ideas and that somehow 'indicate' something particular about the individual's identity. The *relationality* principle, 'relational phenomenon,' refers to the fact that identities are not always autonomous and independent, but intersubjectively constructed presenting several overlapping and complementary relations such as similarity/difference, genuineness/artifice and authority/delegitimacy. The *partialness* principle refers to the fact that identity also entails agency and partiality in meaning and contextually situated linguistic practices between the subject and others. These five principles are not independent of each other, but interrelated, so it is not possible to say that they appear separately in interactions or expressions but rather superimposed and interrelated, a complex characteristic of identity. Therefore, identity is a 'discursive construct' (Bucholtz & Hall; 2005, p. 587), which emerges in interaction, and which occurs in certain contexts; moreover, identity is the product and not the source of linguistic and semiotic practices.

Interaction

To delve into the generation of interaction through actions, their meanings, and their interrelation with contextual elements, Engeström's activity theory (1996, 2001) provides a robust foundational framework. This theo-

ry elucidates the complexity of interactions within communicative processes by considering various factors such as tools, subjects, explicit or implicit contextual rules, community dynamics, division of labor, roles of communicators, and objectives. These elements collectively contribute to the production of actions or behaviors.

Mediation is observed as a natural link between action and context, in which tensions and dynamics are involved by everyone in certain situations, generating the relationship between the individual and their inherent agency in a sociocultural environment (Thorne, 2015; Wertsch, in Kalaja, *et al.*, 2016). This is a dynamic system where context and individuals are considered integral parts, and in a state of change and transformation. Likewise, individuals perform actions that have meaning and sense as active agents in the construction of their world including their learning, and it is not possible to understand their activity without access to the motive or intention to perform it. Thus, while language is possibly the most powerful and persuasive cultural artifact, human mental activity is also mediated by other artifacts with characteristics not necessarily linguistic but social or cultural (Kalaja, *et al.*, 2016; Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner, 2015).

In this vein, the peculiar communication with the use of language and/or languages in the use of social networks to interact, communicate and express themselves is observed as examples of such social and cultural artifacts in the context of the study and then serve to analyze identity. Engeström's model of activity theory (1996) in studying human behavior has been used to interpret and understand different processes such as the acquisition of certain skills originally in the work field. This model has incorporated additional elements to Vygotsky's original triad (tools, subject, object), and it is possible to identify additional elements such as *rules*, referring to the set of conditions that determine how and why individuals act and being in turn the result of social conditioning; also, the *division of labor* that provides a distribution of actions and operations in a *community*. These elements in turn, influence a new plane of reality known as *community* in which individuals coexist and interrelate with the rest of the elements resulting in the visibility and understanding of behaviors, processes or tasks. Such a model has been used to explore activity in learning pro-

cesses and also to explore these processes in social networks (Bagarukayo, Ssentamu, Mayisela, & Brown, 2016; Thorne, 2004).

The construction of identity in L2 learners or users, as observed in their interactions within digital environments, can be recognized through their discursive practices. These include their selection of linguistic codes and the use of hybrid textual practices, often incorporating elements such as images, photographs, memes, likes, videos, and interactive features. In such practices, identities associated with both the L1 and L2 are often combined (Chen, 2013).

Social networks, considered cultural tools, offer various possibilities for interaction, particularly on popular platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Features such as profile customization, status updates, sharing links and photos, as well as the use of synchronous chats and asynchronous messaging, enable users to maintain both online and offline connections. These functions are utilized to explore interaction through participatory actions (Knobel & Lankshear, 2008).

Crystal (2004) pointed out that the study of linguistic practices to identify a linguistic variety account for the specificities of language in digital Internet environments, such as graphical, lexical, syntactic and discourse elements. Graphic representations consist of abbreviated forms of English words such as 'u' to represent the word 'you', and in virtual worlds participants commonly use lexical forms (specific vocabulary) in addition to these expressions. Therefore, participation through social networks is where users' communication and expression practices materialize, in addition to other factors that condition the use of these environments.

Thus, identity traits in digital environments can be identified through users' affiliations with certain activities and their choices regarding language use, registers, and digital tools, which are reflected in their linguistic and textual practices (Depew & Miller-Cochran, 2010; Fong, Lin, & Engle, 2016; Lam, 2004; Pasfield-Neofitou, 2011; Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008). The aim of this section is to provide a lens for analyzing identity in linguistic interaction, while also recognizing the complexity of language use and its social and cultural meanings within environments like social networks.

Methodological Approach and Results

The presented methodology was designed and planned regarding the general objective of the study: to analyze the identity of young university students through the interaction with the use of the English language in social networks. It was developed with a qualitative perspective since the studied phenomenon has human behavioral traits. Also, data was analyzed involving an interpretation of patterns in themes through the voices of the participants (Colás, 1998; Creswell & Poth, 2016; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; McMillan & Schumacher, 2011).

Therefore, it was proposed to set three analytical components to conduct this case study with an analysis in depth about the participants' identity produced in linguistic interaction 1) social networks' identity 2) linguistic interaction in social networks and 3) identity produced in linguistic interaction through social networks.

In light of the above, the study was structured in two phases. *The first phase*, a descriptive phase, aimed to analyze the identity of social networks (component 1) and linguistic interactions within these networks (component 2) using Engeström's model (1996, 2000). This phase focused on the first two analytical components to examine the collected data. *The second phase*, an in-depth analysis, involved re-examining the initial data to describe the participants' identity within the analytical framework of Bucholtz and Hall (2005), focusing on identity produced in linguistic interaction through social networks (the third analytical component). Consequently, an 'emergent design' was developed, incorporating iterative phases and stages of data collection to refine and finalize the process until the necessary data for analysis were obtained.

The Descriptive Phase

This phase consisted of several methods to collect and analyze data. First, the application of a survey to recruit potential participants and an initial interview to select and check participant's data, then an online observation

with the study participants was held. The survey was widespread among young students of the English Courses of intermediate-advanced levels at a higher education institution. Thereupon, the results were collected and analyzed, young students from different undergraduate and engineering programs with high indicators of interaction with the use of the English language in networks were identified and called for a very brief follow up initial interview with the purpose of expanding information based on their answers.

For that matter, young university participants were recruited, the requirements to select participants were that these youth were schooled within the Mexican Educational System and attended public institutions, had an advanced level of the English language, and were frequent users of the language in social networks, they deployed actions several times a day in their personal social networks.

From the surveyed students, data was analyzed and according to the requirements a smaller group of students were selected and briefly interviewed. Because of the precise requirements and willingness to participate, two students were selected, Ana and Aldo (pseudonyms to protect their privacy). They authorized an online observation of their personal social networks to study their interactions in depth.

The online observation was conducted for a period of 3 months in which the activity of each participant was registered, data was collected through a checklist scheme, and it was used for their activity on *Twitter*, *Facebook*, and *Instagram*. The checklist included specific items: type of publication (post or share/forward), type of content (own text, share only text, multimedia), code selection (Spanish, English, codeswitching, alternating language with emojis, or another language), and number and type of reactions (likes, comments, share/forwards).

The observation outcomes indicated that both Ana and Aldo interact highly frequently through their social networks in a diversified manner in different ways depending on the platform and other elements. In Ana's register, 545 publications were registered on Twitter, 67 on Facebook, and 3 on Instagram. Twitter was the social network with the highest number of publications. It was observed that the *type of content* of her posts was mainly with text, that is, generating content for her contacts, and the *type*

of publications with the highest percentage corresponds to retweets (i.e., actions in which content is copied, forwarded, or shared). In relation to *code selection*, she used English and Spanish with equal frequency, and to a lesser extent the alternation of these codes (codeswitching). Another element that was considered part of the interaction with the contacts were the *reactions*, in her case, it was observed that in the network that had more publications, a smaller number of reactions were registered. For example, Twitter had the most public and the lowest percentage of reactions; on the other hand, on Instagram, she published 3 posts, but obtained approximately 100 reactions, *likes*, on each post. Here some examples of posts with *own text* or *tweets* with the highest number of reactions (N = 15), one in Spanish that says '*disculpe profe no hice la tarea...*' and the other in English '*i'm so ready for tomorrow*'. The meaning of these Ana's posts was addressed in the final interview.

In the case of Aldo, the other participant of the study, it was observed that Twitter was the social network where he published the most posts (N = 259), followed by Facebook with 75 posts, and Instagram with 12. The *type of content* in his publications was mainly with *text*, as opposed to publications with some multimedia content. The most frequent *type of publications* were retweets, in this case Aldo was not quite involved in content generation. Aldo's *code selection* was mainly focused on the use of English and, to a lesser extent, Spanish; publications with codeswitching were very rare. In relation to the received *reactions* on his publications, the higher the number of publications, the lower number of reactions. A Tweet with the highest number of reactions (N = 7) was '*Ma'am this is a Walmart, we don't do scientific research here*'.

After data were collected and analyzed it can be concluded that Ana and Aldo express themselves through their social networks. They interact in different ways using the tools that each platform provides, depending on the context and the content. However, it was important to know and understand their intentions and their mindset to express using the English language.

The In-Depth Phase

It consisted of a thematic analysis and a final semi-structured interview. The thematic analysis was carried out based on the results of the interactions of the online observation, this analysis was performed only with data from one social network, Twitter, due to the significant number of publications that were registered. The analysis was carried out for identifying emerging themes in which intentions and motivations could be addressed from their posts and, thus, a coding of different topics such as humor, interpersonal relationships, emotions and mood, reflections, entertainment, among others, were carried out. Ana's posts generally dealt with interpersonal relationships, emotions and mood, and reflections on life. Regarding the used language, it is possible to highlight that the main themes in posts in Spanish were emotions, relationships, and life; in English were movies and television, humor, and relationships; and with codeswitching were emotions, school, and relationships.

In Aldo's case, there was a recurrence of publications about music and humor. Likewise, on publications in Spanish, humor and relationships were found, while on posts in English, music and humor appeared almost exclusively. On posts with code alternation (using emojis) or codeswitching (language alternation), humor and reflection on life were mainly found.

Lastly, the final interview addressed the meaning of the different actions and posts patterns that highlighted the interaction of these young people. It is possible to say that Ana used English to nuance emotions, that is, to de-intensify emotions; she gives global importance to language, and the use of alternation between Spanish and English gives her a bilingual identity because it shows two parts of her world, at least, of her world's point of view. For her, each platform has a particular meaning and influences how she interacts through the messages she transmits, she uses expressions about movies and TV and school to express herself in English, but also to reduce importance on messages and not to make them as emotional or direct as if she did it in Spanish.

On the other hand, Aldo identified with the music, he feels that by the lyrics of the songs he can express what he thinks about some social strug-

gles that represent either the lyrics of the songs or their exponents, such as stereotypes discrimination and depression. Aldo uses English language more to interact with humor, which modulates the seriousness of the content he posts; he discretely shows his sympathy with the community of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and genderqueer (LGBTQ) people, and he does it by humor and music. For him, English represents a way to relate to people outside his offline circle and allows him to understand different contents as well; he also believes that the meaning of his posts takes on a different social meaning from one language to another.

Discussion

The interaction practices were observed considering that the elements that are interrelated in the activity of the networks are those produced to make the construction of identity observable.

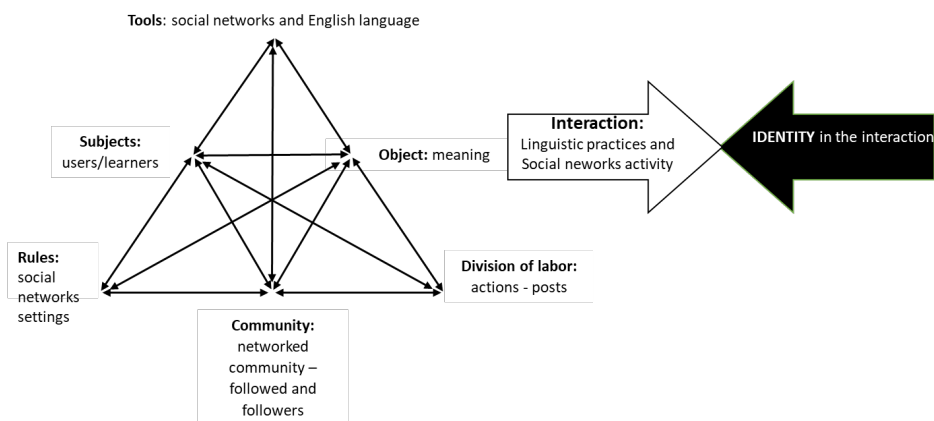
Interaction

The description of interaction in this study was inspired by Engeström's model (1996, 2001), in such a way that interaction is apparent as a set of elements that are constituted with features of the context, so in this environment the original elements of the model are transferred to the specific situation of the study. Therefore, *tools* in the model are, in this context, social networks and the English language. The *subjects* are the users. The *rules* are the settings of the social networks and the social 'norms' of the youth generation. The *community* is the network of contacts and followers with whom they interact on each platform. The *division of labor* consists of the actions and publications shared and forwarded, with or without modification, that generate trends in topics. Finally, the *object* is the meaning obtained by the intentions and motivations of the participants in their interactions.

It is necessary to observe that interaction is neither unidirectional nor totally unconscious but is subject to interrelated with and dependent on

the other elements. Once all the interrelationships have been visualized the result is the representation of the interaction, making it possible to propose a model that will later serve as the basis for the analysis of identity, under the framework of language identity as produced in linguistic interaction (see figure 1).

Figure 1. *Model of the interaction with the English language through social networks*



Note. Interaction can be seen through linguistic practices as multidirectional and interrelated to show identity. Adapted from Engeström, 1996, 2001).

Identity

The analysis of identity as produced in interaction with language can be carried out to describe the particular use that individuals develop with language. Thus, once the interaction with language in the context of social networks and its interrelations with other elements has been visualized, it is considered relevant and practical to describe the construction of linguistic identity of these young people on their posts and practices in social networks, which are an extension of their being and presentation to their audience. This was based on the framework of analysis developed by Bucholtz and Hall (2005) in which five principles of interaction present in the construction of identity (emergence, positionality, indexicality, relationality and partialness) are posed to understand and somehow describe the fluid and unstable yet interrelated dynamics.

In relation to the principle of *emergence*, this is a macro attribute in which the category of age, race and/or socioeconomic status is located. It is presented with special characteristics that “display” the participants as part of a generation of young people. In Ana’s interactions, it was observed that her posts frequently referenced her state of mind and situations related to school, reflecting her role as a student. From this principle, it can be assumed a connection to socioeconomic status by her “bilingual” interactions with which she identifies herself by using code switching, reflecting an upper – middle or high educational level and socioeconomic context due to the access to tools such as technology and other languages (also in Kormos & Kiddle, 2013), although it was not directly nor in depth analyzed. It can be observed that in most of Aldo’s interactions, the expression of humor in relation to his feelings and moods is shown. Likewise, as explained in Bucholtz and Hall (2005), the gender category can be observed in his posts with sympathy to the LGBT community, because of his interest in social issues such as discrimination by stereotypes.

The principle of *positionality* (micro features in relation to local and temporal aspects such as being a member of an institution, and roles of the participant in society). In Ana’s construction of identity, it was identifiable in the interactions in which she established her role as a student and as a young person at the same time. Thus, by her posts about entertainment and the recurrent communications about the ‘Avengers’ films, their characters, and actors, it is possible to observe the interrelation of two principles: positionality and emergence. Likewise, Ana posed herself as a user of a second language, i.e., as bilingual and a member of a community of students who are trained to be English teachers (this as a local attribute). For Aldo, this principle of identity was observed in his posts and interactions in his role as a student (this being a local attribute) and as a user of a second language by representing his ideas preferably in the English language.

The principle of *indexicality* is noticed by labels about themselves and others, as well as implications and inferences about perceptions. On Ana’s interactions, it was possible to distinguish this feature both in the linguistic forms chosen to present herself through social networks, as well as when she presents herself as a university student, bilingual, and as a young person in publications such as ‘*I like to party...*’, ‘*i’m a student of the BA in*

English teaching..., *I know English...*, or *I like to be bilingual...* The linguistic forms are also observed in the use of the lower case for the personal pronoun of the first person singular in English (i), a usual idiom that implies the diversity of language use in an informal way. In the other side, for Aldo, he uses certain forms and vocabulary to refer to gender diversity, his bilingual identity, and even his musical preferences with the lines in his posts (*'m gay...*, *I know English...*, *I use English...*, or *I like this kind of music*); thus, the type of music of *Lady Gaga*, *Madonna*, *Kim Petras*, *Billie Eilish* and *Bebe Rexha* is a popular genre in the community that represents a sense of generational struggle (this being a feature by inference).

The principle of *relationality* is an attribute of identity in relation to oneself and others by complementary relationships such as similarity and difference and other. In Ana's posts, a similarity with others was noted through her interactions with the popular *Avengers* films from the *Marvel* universe. However, a difference was also observed: she is more interested in a secondary character, *'Bucky'*, rather than the main characters. In the other hand, on Aldo's interactions, the similarity with others is observed through his posts about popular exponents of a musical genre, however, the relationship of difference is presented in that the motivation to interact with them or publish about them has a meaning of difference by being represented on the lyrics and focusing on the social problems they present and what they fight for.

The principle of *partialness* is an observable attribute in interactions that, although it does not lie only in the individual, it emerges by intersubjective relations. That is, it refers to the fact that identity entails a partiality in the meaning and contextually situated linguistic practices between the same subject and others. This principle was observed in Ana's posts when constructing her bilingual identity openly, without concerns about the "correct" use of the language (L1 or L2). These practices are part of her own speech, but also when feeling comfortable with her audience or community of contacts and followers with whom she identifies with and who may understand what she wants to convey in her messages. In Aldo's posts, this principle was observed by his preferences in relation to musical content with a sense of struggle for stereotypes, that is, partly for himself and his personal struggle, partly for his community. It possibly to observe the

representation of empowerment, in both cases, for different reasons; in Ana for being able to show her bilingualism in lines such as ‘*I know English...*’, or in Aldo for advocating on social causes such as against gender stereotypes, See table 1.

Table 1. *Identity as produced in linguistic interaction through social networks*

Emergence: macro attributes- gender, age, race and/or socioeconomic status.	Positionality: micro attributes- local and temporal aspects.	Indexicality: labels about themselves and others, implications, or inferences.	Relationality: representation of identity in relation to self and other (complementary relationships).	Partialness: attribute that does not reside only in the individual but emerges in intersubjective relationships.
ANA: -age and socioeconomic status. -student role -Bilingual status by constantly using code switching.	ANA: -student role. -role as a young person -‘ <i>Avengers</i> ’, -English language user. -member of the community of learners for English teachers.	ANA: -University student -Bilingual -youth -the use of lowercase for the pronoun ‘I’.	ANA: - <i>Avengers</i> films (<i>similarity</i>) -not the interest in the main characters but in a particular ‘secondary’ character (<i>difference</i>).	ANA: -Empowerment: openly bilingual.
ALDO: -Age and race. -Humor relation to his feelings and moods. -Gender, sympathy with the LGBT community and interest in social issues (discrimination due to stereotypes and depression).	ALDO: -role as a student, -user of a second language by representing his or her ideas with content preferably in English.	ALDO: -gender diversity -bilingual identity -type/content of music.	ALDO: -popularity musical exponents (<i>similarity</i>) -focus on the lyrics and message on social issues they represent (<i>difference</i>).	ALDO: -Empowerment: stereotypical struggle advocate.

Note. This table shows Ana and Aldo’s identities according to the interaction principles according to Bucholtz and Hall (2005) framework.

Conclusions

It was observed, in this study, that social networks are not only a space for socialization and entertainment, but also serve as a cultural space with linguistic-type meanings and demands through which identity construction unfolds. In addition, social networks provide a space for developing com-

munities of practice. However, questions remain about their application in the teaching-learning process (Gee, 2018), and there is no consensus on how this can be practically achieved or utilized. It is essential to consider various contextual factors, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of each situation. The findings in this study could pedagogically serve to locate communicative strategies and levels of meaning in language teaching using language interaction and socialization.

It was possible to notice how Ana and Aldo assign a special meaning to the language and use it to add meaning to their expressions. It was remarkable how they used Spanish, English and codes alternations in specific situations where they found the need to add specific denotations. It permeates their identity in the ways of expression they choose to communicate themselves.

Young Mexican university students are located in a multidimensional context, by being immersed in a digital culture, which in part has been strengthened by the educational policy of the Mexican Education System, and by its effects in relation to language and the use of digital tools with a communicative approach and human development (referred to as digital literacy). It is assumed these tools are subject to the communicative features that are developed in computer-mediated communication.

The theoretical significance of this research lies on its context and in the methodology used to approach a complex and subjective phenomenon, linguistic identity and interaction. Likewise, the diversity of existing studies also denoted a variety of theoretical and methodological components, which made the design of the present work more complex, however, a solid and underpinned design was achieved according to the specific situation of the participants.

It is necessary to approach the emergent characteristics of new generations which modify their forms of interaction as they change, as well as to incorporate them in their ways of learning since they also intervene in the ownership that students may have of the language, a direct relationship with learning in a foreign language context. Furthermore, Ana and Aldo reflected on their interactions as bilingual users and are aware of the advantages and disadvantages this entails for their audiences, as well as the identity they project in their own spaces.

The content they generate shows a bilingual culture contextualized in the geographical space of the study (living in a border state with the United States), as well as in the digital space that delineates their communities, showing how they own language and build an identity in their personal digital and social spaces, by generating their own linguistic uses of English, Spanish, or code alternation when interacting with their interlocutors. Just as these young university students, who attended school in a Mexican public education system and with no additional English instruction, identified and owned the language and skills for the use of technology, there are other youths. It could be considered as a significant effect of the implemented educational policy and which would be worth thinking about, studying, and exploring on a larger scale. Above all, to think practically about the foundations for curricular change that would be necessary to meet the needs of the new generations and in support of their personal and professional competencies.

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Chapter 2

Competency-Based Language Teaching: Opportunity or Imposition?

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Abstract

This qualitative case study analyzes teacher agency within the competency-based language teaching model (CBLT). Competency-Based Education (CBE) evolved with an interest in establishing a link between schools and the wider world, trying to relate theory and practice (Díaz-Barriga & Rigo, 2000). I conducted this study in a BA in English Language Teaching Program in northwestern Mexico.. In this chapter, I analyze the attitudinal aspects of teachers towards the model and how it permeates in the educational practice in classrooms. The results show compliance with the educational policy and its ideological foundations. I analyzed the results through Critical Discourse Studies.

Key words: *Competency, critical discourse studies, language policy, curriculum design, ideology.*

Resumen

Este estudio de caso cualitativo analiza la agencia docente dentro del modelo de enseñanza de idiomas basado en competencias (CBLT). La Educación Basada en Competencias (EBC) evolucionó con el interés de esta-

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blecer un vínculo entre las escuelas y el mundo, tratando de relacionar la teoría y la práctica (Diaz-Barriga & Rigo, 2000). Este estudio fue realizado en una licenciatura en enseñanza de inglés en el noroeste de México. En este capítulo analicé los aspectos actitudinales de los docentes frente al modelo y cómo este permea la práctica educativa en las aulas. Los resultados muestran el cumplimiento de la política educativa y sus fundamentos ideológicos. Los resultados fueron analizados a través de Estudios Críticos del Discurso.

Palabras clave: *competencia, estudios críticos del discurso, política del lenguaje, diseño curricular, ideología.*

Introduction

Competency-based education is a recurring theme in international educational policies. The link between school and work is gaining more and more significance in the global educational panorama. Programs within the teaching of English have addressed the issue, echoing the aforementioned policies. Richards and Rodgers (2001) explained that Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) is the implementation of the Competency-Based Education Model in a Language teaching context. That is to say, when competency-based education takes place in a language learning context, it is called CBLT.

A competency is a learner's capacity to perform specific skills in complex and authentic contexts. According to Andrade (2008), a competency is based on integrating and activating knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values for holistic development. In this context, teachers, as key agents in the learning and teaching processes, play a crucial role in facilitating the activation of these competencies by effectively operating within their educational environment (Kalaja *et al.*, 2015).

Furthermore, a comprehensive definition of *agency* is "a sociocultural capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112).

Thus, Agency is not only concerned with what is observable, but it also involves not visible behaviors, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings; all of which

must be understood in relation to the various contexts and affordances from which they cannot be abstracted. (Mercer, 2012, p. 42).

The objective of the present study consists of *analyzing teacher agency in the implementation of the model to understand the impact on classroom practices*. Hence, this study investigates how Competency-Based Language Teaching impacts teacher agency. The present research attempts to understand how this international policy has permeated until reaching the main educational stakeholders, teachers. From their perspective, educators describe how they understand this policy and explain the features of the CBLT model.

However, it is essential to know how such top-down policies have impacted the classroom and its interactions. For this reason, I decided to study the subject as part of my doctoral studies. This topic yielded complex results about educational policy in Mexico and its implications for academic practices in classrooms. Even though the main objective of my study was to understand how these measures impacted teachers' agency, I also sought to explore their attitudes towards these policies and their knowledge of the subject. To align with this, the research questions I considered for my qualitative study were the following:

Primary question:

- What impact does the CBLT model have on teacher agency, as observed in a Mexican BA in ELT program?

Specific questions:

1. What elements of CBLT are carried out?
2. How has the CBLT model been understood and interpreted by teachers?
3. What underlying notions of the social model implicit within CBLT are found?
4. Do teachers resist CBLT? If so, why?
5. What features in my particular case study indicate a custom-made adaptation of the model?
6. What kind of students' learning outcomes are presented?

In this chapter, I will answer two key questions: *What elements of CBLT are being implemented?* and *What attitudes do teachers present towards the model?* The analysis of these questions will help to determine whether the educational policy has truly permeated educational agents or if it represents a mere simulation of policy implementation.

Literature Review

In this section, I will briefly present the key ideas that guided this study. The most fundamental of these is *competency*, which involves the ability to act and develop effectively in response to specific circumstances. It represents a combination of attitudes, values, knowledge, and skills that enable individuals to perform tasks appropriately and meet contextual demands.

The concept of competency is “a dynamic combination of cognitive and metacognitive skills, knowledge and understanding, interpersonal, intellectual and practical skills, and ethical values” (Lokhoff *et al.*, 2010, p. 52). Argudin (2010), simplifies the term by summarizing it as knowledge in execution and explains that being competent implies comprehending how to interpret and perform in different sceneries.

Competency-based education is a methodological guide for the teacher where the target competencies are indicated according to the labor needs of the market. The target competencies are developed in the classroom within a structured evaluation demonstrating their acquisition and proper application. Competency-based education is based on Vygotsky’s constructivism. According to its advocates, the competency-based education model defeats some conservative principles where students are regarded as receivers of the information. Assuming a competency view aims to go far away from behaviorist philosophies and to go nearer to constructivist concepts where the learner is the key character. Learning is concentrated on performance (Andrade, 2008).

Saadi *et al.*, (2016) describe Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) as an interaction between the realities of language, the social context, and the communication needs of students. Additionally, Bader

Bataineh and Tasnimi (2014) emphasize that CBLT prioritizes what students are expected to do over what they are expected to learn. Furthermore, Auerbach (1986, p. 413) notes that “CBAE/ESL reflects the shift from viewing language learning as an end in itself to viewing it as a means for learners to achieve their own individual goals.” These definitions collectively highlight the importance of using language for communication, rooted in the social context. They all emphasize “doing with the language” rather than merely “learning about the language,” focusing on performance.

Additionally, *constructivism* is about what individuals are capable of doing with what they know, not only focusing on the information acquired by the student. In other words, it is a promoter of the application of the acquired knowledge. Constructivism focuses on collaborative learning that allows students to be more autonomous in their learning. Competency-based education promotes a shift from a teacher-centered paradigm to a student-centered one, where the main star is the learner. This is done through the *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)*, where a scaffolding process is presented among classmates and the facilitator so that the student can take and exceed their current level of knowledge and skills. Competency-based education is primarily guided by the assessment and demonstration of skills through evidence of learning.

Furthermore, *agency* refers to the actions that the individual performs in a certain area. The agency is influenced by beliefs, ideologies, and values that make a person act in one way or another. Emirbayer and Mische (1998) mention that agency is the interplay between the following dimensions: routine, which is the acquired pattern of action; purpose, which is the motivating force of the individuals; and judgment, which shows engagement with the actual situations in the moment of action (p. 963). Additionally, *agency* is not an attribute that individuals own; it is an action that people take based on their situation and their viewpoints of what fits best to each problematic. As Priestley *et al.*, 2012, p. 3) state, “agency is not something that people have, is something that people do”. Furthermore, agency is based not on the objective reality but the subjective reality, their reality (p. 14). In this study, I focused on teacher agency to observe how the ideology of educational policy permeates the main educational actors: teachers in classrooms.

Methodology

This qualitative case study involved seven female teachers and seven students, all of whom participated in the research. Among the teachers, two held doctoral degrees, while the remaining five possessed master's degrees. All teachers were observed in their classrooms, and they also participated in semi-structured interviews. The students contributed through focus group discussions.

The study was conducted at a university, which will be referred to as Metropolitan University in this research to uphold ethical principles concerning anonymity and confidentiality. The methodology comprised data collection through face-to-face classroom observations, interviews with university instructors, and the analysis of students' learning outcomes to demonstrate the methodological approaches utilized by the teachers.

I opted for a case study methodology, as it is well-documented in the literature for its capacity to “portray, analyze, and interpret the uniqueness of real individuals and situations through accessible accounts” (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 129). Additionally, case studies are regarded as a meaningful and reliable research method (Adelman *et al.*, 1980).

I developed this study in a BA in English Language Teaching program at a public and autonomous university in northwestern Mexico. The bachelor's degree program lasts four years, and the average class size is 25 students. The goal of the program is to prepare students at all educational levels. All the programs at this university have already been restructured using the competency-based model, and it has nearly 13 years of experience using the model, which indicates that it is a well-established program. This university has been considered an example for other institutions in the country regarding the implementation of the competency model. This study was necessary because there have been no previous studies about the operation of the model and its practical aspects.

I carried out the analysis of the data collected through critical dis-

course studies (CDS). This type of analysis served as a methodological tool to describe the ideological root of teachers' agency. Critical discourse analysis seek to look beyond the obvious and unmask hidden intentions behind different policies. As mentioned in the introduction, the focus of this chapter is to discuss teachers' attitudes towards the educational policy of competency-based education.

Findings

Firstly, I discuss the attitudes teachers present about the model and the elements of CBLT that they carry out. I describe the features that teachers comply with about the CBLT model. By *compliance*, I mean what they verbally manifest in support of the model and what they performed through their teacher agency during the classes I had the opportunity to witness. Compliance also implies that teachers have internalized the neoliberal ideas underlying CBLT, as evidenced through this chapter. I will observe other compliance elements in the materializations of the competencies, which are the students' learning outcomes. This chapter starts by answering the first research questions that imply approval of the CBLT ideology inherited in education.

CBLT Elements in Practice: Teachers' Attitudes towards the Model

Throughout this section, I describe and analyze the aspects that respond to my research questions: What elements of CBE are carried out? What attitudes do teachers present towards the model? First, I explore whether participants see CBLT as an opportunity or imposition. This aspect is to know teachers' attitudes about the CBLT model as a good starting point to observe if practitioners are willing to embrace the model or they question it. Also, I explore what CBLT approach elements were observable in classes in order to see how the precepts of the method are reflected in classroom practice. In addition, I discuss the humanistic elements involved within

the CBLT curriculum which were part of the elements that teachers approve about the approach.

CBLT: Opportunity or Imposition?

Almost all participants in this study mentioned they perceived CBLT as an opportunity instead of an imposition. Only one participant said it was an imposition. However, she mentioned the beneficial aspects of the model. In the following excerpt, I present some examples and analysis through CDs of such acceptance of the CBLT policy.

Gabriela “For me is an opportunity, from the beginning... it probably was because we were in the English area, we have already learned to work with the development of skills. Then, when they started to train us to move to competencies and talk about how to develop skills, we already had training, we understood... What do I have to do to develop one skill or another? It was then an opportunity to apply it to English Language Teaching and any other subject you could teach. And, it was not an abrupt transition where you say: how do I do this? Then, opportunity? Yes. You can do many things inside and outside the classroom, as opposed to traditional teaching that did not allow for it any times.”

In this excerpt, Gabriela expresses her approval of the CBLT model. She confirms that CBLT is an opportunity for teachers to do a better job during their classes. Gabriela emphasizes that being an English teacher enables working with CBLT since they develop and demonstrate the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). For her, it was not a difficult transition. She mentions that it was an opportunity to open her vision to other subjects using the model she works within the English classes. This aspect relates to the results shown by Aziz (2016), stating that having a BA in ELT does not guarantee that teachers know how to work with competencies. It is a fact that teachers received training in CBE, and they related what they were learning to their experience developing skills because of their constructivist backgrounds. Also, Gabriela expresses her approval towards CBLT when she compares CBE to traditional teaching

mentioning that traditional education did not allow her to take out her students outside the classroom. Her statements suggest that adopting a constructivist framework, such as Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT), allows her to break free from traditional educational methods and adopt a different approach to teaching. The following excerpt illustrates how, in Patricia's view, CBLT presents an opportunity to enhance instructional practices.

Patricia: "Oh, yes, it (CBLT) is a growing opportunity when used appropriately. With enough tools for the student to achieve...the student can self-regulate and manage his knowledge during the whole semester. Then, if there is no facilitator, it would be easy to enrich the knowledge. For that reason, I believe the model is an opportunity to be used with all it has." Patricia also mentions that she sees CBE as an opportunity to grow. She explains that the model provides all the elements students need to learn. Patricia emphasizes and puts a condition when she mentions the expression "*if the model is used appropriately;*" "*when used with all it has*".

According to Patricia's perspective, these two expressions might suggest that not all students take advantage of the CBLT model that presents all the elements students need. She clearly expresses her approval of the constructivist ideas underlying CBLT. She believes the model offers a range of opportunities for students to learn, and she even mentions that students do not need the facilitator because all the knowledge is there for them. In the following quotation, Patricia talks about the attitudes that teachers hold about the CBLT model:

Patricia: "I believe there is no resistance to the model at this moment. It is now in an observation stage of what is good and what does not work. We will start revising and upgrading the study programs since the topics have become obsolete. Then, in that way, all programs from 2014 will have a modification. I believe this modification will help us see what the model provided and what has to be modified."

Patricia expresses that she does not believe that there is teachers' resis-

tance towards the model now. She even mentions a revision stage of the programs to analyze the contents and renew them. When she talks about the program, she refers to the didactical sequences and the curriculum modules. So, the next upgrade of the program will continue using CBLT but with upgraded content. She reaffirms that she does not find resistance in the following quote:

Patricia: “ I do not think there is resistance at this moment. It was probably at the beginning; I do not remember. When I got here in 2011, I did not resist because I was new in the institution and adapted to what the institution provided, but I think that a teacher who had more years in the institution could have noticed that resistance.”

Again, Patricia mentions that she does not believe there is resistance to the model. However, she also states that she did not show any resistance in her case since she was new to the institution. She instead adapted to what the institution asked. Here again, the approval of CBE in teachers’ perceptions is observed. This participant holds a master’s degree in Competency-based education. It allowed her to practice and evolve her ideas on this topic in the institution. She also mentions that she did not show any resistance in her case but believes she might have noticed that resistance for teachers who had more years working for the institution. In the case of teachers of the BA in ELT, there was no resistance to implementing the CBLT curriculum since teachers were hired with the CBE-specific profile. The BA in ELT was created simultaneously with the educational model. Patricia explained her position when she was hired at first, mentioning that she adapted to what the institution required of her. In the following quote, Clara explains her attitude toward the CBE approach:

Clara: “I always see it (CBE) as an opportunity; as an administrator, it was an opportunity to do things differently and make my institution grow. I never saw it as an imposition.”

I was able to observe a compliance attitude towards CBLT through all the interviews. Almost all of them mentioned it was an opportunity, and in general, they noted that v brought them the chance to do things differ-

ently. The following excerpt exemplifies this aspect:

Flor: For me, it is an opportunity that my institution allows me to view my student as a complete individual for me is an advantage; I love it. Yes, I work a little more because teachers' commitment is higher; you see more facets of students. You see more colors, and you must attend to all of those colors. You wait if the student had a situation at that moment until he catches up, then you accept it and see how you evaluate that aspect that he has been losing. It is more work, but I think it is better. You are considering the individual and not only a group. We are people".

Flor's excerpt shows how the teacher believes that CBLT is much better than teacher-centered education. She expresses that it is advantageous to see students as human beings and to have this framework to be sensitive to students' problems. She also mentions that it is much more work; nevertheless, she maintains this commitment with an optimistic attitude. She uses the words or phrases: "*I love it*", "*colors*", "*attend*", "*accept*", "*better*", "*individual*," *people*". From here, one can deduce that Flor's approval of the essence of the model is high. As could be observed in the examples presented, teachers seem to hold an accepting attitude towards the model, and they highlight favorable aspects of CBLT addressed in the following excerpt:

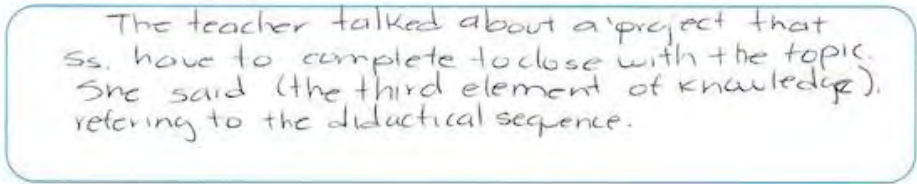
Alejandra: "I think I am more in favor than against; I see that it has many advantages... When evaluating, it is more specific for students; it is easier to know what they must do and what they have to achieve. I think that is good."

CBLT Elements Reflected in Classes

Another element of approval found in the interviews is that CBLT is more specific when assessing and what is expected from students becomes clearer. In this way, Alejandra sees CBLT as an opportunity. In addition, it is also evident that teachers and students manage the terms referred to in the v curriculum, as observed in the subsequent two figures:

Figure 1. *Observation note: Flor 1*

Use of Assessment

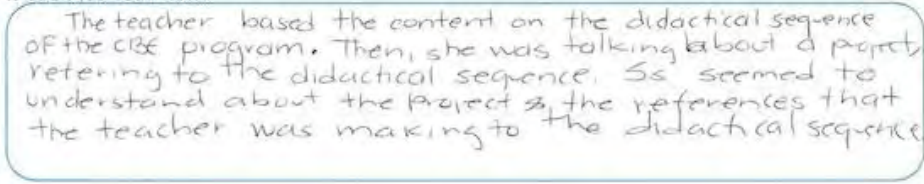


The teacher talked about a project that ss. have to complete to close with the topic. She said (the third element of knowledge), referring to the didactical sequence.

Note: (Transcription). The teacher talked about a project that students must complete to close the topic. She said (the third element of knowledge referring to the didactic sequence).

Figure 2. *Observation note Flor 2*

Is CBE observed? How?



The teacher based the content on the didactical sequence of the CBE program. Then, she was talking about a project referring to the didactical sequence. Ss seemed to understand about the project & the references that the teacher was making to the didactical sequence.

Note: (Transcription). The teacher based the content on the didactic sequence of the CBE program. Then, she was talking about a project, referring to the didactic sequence. Students seemed to understand about the project and the references that the teacher was making to the didactical sequence.

Flor explained the activities the students would carry out and reviewed the didactic sequence. According to advocates of the model, CBE presents a standardization of concepts that indicate the way as a map to accomplish the desired competencies. It is the map of achieving outputs of desired student performance (Richards, 2013). While reviewing the didactic sequence, Flor referred to the integrative projects that students were going to hand in, and she based on the didactic sequence that she was holding. This aspect reveals that students are aware of the kind of learning and assessment they are going through, as observed in the last two figures. The teacher follows the path traced by the didactic sequence established by the Metropolitan University. I chose to conduct this research at Metropolitan University because it has an established Competency-Based Education (CBE) program that has been in place for over 10 years. The university's educational model has been systematically implemented, with a strong focus on embedding CBE principles into both faculty and student practices.

This long-term commitment to CBE made it an ideal context for exploring how the model has been understood, adopted, and integrated into teaching and learning, providing a solid foundation for examining its real-world application and impact.

This aspect reveals acceptance of the CBLT ideology and how it has been carried out in classrooms. It also reveals a reproduction of the CBLT didactic sequence. It shows how the policy efforts in training the model have been implemented in classrooms.

It can be observed how teachers try to follow the program established by the education entities and how, at the same time, in this case, what the teacher can bring to the class based on his ideology and experience has been diminished. Hawkins *et al.*, (2015) speculate that teachers are focused on the instrumental spectrum and are worried about completing the tasks needed. This situation could distance teachers from their intellectual commitment to their profession and their responsibility to students, the school, and society. This aspect is evident when the participant talks about the CBLT curriculum, didactic sequence, and the elements students need to complete the project required. In the next section, the humanistic side of the CBLT approach will be discussed.

CBLT: Humanistic Side

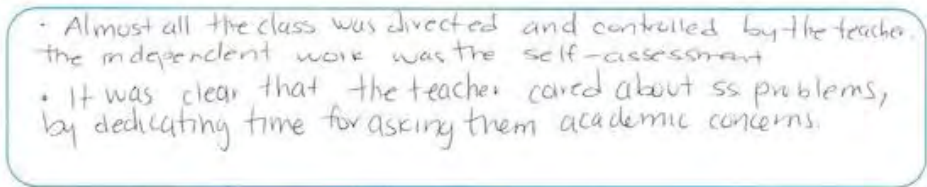
Another element of the CBLT approach that teacher participants highlighted about the model was that within this approach the students are seen as whole entities. That is to say, students' personal issues are taken into account and teachers become mentors in order to help students in an integral way. These CBLT elements are part of the approval attitudes that teachers hold about the model. In the following excerpt, Flor explains the humanistic side of the approach:

Flor: "I love it because we see the student as a human being. I like to think that I am working for humans and would like to contribute to being happier. If people are happy, we will live better, be more self-confident, and live and produce. Even when you push your students to give an extra, they perform

better if you do it and know that you are interested in them. It is a win-win relationship. I do not get involved a lot with students. I do not think they need another friend, but I like that they feel that they interest me a lot, that their being and their happiness is important to me.”

Teachers seem to approve of CBLT because it sees students as integral beings. Moreover, this aspect comes up in the different interviews, which take this humanistic approach to teaching, and forgets about the coldness of the numbers and statistics of traditional education. It brings the teacher closer to the student and breaks that barrier between teacher and student that the conventional education stereotype had. Although she mentions that she worries about students, Flor also says that they do not need an-

Other comments

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- Almost all the class was directed and controlled by the teacher. the independent work was the self-assessment
 - It was clear that the teacher cared about ss problems, by dedicating time for asking them academic concerns.

other friend, but Flor is interested in them and likes them to know that she cares about them. Another evident element while observing classes is that teachers care about students. They try to see students as a whole person and try to be flexible in case a student presents problems in their learning, as observed in the following fragment:

Transcription: Almost all the class was directed and controlled by the teacher. The independent work was self-assessment. It was clear that the teacher cared about students’ problems, by dedicating time for asking about their academic concerns.

According to Ruohotie-Lyhty (2013), significant encounters, life-touching and empathic feelings towards their students’ lives influence the teachers’ self-perception. These were determining factors that affected their

teacher identity. Within the educational model of the Metropolitan University, the flexibility towards students' problems and academic concerns is manifested. This flexibility reflects how the educative model's humanistic side has permeated teacher agency in classrooms, as observed in the previous observation note.

“The Good Teacher Has always Worked with Competencies”

This section presents examples of how teachers relate being a good teacher with working with competencies. It is a clear example of how these top-down ideologies are influential and have penetrated teachers' minds, hence in teachers' actions. The following citation is another example of how teachers have internalized CBLT while Flor and Mariana express their opinion about what a good teacher is:

Flor: “A very personal opinion is that the good teacher has always worked with competencies. It was accomplished to separate this vision of preparing students to incorporate them into the world of work. The student had to be treated as an integral being; I think the good teacher has always treated his students by a competency model because you not only see a grade in the student (at least that has always been my perspective). For me, assessment is formed by many things, and I have always said, the grade, the number is cold... for me, the student has a lot to teach. But I think a good teacher has always acted by competencies, it is seeing your student as an integral human being, and not only a person with reading skills, reflection and a grade, it's over. No, I think that is much more than that.”

Mariana: “I believe that we always have worked with competencies. They have a name now, but I feel that we have always worked by competencies. I feel that working by competencies is more organized because the teacher can see what he wants to achieve and what is wanted and could be reached. Then, if it is well organized, and the teacher understands it well, he can reach all the

competencies established in the program or the curriculum, I do not know, and obviously, reach those objectives... Another positive aspect is when one can 'read' the competencies. There is a way to follow, a direction. You are not lost because a teacher who is not working within a CBE program can often make their way or see the themes without landing them or linking them. And that is very important because you help the student see the complete picture of what he will learn and why."

Mariana and Flor believe that the "good" teacher has always worked with competencies. For them, the topics need to be linked to practical reality. Mariana likes that CBLT is a guide on where and how to go in her classes. She mentions that it gives teachers a direction on where and how to work in lessons. She said it is easier for students to see the complete picture of where they are heading and what is expected. For Patricia, the student has the opportunity to have everything structured, giving an endless world of possibilities.

Moreover, students can take their knowledge further because there are no limits to experience in practice from them. They did not mention that students take these opportunities, but they said that the structure and the knowledge are served to develop their students' competency. Having such a structured plan represents how teachers no longer have that responsibility because somebody else outside their classroom planned the didactic sequence for them. A *didactic sequence* is a suggested class plan showing how facilitators could develop classes and the learning outcomes teachers could ask students. These didactic sequences are published on the Metropolitan University webpage, and any person can have access to them, including students.

CBE presents the standardization of concepts that indicate how to accomplish the desired competencies. Such standardization is offered through the didactic sequences. The curriculum takes content (from external standards and local goals) and shapes it into a plan to conduct effective teaching and learning. It is the map of achieving outputs of desired students' performance (Richards, 2013). However, Kumaravadivelu (2008) argues that "established methods are founded on idealized concepts geared toward idealized contexts. Furthermore, they are removed from classroom

reality... no idealized method can visualize all the variables in advance to provide context-specific solutions” (p. 165).

Nevertheless, the participants in this study mentioned that they could adapt the method to their students’ circumstances, which is what their agency relies upon. In addition, teachers connect being a good teacher with working with competencies. This aspect exemplifies how teachers have appropriated or internalized the CBLT by including competencies in the “good teacher” identity. As stated, *“a good teacher has always worked with competencies”*.

Patricia: “I like students can know the contents and take them further. If the teacher presents a specific topic, let us say that the international alphabet for sounds, the IPA (International Phonetics Alphabet), the student will have the opportunity to take that knowledge they see in class and investigate more and self-regulate, see more information, consult maybe with the facilitator, search other strategies, other dynamics.”

Patricia likes the idea that while working with CBLT, students can take the contents seen in class and research them to enrich their learning. However, students do not seem to use this resource.

Materialization of the CBLT ideology: Students’ Learning Outcomes

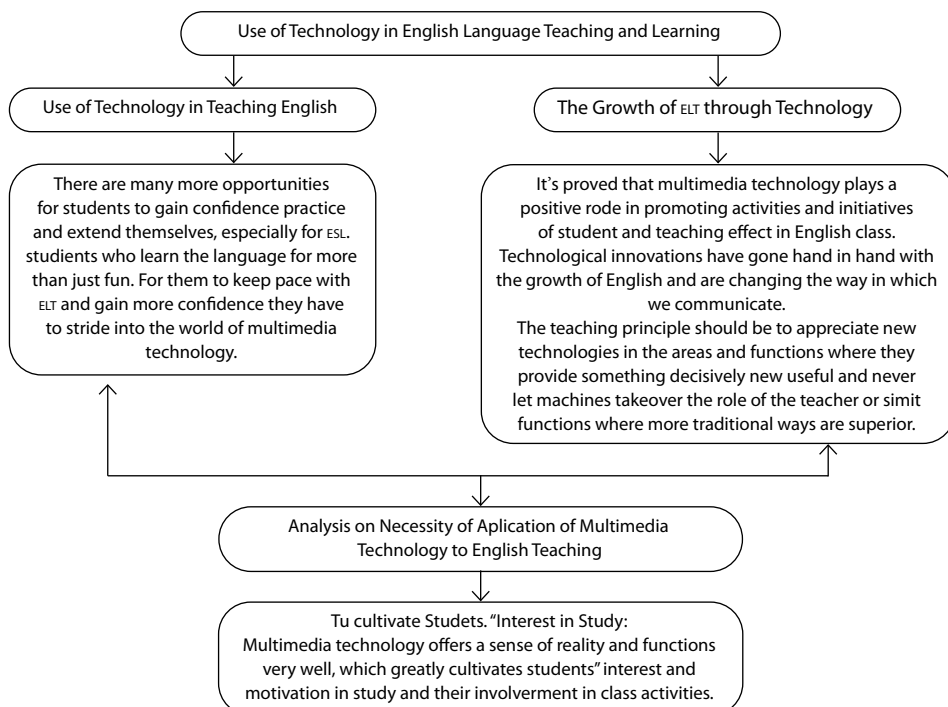
Throughout this section, I will present the learning outcomes collected from the students. The learning outcomes represent the CBLT ideology’s materialization that demonstrates that the pupil has acquired or not the competency. Although it is not the purpose of this study to make a direct relationship between competency and students’ learning outcome, it demonstrates how the CBLT ideology has permeated into teachers’ minds and has allowed the implementation of this policy. This section intends to clarify the connection between CBLT ideology and the tangibles results representing the policy’s materialization.

As stated in the methodology section, I analysed the type of students’

learning outcomes presented and their relationship with the students' learning outcomes suggested within the CBLT ideology. For an accurate perspective of the phenomenon, I asked students to send me examples of their learning outcomes presented during the semester. I took a screenshot of them, omitting the students' names for privacy. The students' learning outcomes I collected match criteria that the Metropolitan University asks for, and this demonstrates aspects of the CBE policy that teachers carry out in practice. In competency-based learning models, such as the one implemented at Metropolitan University, tangible evidence of student learning is essential to demonstrate the practical application of acquired knowledge and skills. These pieces of evidence are varied and designed to reflect students' ability to perform in real-world and complex contexts, integrating knowledge, attitudes, values, and competencies effectively.

Common examples of tangible evidence include final projects or written reports, where students synthesize their work on specific topics, showcasing

Figure 3. Students' learning outcome example: Mind Map



Note: This figure is an example of a student learning outcome collected from the participants of this study.

their ability to critically engage with the subject matter. Portfolios are also widely used as they offer a collection of student work throughout the course, highlighting the development of competencies over time. Oral presentations or exhibitions serve as another crucial form of evidence, where both content knowledge and communication skills are evaluated. Additionally, mind maps, timelines, and summaries, including critical summaries, allow students to organize and analyze information in a structured and insightful way, showcasing their capacity to evaluate and interpret complex material.

The following is an example of a learning outcome provided by a student illustrated in figure 3:

As can be seen, figure 3 represents a mind map, and this type of learning outcome matches with the kind of outcomes required by CBE/CBLT model. This is an example of how the materialization of the ideology of the approach has permeated into teachers' and students' agency by complying with the requirements of the model and evidencing the acquisition of the required competency. Through this section, the results concerning the attitudes that teachers present towards the CBLT approach were analyzed and discussed. In the following section, the main conclusions that arose from this section of study will be developed.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we were able to observe how educational policy has permeated the main educational agents: teachers. The main features that teachers approve of the model are its structure and organization. They mentioned that CBLT is clear and specific, also, it draws the way helping students acquire the competency as a map. Teachers also present an acceptance attitude towards the fact that students are seen integral beings within this model. Teachers also state that the "good teacher has always worked with competencies" and this is statement that brings a positive connotation about the model.

Likewise, through class observations, it was possible to observe that teachers promote and do their part in the implementation of the model.

Although derived from this study, different challenges were revealed in its implementation, this chapter was dedicated to discussing the elements that are carried out in practice and in the attitudes of acceptance towards the model. The data collected through the students' learning outcomes also portray a compliance of the CBLT ideology reflected on teachers' agency. In addition, it shows with evidence, how the materialization of the ideology takes place in the classroom. Overall, it could be observed how teachers in the Metropolitan University present a compliance attitude towards the model and they see this policy as an opportunity to help students develop and grow.

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Chapter 3

Teaching and Learning Strategies Preferred by Pre-service English Teachers

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Abstract

The present study determined the teaching and learning strategies preferred by pre-service English teacher to facilitate their own English language learning and their academic performance. This quantitative research utilized an online survey questionnaire as a method to collect data. Participants were 57 English Language Teaching (ELT) undergraduate students from a Mexican public university. The results revealed that pre-service teachers perceive co-instructional and post-instructional strategies as the most appropriate to obtain better academic results. Besides, the learning strategies they favor the most are cognitive and metacognitive. However, there is a non-significant difference between the strategies preferred by the students, indicating that both inductive and deductive strategies can be implemented and supported by technology to improve their English language skills. In other findings, the research also discovered that pre-service teachers have positive attitudes toward the English language and favor the use of technological tools to learn it.

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Keywords: *teaching strategies, learning Strategies, preferences, pre-service teachers, English language.*

Resumen

Este estudio determinó las estrategias de enseñanza y aprendizaje que prefirieron los profesores de inglés en formación para facilitar su propio aprendizaje del idioma inglés y su desempeño académico. La investigación fue de tipo cuantitativo utilizando un cuestionario de encuesta aplicado en línea como método de recolección de datos. Los participantes fueron 57 estudiantes de la licenciatura en Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés de una universidad pública mexicana. Los resultados revelaron que los profesores de inglés en formación perciben las estrategias co-instruccionales y post-instruccionales como las más apropiadas para obtener mejores resultados académicos. Además, las estrategias de aprendizaje que más favorecen son las cognitivas y metacognitivas. Sin embargo, existe una diferencia no significativa entre las estrategias preferidas por los estudiantes, lo que indica que tanto las estrategias inductivas como las deductivas pueden implementarse y apoyarse con la tecnología para mejorar sus habilidades en el idioma inglés. Entre otros hallazgos, la investigación descubrió que los profesores en formación tienen actitudes positivas hacia el idioma inglés y favorecen el uso de herramientas tecnológicas para aprenderlo.

Palabras clave: *estrategias de enseñanza, estrategias de aprendizaje, profesores en formación, preferencias, idioma inglés.*

Introduction

The current educational paradigm involves the transformation from teacher-centered to student-centered teaching. In the latter case, the training action focuses on the learners and the activities they carry out to achieve learning and not on the teacher. Thus, students have an active role, placing themselves at the center of the teaching and learning processes (Céspedes,

2020). In correspondence with this new environment, higher education teachers should not underestimate the learning preferences of pre-service teachers of English (hereinafter pre-service teachers or students). Therefore, to improve the training processes it is essential to consider their needs and desires. This makes it necessary for the teaching and learning strategies implemented by teachers in the classroom to reflect the voices of the students (Rocha-Erkaya & Ergünay, 2021). According to Daflizar *et al.*, (2022), identifying the characteristics of the students and the learning strategies of their preference is essential for teachers to select teaching materials, design activities, tasks and projects according to their needs, to help them improve their academic performance. Regarding teaching strategies, Díaz Barriga and Hernández (2004) argue that thanks to their variety and flexibility, teachers can use them at different times, which can be before, during, and after instruction, to facilitate learning and the development of students' autonomy. The combination of teaching and learning strategies allows the development of meaningful learning, where, in the former, the responsibility falls on the teacher, and in the latter, on the student. Therefore, both should use them as moldable procedures in different educational environments (Díaz Barriga & Hernández, 2004).

In the same vein, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) point out that when it comes to language learning, emphasis should be placed on how people learn rather than on what. The researchers state that using a learning-centered approach is adequate to understand how people learn the strategies they apply to learn the target language, in order to establish an appropriate teaching path. Similarly, they recognize the contribution of educational psychology to learning by focusing on the interests and preferences of the learners, since they could have different needs that would influence their attitudes, motivation and achievements.

Particularly in Mexico, where this study was carried out, several research studies have shown that the linguistic competences of the English language, both, adults and students of different educational levels are very low. For example, according to the organization EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI), Mexico has shown a constant decline in the English proficiency of adult learners since 2011; situation that must be addressed by the federal government by allocating economic resources. In 2021, the results

of the EF EPI test showed that Mexico's score decreased from 440 points in 2020 to 346 points, obtaining a score of -4 according to the EF EPI classification by countries and regions (Zermeño, 2021). In 2022, there is an improvement in the level of English in Mexico, going from position 92 out of 112 countries in 2021 to 88 out of 111 countries. However, the country continues to be in the very low domain range (EF EPI, 2022).

Another study conducted in 2015 by the Mexicanos Primero organization to assess whether high school graduates had the necessary skills to communicate in English, obtained negative results (Székely *et al.*, 2015). The study included the participation of 4727 high school graduates from 11 states of Mexico, who took the Comprehension and Use of the English Language Test for High School Graduates (EUCIS). The EUCIS results showed that 97% of the students obtained a failing grade, while 4 out of 5 students had a total lack of knowledge of English. Also, Consulta Mitofsky (2013) examined the amount of the adult population that speaks English in Mexico. The results showed that from a sample of 1000 adult participants over 18 years of age who responded to a survey, less than 12% spoke English. Only 11.9% of people stated they read very well, compared to 51.7% who said they were poor readers. Regarding the ability to speak English, 8.8% of the participants answered that they spoke fluently, as to the 56.2% who said they spoke poorly.

On the other hand, it is relevant to note that these studies on language proficiency were conducted by private organizations; therefore, they may have methodological biases. However, due to the scarcity of recent research on this theme and the information provided by the studies presented above, it can be deduced that students who finish high school do not have the necessary language skills to perform successfully at a higher level.

The low level of English with which students graduate from basic, secondary and upper secondary education has a direct impact on the higher level. At the local level, the Bachelor's Degree in English Language Teaching sees the need to accept some students below the required level of English in order to reach the required number of students established by the university, situation that hinders the trajectory of these students in the educational program. For this reason, the purpose of this study is to determine the teaching and learning strategies preferred by pre-service English

teachers to facilitate their own English language learning, and consequently, their academic performance. This research seeks to fill the gap in the research literature regarding the learning preferences of pre-service English teachers to help them become successful teachers. Moreover, knowing the teaching and learning strategies preferred by students can provide valuable knowledge that helps improve English teacher training programs (Rocha-Erkaya, & Erünay, 2021).

Research Questions

The following research question guides the present study:

1. What learning strategies do pre-service English teachers prefer?

Literature Review

Conceptualization of Teaching and Learning Strategies

In countries where the official language is not English, students have few opportunities to be in contact with the language; thus, the teaching and learning strategies teachers utilize constitute an essential element in facilitating foreign language learning. Pimienta (2012) defines teaching strategies as the instruments the teacher uses to contribute to the implementation and development of student competencies. While Pamplona (2019) points out that they are the teacher's methodology to ensure that the thematic contents and information can be learned by the student and the development of competencies is generated. Taking this statement a little further in its definition, it not only considers strategies as objects that are used to carry out work, but also as an orderly and systematic way to reach a specific objective. Similarly, Díaz Barriga and Hernández (2004) define teaching strategies as the procedure that the teaching agent uses reflectively and flexibly to promote achievement of significant learning; adding reflection by the teacher for his selection and flexibility when implementing

them. Similarly, Peralta (2016) points out that teaching strategies are general guidelines planned by teachers on how to teach the contents of a course. These include the “why” and “what for” in order to establish the learning goals in a clear and organized way.

Regarding learning strategies, Oxford (1990) defines them as behaviors or actions carried out by students in their learning process. These strategies serve as instruments to understand easily, fast, and in a self-regulated way through acquiring, retaining, and recovering information. The use of learning strategies is essential to help students improve their performance and develop self-confidence (Oxford, 1990). For Cohen and Macaro (2007), learning strategies are processes consciously selected by learners. Consistently, in the ELT area, Steinberg *et al.*, (2001) define learning strategies as specific approaches or techniques used by students depending on the situation they face. For example, a student can remember and explain what he did using new vocabulary. In this sense, it is understood that learning strategies vary from person to person depending on the way each individual learns. Brown (2006) adds to the definition of Steinberg *et al.*, (2001) by saying that strategies are “attacks” used by individuals to face certain learning situations. On the same token, Chamot (2005) offers a generalized definition of learning strategies, pointing them out as conscious procedures that facilitate a learning objective. Like Chamot, Bargas *et al.*, (2010) define learning strategies as conscious mental and behavioral procedures used by people to have control over their learning process.

Whether taught by the teacher or learned by the students, it is considered that strategy-based teaching could meet the learning needs of students, resulting in autonomous learners, responsible for their own learning, self-confident and capable of achieving learning goals (Melvina *et al.*, 2020).

Types of Strategies

Teaching Strategies

Table 1 presents the teaching strategies identified in the research by Pamplona *et al.*, (2019), based on Díaz Barriga and Hernández (2004). In view

of the fact that there is a similarity between them and cover the different stages of the teaching-learning process. The two classifications are divided into the investigation of prior knowledge as an introduction to the process, the development and construction of the topic through the organization and understanding of the information, as well as the synthesis and integration of what has been learned to contribute to the development of competencies or abilities.

Table 1. *Teaching strategies*

<i>Types of strategies</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Strategies</i>
Pre-instructional (introduction to the subject)	Traditional	Statement of objectives, activation of previous knowledge, examples, relationship with daily life.
	Innovative	Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).
Co-instructional (development and construction of the topic)	Traditional	Mind maps, semantic maps, problem solving, relationship with everyday life, illustrations, socialization.
	Innovative	Interactive groups, murals, classroom projects, reciprocal teaching, short stories, dramatizations, ICT, games, digital games.
Post-instructional (Synthesis and integration of the learned concepts)	Traditional	Localization, semantic maps and mental maps.
	Innovative	ITC.

Source: Pamplona *et al.*, (2019, p. 19). Teaching strategies of the teacher in the basic areas: A look at school learning.

Pamplona *et al.*, (2019) give relevant importance to ITC, considering that in the three categories of strategies within their classification: pre-instructional, co-instructional and post-instructional, they appear as innovative strategies, while Pimienta (2012) considers them to be among the active methodologies to contribute to the development of competencies according to their classification. Pimienta presents a more extensive categorization based on his experience in teacher training at the university level in various countries. His classification focuses on strategies to gather prior knowledge and to organize and structure content to facilitate the achievement of significant learning and the development of competencies. Table 2 presents the teaching strategies proposed by the author.

Table 2. *Teaching strategies*

<i>Teaching Strategy</i>	<i>Type of strategy</i>
Strategies for inquiring about prior knowledge	Brainstorm. Simple/complex questions Guiding questions: how? where? when? Literal, exploratory questions What I know, what I want to learn, what I learned Previous answer, question, later answer
Strategies to promote understanding by organizing the information	Synoptic, comparative table Charts: flow, radial, tree, cause-effect Maps: web, cycles, squid, sequence, mind, concept
Strategies to promote understanding	PNI (positive, negative, interesting) WWW (what I see, what I don't see, What I infer) Summary, synthesis, essay
Group strategies	Debate, symposium, discussion panel, forum, seminar, workshop
Active methodologies to contribute to the development of competences	Role-play Case Study Problem based learning On-Site learning (internship) ICT-based learning (forum, chats) Learning through Social Service Guided research Collaborative learning

Source: own design.

Pimienta's classification is based on relating the new material to the student's prior knowledge and is divided into three parts: the first considers strategies to investigate prior knowledge, as it is the teacher's starting point. The second part presents a series of strategies that promote understanding through the organization of information, and the last part includes active methodologies to contribute to the development of competencies.

In both classifications shown in Tables 1 and 2, the strategies have been considered according to their moment of use and presentation and the cognitive processes involved.

Learning Strategies

Learning strategies have become a fundamental element for students to succeed in acquiring a second or foreign language (Oxford, 2003). There is

a wide variety of international classifications of second and foreign language learning strategies, such as those presented by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Oxford (1990) and Wenden and Rubin (1987), among others. As an example, two taxonomies of strategies well known in the area of language teaching are presented.

Oxford (1990, pp. 20-21) presents a widely detailed classification of learning strategies encompassing the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). Oxford divides strategies into two main groups: direct and indirect. Direct strategies, are subdivided into memory strategies (e.g., creating mental links, applying images and sounds, reviewing well), cognitive strategies (e.g., practicing, analyzing, reasoning) and compensation strategies (e.g., intelligent guessing). Indirect strategies, are subdivided into metacognitive strategies (e.g., focusing learning, organizing, planning), affective strategies (e.g., reducing anxiety, encouraging oneself), and social strategies (e.g., asking questions, cooperating). Oxford considered linguistic, communicative, and psychological aspects that meet the strategies in information processing. Some strategies in her taxonomy, especially memory and metacognitive strategies, reflect various learning styles and strategies of the learner (see Oxford's strategy classification in table 3).

Table 3. *Classification of learning strategies*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Strategies classification</i>	<i>Types of strategies</i>
Direct	Memory	Development of mental links, use of images and sounds, deep reviews, actions.
	Cognitive	Practicing, sending and receiving messages, analyzing and reasoning, creating of input and output structures.
	Compensation	Intelligent guessing, overcoming limitations in speaking and writing.
Indirect	Metacognitive	Focusing on own learning, organizing and planning own learning, assessing own learning.
	Affective	Lowering own anxiety, cheering oneself up, being aware of own emotional changes.
	Social	Asking questions, cooperate with others, empathize with others.

Source: Oxford (1990). *Language Learning Strategies. What Every Teacher Should Know*.

Oxford redefined language learning strategies and provided new ways to assess, teach, and study them in different proficiency levels, from beginners to advanced learners. Although, she did not offer a new classification of language learning strategies, her in-depth review emphasizes the importance of self-regulated learning strategies in supporting effective language acquisition. Also, Oxford highlights the application of strategies for learning second language grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, reading, writing, speaking, and pragmatics in context (Oxford, 2017).

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) presented a less complex taxonomy than the Oxford one based on cognitive learning concepts, where they classify strategies into three large groups: metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective (See O'Malley & Chamot's taxonomy in table 4).

Table 4. *Learning strategies*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Strategies classification</i>	<i>Learning Strategies</i>
Metacognitive	Planning	Advanced organizers, directed attention, selective attention, self-management, functional planning
	Monitoring	Self-monitoring
	Evaluation	Self-evaluation
Cognitive	—	Repetition, retrieval, translation, grouping, note taking, summary, deduction, recombination, imagery and auditory representation, keyword method, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, inference.
Socioaffective	Inquiring to clarify	—
	Cooperation	—
	Chatting to one self	—

Source: O'Malley and Chamot (1990, pp. 119-120). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*.

In the taxonomies presented in tables 3 and 4, it can be observed that the cognitive strategies of O'Malley and Chamot are present in the Oxford classification as memory and cognitive strategies. However, the strategies are generally consistent across both classifications.

English Teaching in Mexico

The Ministry of Public Education in Mexico (SEP) establishes the guidelines for English language teaching that educational institutions must observe. The SEP incorporates into the National Development Plan (NDP) the strategies to achieve educational goals at the national level. However, the NDP (2019-2024) does not mention any specific topic in relation to English language teaching. Although the NDP emphasizes access for all students to all educational levels, from basic to higher education, it does not clarify what actions will be implemented in the field of English as a foreign language.

Hernández's study (2019) on English language teaching at different educational levels in Mexico offers a broad vision of the current situation of English language teaching and the lack of an official policy on how to teach it. At the macro level, there is a correlation between English proficiency among the population and national income per capita. That is, English skills improvement increases salaries and elevates investment throughout the country, forming a virtuous cycle (Hernández, 2019). In addition, the study revealed the existence of personal and professional benefits for people who speak English. At the local level, the university promotes effective communication between teachers, tutors and students to ensure a successful academic trajectory. Hence, this study reflects the university's interest in providing a quality education to future English teachers.

Attitudes and Motivation toward Language Learning

As Gardner (1985) points out, emotions, such as the desire to learn the language and favorable attitudes towards learning, can influence the intensity of motivation. Attitudes can be understood as a person's predisposition to react in a positive or negative way toward various entities, such as ideas, objects, people, or situations. Thus, attitudes toward language learning reflect an individual's inclination and level of effort toward acquiring languages (Zulfikar *et al.*, 2019).

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), people are motivated when they feel moved to do something. They classify the types of motivation as intrinsic and extrinsic. In the context of English learning, intrinsic motivation refers to the student's desire to learn the language because they find enjoyment, interest, or personal satisfaction in it; which in language learning is often associated with deeper and more sustained learning.

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation refers to an interest driven by external rewards or consequences. Students who are extrinsically motivated might study English to earn good grades, fulfill academic requirements, secure a job, or achieve a professional status. While extrinsic motivation can effectively drive learning, it tends to be less enduring than intrinsic motivation and may rely on the continued presence of external rewards (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Methodology

This study used a quantitative method under the principles of the constructivist approach. The investigation collected quantitative data to determine the teaching and learning strategies preferred by pre-service English teachers to improve their language skills and academic performance. The researchers conducted surveys to gain insight into students' attitudes toward English, their motivation to learn the language, and their learning needs. The above is according to the learning-focused approach proposed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), which emphasizes the importance of teaching and learning paths.

Research Context

This study was conducted in a Mexican university in the north of Mexico. The university has five campuses from which the North and Center campuses (pseudonyms) were chosen to carry out the study, as they have the largest population of students in the university. Therefore, the information provided by participants from those campuses would be more representa-

tive. Candidates who seek admission to an English Teaching major must meet the selection criteria established by the university to demonstrate their command of English at an intermediate level, which corresponds to the levels B1 and B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). In this major most classes are taught in English. Students enrolled attend face-to-face sessions in classrooms equipped with a smart TV and internet connection. An educational platform is used to carry out the teaching and learning processes in a blended learning environment.

Participants

The participants in this study were 57 students enrolled in the English Language Teaching course at the North and Center campuses of the university, who voluntarily accepted the invitation to participate in the study.

Students meeting one of the following criteria were recruited:

- a) Students initially accepted into the program with the condition of continuing to study English.
- b) Students who meet the entry requirements but are at the threshold level of English established for the educational program.

Data Collection Instruments

For the survey, researchers adapted the questionnaire created by Moreno (2004) to investigate the language needs of Spanish students majoring in English Philology. Also, the questionnaire was modified to include questions about learning technologies. The questionnaire is structured in three sections (see Appendix 1). It begins by presenting the purpose of the study, use of the information collected, the confidentiality of the data, and the voluntary nature of participation in the study. Section I gathers the personal information of the participants and the reasons why they chose to study English Teaching major. Section II explores the attitude and motiva-

tion of students towards the English language through questions related to why they want to continue studying it. The information obtained from these two sections constitutes the starting point of the investigation; since it allows to have a clear idea of who the participants are in terms of their age, gender, and mother tongue, as well as their attitudes toward the language and what motivates them to continue studying English. Section III explores the learning needs of students in terms of how they like to learn English. The questionnaire items were measured using a five-point Likert-type scale from 1 (negative) to 5 (positive). To assess the internal consistency of the items, the researchers used the software SPSS version 23 to measure the average correlations between items. Field (2009) points out that the reliability of a scale is excellent from .90 and above. In this case, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the questionnaire was .90, which demonstrated the reliability of the instrument. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, two professors from the English Teaching career answered it and provided feedback. The teachers suggested minor changes in the wording of some elements to improve their understanding. For example, in question A, Section II: *Why are you interested in learning English?* The reviewers proposed changing it to: *Why are you interested in continuing to study English?* The latter is because students already know English at a certain level when they enter the course. Another suggestion for change in the instrument was in question C, Section III: *Do you consider the following activities useful to develop the four English language skills?* To this question, the following words were added (*Read, write, speak, listen*).

Data Collection Procedures

The selection of candidates for this study was through the Heads of the major in English Language Teaching from Central and North campuses who provided in advance the database of students identified with weaknesses in the use of the English language. The researchers sent a personalized email with the survey link to 57 students, 41 women and 16 men. The surveys were answered online through Google forms by students from the

North and Central campuses from July 9th to September 1st, 2020, obtaining a 90% response rate.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data was analyzed using the software SPSS V25. The analysis consisted of calculating basic descriptive statistics to obtain the frequency and percentage of the survey responses.

Results

This section presents the results obtained once applied the survey. Of a population of 57 pre-service teachers, 72% are women, and 28% are men. The age of the majority (82%) ranges from 17 to 21 years, and only one student is over 30 years of age. Likewise, all the participants declared that their mother tongue is Spanish.

The participants' answers to the question: *Why are you studying the English Language Teaching career?* revealed that it is the major they like (72%), even though only 35% think the labor field is attractive. This information is relevant for the study since establishes a connection between the necessity of mastering the language for professional purposes and the strategies they use or prefer to improve their proficiency level. Pre-service teachers said they want to teach English in a public or private school (54%); this information is consistent with the 53% who responded that they like to help people. In addition, 37% of the participants would like to be an English-Spanish interpreter or translator, and 30% said they want to study for a master's degree in English language teaching (see figure 1).

The "Agree" and "Strongly agree" responses to the statement: *I like the English language*, showed that all the participants like the language (100%). For this reason, their desire to understand readings, songs, and movies in English (94.7%) was a strong motivator; followed by the job prospects that English opens for them in Mexico (93%). Besides, the data revealed that English allows them to travel to other countries and function better

Figure 1. Reasons why pre-service teachers chose to study the major in English Language Teaching

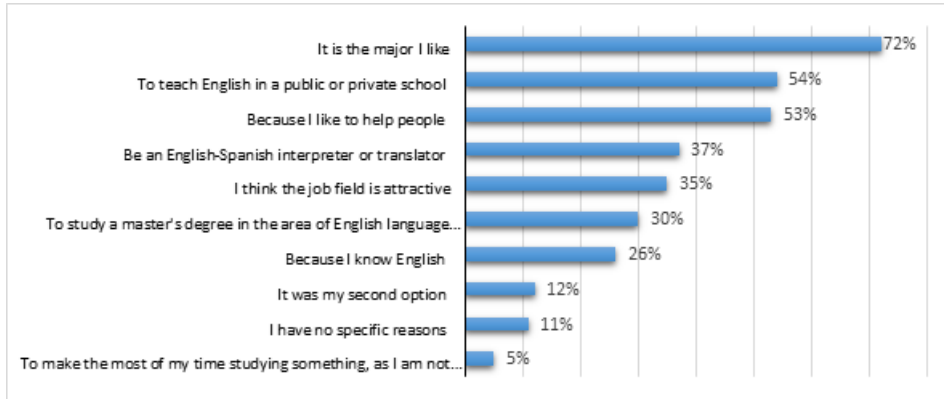


Table 5. The interest of pre-service teachers to continue learning English

Answers	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %
I like the English language.	19.3	80.7	100
I want to understand readings, songs, and movies in English.	10.5	84.2	94.7
English opens job prospects for me in my country.	24.6	68.4	93.0
English allows me to travel to other countries and function better.	17.5	73.7	91.2
I want to study in an English-speaking country.	26.3	43.9	70.2
I want to work in an English-speaking country.	22.8	45.6	68.4
I speak with family and friends in English.	17.5	47.4	64.9

(91.2%); they want to study (70.2%) and work (68.4%) in an English-speaking country, and interact with some family and friends in English (64.9%) (See table 5).

Learning Strategies Preferred by Pre-service Teachers

Findings showed no significant difference regarding the strategies students prefer to use in their learning process. According to their answers to the question: *How do you think you get better results in learning English?* Most students prefer a deductive strategy. That is, do exercises to practice the theory, followed by 68.4% who favor the inductive strategy in their learn-

ing, extracting the principle once the exercises have been completed. Pre-service teachers show almost the same preference for online resources such as forums, chat rooms, blogs, websites, etc. (75.4%) and passive tasks such as listening, taking notes, and memorizing (75.5%). Students prefer to follow the model and guidelines the teacher instructs (78.9%) than seek information themselves (68.4%). In addition, they show a marked preference for reflecting on the practice they carry out (92.9%) over practicing with activities that do not demand much of their time (82.8%). To practice online activities is much more useful according to the student's responses (75.4%) than repeating after the teacher (64.9%).

All the students mentioned that technology helps them develop creative ideas and allows them to practice pronunciation, writing, spelling, and grammar. Their answers to the survey show that they are aware of the different technological tools to learn the language, suggesting that students can effectively engage with teaching and learning strategies involving technology. Regarding the practice of written expression, most students like to have several models that serve as examples (89.5%), as well as being guided by the teacher through the writing process since the generation of the idea to the final product (80.7%). Table 6 shows that all the activities students find useful to develop the four English skills could be used without difficulty.

Table 6. *Useful activities to develop the four English skills*

<i>Answers</i>	<i>A lot %</i>	<i>Very much %</i>	<i>Total %</i>
1. Practice pronunciation.	12.3	87.7	100
2. Learn songs.	33.3	61.4	94.7
3. Listen to audio material.	29.8	63.2	93
4. Use Internet applications to practice speaking.	33.3	56.1	89.4
5. Watch videos related to the topic.	31.6	57.9	89
6. Visit Internet sites to learn vocabulary.	24.6	61.4	86
7. Participate in role plays that simulate real situations.	24.6	52.6	77.2
8. Learn grammar through computer games.	28.1	49.1	77.2
9. Investigate a topic and participate in a debate.	29.8	42.1	71.9
10. Present a topic in front of the class.	38.6	31.6	70.2
11. Writing stories and narratives.	31.6	35.1	66.7
12. Participate in forums and chats.	36.8	24.6	61.4

Practicing pronunciation, learning songs, and listening to audio are the activities preferred by more than 90% of students. These findings indicate that what they do as students of the major in English Language Teaching benefit their language learning.

Regarding the question *How do you like to have your mistakes corrected when you participate in an oral activity?* the data revealed that just over half of the pre-service teachers like “A lot” and “Very much” that the teacher corrects their mistakes at the time they occur (68.4%). In almost the same proportion, students responded that they prefer the teacher correct their errors at the end of the speaking activity to avoid interruption (66.7%). Half of the participants favored error correction at the end of the activity individually (56.1%), while error correction by equal pairs (38.6%) and via audio sent to their smartphones after class (36.8%) obtained less than half of the percentages.

Finally, concerning the question *How do you like to be evaluated?* the vast majority of pre-service teachers reported “A lot” and “Very much” about being assessed through their performance in class (continuous evaluation) (80.7 %). More than half of the students prefer written assignments (68.4%) and partial-written exams (66.7%), while less than half prefer to be evaluated with a final exam (43.8%), followed by a minority of students who favor oral exams (19.3%).

Discussion

The interpretation of the results focuses on responding to the research question in light of literature and the findings of the study. The purpose is to determine the teaching and learning strategies preferred by pre-service English teachers to facilitate their own English language learning and academic performance, which could also serve to update the course programs by including significant activities that are interesting and attractive to future teachers.

Strategies Preferred by Pre-Service English Teachers

Identifying the teaching and learning strategies preferred by pre-service teachers is essential to establish achievable learning objectives and to plan the complexity of the tasks systematically. Based on the learning-focused approach that serves to meet the specific needs of learners (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), the study establishes that there is not much difference between the strategies preferred by students, making it possible to implement inductive and deductive strategies to improve the English language. The research found that students have the same predilection for using online resources and passive tasks, which allows the selection of specific teaching situations and different methodologies (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). Furthermore, pre-service teachers prefer to reflect on their own learning, coinciding with the findings of Morales and Bendek (2022) about the tendency of English learners towards a reflective learning style when observing and analyzing options before acting. This finding demonstrates that students can benefit from activities that help them develop their critical thinking skills.

The pre-service teachers' perception of teaching strategies that help them to obtain better academic results, denotes a preference for co-instructional and post-instructional strategies (Pamplona *et al.*, 2019). Co-instructional strategies are related to practice and directed attention, as most students consider it essential to understand the contents of classes, talks, and conferences in English exists a necessity for including topics to develop listening skills in the curriculum. Post-instructional strategies relate to the construction of knowledge using note taking, listening, and memorizing. For instance, listening to the radio, watching (subtitled) movies and tv/Internet programs to learn vocabulary, improve pronunciation, and understand the target language. The fact that these activities are performed by the students using ICTs reveals their familiarity with online resources and the enjoyment of using Internet applications to facilitate their English skills.

Regarding the learning strategies preferred by pre-service teachers, they favor cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Oxford, 1990; O'Malley

& Chamot, 1990). The cognitive ones refer to what students do to learn, namely analyzing, memorizing, seeing examples, listening to audio, watching videos, being guided by the teacher, and practicing to acquiring knowledge. Among the metacognitive strategies, socialization activities and reflection on learning routes stand out. For example, students give great importance to communicative tasks such as making and understanding presentations, holding and understanding dialogues, and participating in role-play activities, which indicates that they are proactive in their own learning since oral tasks reinforce the practice of the English language.

Concerning written tasks, reading for academic purposes, taking notes, making translations, and writing personal reflections were marked as very important for students. Therefore, including these activities will enhance students' interest and motivation (Cunningham, 2015). Similarly, there is a belief among students that technology can help them develop all four language skills, which matches Torsani's (2016) declarations that teachers and students who focus the use of technology on the development of communicative skills integrate language learning and technology effectively. Similar to Torsani's assertions, Motteram (2013) states that electronic devices and online tools can develop and improve language skills. In addition, the participants of this study believe that technology helps them be up-to-date and responsible for their own learning, which is in line with Ghanizadeh *et al.*, (2015), who say that technology has several fundamental roles in language education, namely as a resource, delivery system or productivity. The authors claim that computer programs are the most effective in supporting student-centered learning, as technology can provide scaffolding for students with special needs and interests. Based on pre-service teachers' perceptions of the use of learning technologies, the researchers consider that using technological tools to facilitate the development of English language skills will be very well accepted by them.

About error correction, most pre-service teachers preferred that the teacher correct their errors when they occur and at the end of the activity to avoid interruptions. In this regard, Amara (2015) explains that the error treatment depends on whether the purpose of correction is communication fluency or accuracy. If the goal of communication is fluency, errors must be corrected after it finishes. Conversely, if accuracy is sought (e.g.,

in grammar or pronunciation), corrections should be done immediately, as delaying it could result in forgetfulness. For this reason, teachers must assess both practices depending on whether they evaluate fluency or accuracy.

Ketabi and Ketabi (2014) define continuous assessment as a way to collect information on students' performance in the classroom without using written tests. In this respect, the study found that pre-service teachers prefer to be evaluated through their performance in class, participation, and oral presentations than by exams, though they are not against them. As for written tests to measure English proficiency, it is worth mentioning that pre-service teachers must take various standardized tests during their professional lives to certify that they are competent in the language they teach. Therefore, it is vital to include technology-assisted written exams in the curriculum to prepare them for this scenario.

The study also unveiled that the pre-service English teachers who participated in the study present similar characteristics in terms of age range and mother tongue, and the majority studied in public schools; perhaps because of this, they share similar thoughts and ideas about language learning, as they belong to the same cultural and educational background. Most pre-service teachers have positive attitudes toward the English language and desire to continue studying it. Students' positive attitudes can represent a solid base for designing and implementing teaching and learning strategies to improve their performance.

In addition, the study determines that pre-service teachers are highly motivated as most of them are studying the career they like, they want to teach English, and they like to help people. In this sense, their motivation is intrinsic because they perceive these activities as pleasant. Besides, it was discovered that pre-service teachers are intrinsically motivated to continue studying English simply because they like the language.

In contrast, pre-service teachers are extrinsically motivated as they consider the major of English Language Teaching as a means to become teachers, interpreters, translators, and to study a master's degree in the future. Moreover, students want to understand readings, audio materials, work in Mexico or abroad, travel to other countries, study in an English-speaking country, and interact with family and friends using English.

Therefore, it is essential to consider these strong motivators when implementing teaching and learning strategies preferred by pre-service teachers.

Conclusion

Similarities in students' characteristics and positive attitudes towards the English language represent a solid base for designing and implementing strategies to help them develop the skills and sub-skills of the target language. Due to the fact that students are interested in continuing to learn English, mainly for communicative purposes, it is adequate to use social strategies to promote collaborative learning, such as role-playing, case studies, projects, and problem-solving, among others, as well as cognitive strategies for them to learn academic vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. A clear understanding of teaching and learning strategies preferred by pre-service teachers will allow teachers to implement activities that foster students' positive attitudes toward the language and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Additionally, applying activities that involve metacognitive strategies would be helpful to promote reflection for students to develop critical thinking skills and become competent English teachers.

It is beneficial that most pre-service teachers are familiar with many online language learning tools. For example, students can improve their oral production through interactive activities such as question-and-answer situations, group work, role plays and short speech since they all contribute to enhance oral production (World TEFL Accrediting Commission, 2018). Because students are familiar with learning technologies, we assume they will enjoy learning and practicing the language using computer devices and technological tools, as they currently use internet applications for pedagogical purposes.

This research also has limitations. As it is a case study its results cannot be generalized. However, their findings may benefit other higher education institutions with similar contexts. Moreover, it recommends using a larger sample so that the results are more reliable and allow planning

teaching routes consistent with the learning preferences of pre-service teachers.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1. Pre-service English Teachers Questionnaire

This study seeks to determine the teaching and learning strategies pre-service English teachers prefer to improve their language skills and academic performance. The information you voluntarily provide through this survey will be used by the researchers in a strictly confidential manner and exclusively for the study. You can stop participating in the study at any time without your grades being affected. If you have any questions regarding the Research, feel free to contact the researchers at the following email addresses:

maria.fernandez@ues.mx ; mayauel.magdaleno@ues.mx ; diana.castillo@ues.mx

By pressing the button, I certify that I am over 16 years of age and agree to participate in this research.

I. Demographic Information:	
A) Age: 17-21 ___ 22-25 ___ 26-29 ___ 30+ ___	
B) Gender: Man ___ Woman ___	
C) Mother tongue: _____	
D) Why are you studying the major in English Language Teaching?	
Mark with an X the reasons that you consider most relevant.	
1. It is the major I like ___	
2. It was my second option ___	
3. I think the job field is attractive ___	
4. To make the most of my time studying something, as I am not sure what I want to do ___	
5. To teach English in a public or private school ___	
6. Be an English-Spanish interpreter or translator ___	
7. To study a master's degree in the area of English language teaching ___	
8. I have no specific reasons ___	
9. Because I know English ___	
10. Because I like to help people ___	
11. Any other? (Specify) _____	
II. Attitude and Motivation toward the English language	
A. Why are you interested in continuing to learn English?	
Choose one of the following options: <i>Strongly disagree=1, Disagree=2, Neutral=3, Agree=4, Strongly agree=5</i>	
1. I like the English language.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
2. I want to understand readings, songs, and movies in English.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
3. English opens job prospects for me in my country.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

4. English allows me to travel to other countries and function better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
5. I want to study in an English-speaking country.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
6. I want to work in an English-speaking country.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
7. I speak with family and friends in English.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
8. Any other?	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

III. How do you like to learn English?

Choose one of the following options:

Not at all = 1, Very little = 2, Neutral = 3, A lot = 4, Very much = 5

A) How do you think you get better results in learning English?

1. Doing exercises to practice the theory the teacher/book gave.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
2. Extracting the theory after having analyzed examples.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
3. Listening, taking notes, and memorizing.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
4. Repeating at the moment I hear or after the teacher.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
5. Finding the information on my own (Books, the Internet).	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
6. Following the instructions given by the teacher.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
7. Practicing speaking, reading, writing, and listening and reflecting on it.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
8. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening as much as possible without spending too much time on it.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
9. Using online resources such as forums, chat rooms, blogs, websites, etc.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
10. Any other? (Specify).	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

B) Do you consider that the following activities are useful to develop the four language skills?

1. Use Internet applications to practice speaking.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
2. Watch videos related to the topic.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
3. Listen to audio material.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
4. Investigate a topic and participate in a debate.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
5. Present a topic in front of the class.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
6. Participate in role plays that simulate real situations.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
7. Visit Internet sites to learn vocabulary.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
8. Learn grammar through computer games.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
9. Learn songs.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
10. Practice pronunciation.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
11. Participate in forums and chats.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
12. Writing stories and narratives.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
13. Any other? (Specify).	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

C) How do you like to write texts in English?

1. Reading other texts that serve as examples.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
2. Being guided by the teacher through the writing process (From the generation of ideas to the final product).	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

E) How do you like to have errors corrected when you participate in an oral activity?	
1. The teacher corrects me during the activity.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
2. The teacher corrects at the end of the activity to avoid interruptions.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
3. The teacher tells me my errors individually.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
4. Have a classmate correct me.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
5. Have the teacher send me an audio recording of my errors.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
F) How do you like to be evaluated?	
1. Oral exams.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
2. Partial written exams.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
3. Final exam.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
4. With written works.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
5. Based on my performance in class.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
6. Any other? (Specify).	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

Chapter 4

State of the Art: Research on Beliefs about Writing in Different Contexts

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Abstract

This chapter is the literature review of a qualitative research. The objective of this research was to identify the factors involved in the development of a belief system, taking into considerations the emotions and their influence on the writing teaching practices of a group of professors of a B.A. program in English Language Teaching at a public university in the north-west of Mexico. For this purpose, a systematic review of previous studies was carried out to visualize the state of knowledge in different geographical contexts in relation to the fundamental concepts for the research. In other words, the studies which were found related to *a) teachers' beliefs in the context of foreign language teaching and b) teachers' beliefs in teaching and learning writing*. As it will be noted below, this article presents methodological, theoretical, and practical aspects in a list of studies, which led to finding a research gap to be filled and contribute to the knowledge of beliefs and writing in the context of higher education in Mexico, particularly in English teaching.

Key words: *teachers' beliefs, higher education beliefs, writing, literature review, higher education writing.*

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Resumen

El presente capítulo brinda una revisión literaria de una investigación cualitativa. El objetivo de esa investigación fue identificar los factores involucrados en el desarrollo de un sistema de creencias, emociones y su influencia en las prácticas didácticas de escritura de un grupo de profesores de una licenciatura en enseñanza del inglés en una universidad pública al noroeste de México. Para tal propósito, se realizó una revisión sistemática de estudios previos con el fin de visualizar el panorama del estado del conocimiento en diferentes contextos geográficos con relación a los conceptos fundamentales para la investigación. Es decir que se encontraron investigaciones relacionadas con *a)* creencias de los profesores en contexto de enseñanza de lengua extranjera y *b)* creencias de profesores en enseñanza y aprendizaje de la escritura. Como se podrá notar a continuación, este artículo visualiza, a través de los estudios visitados, aspectos metodológicos, teóricos y prácticos lo cual propició encontrar un espacio investigativo para abonar al conocimiento de las creencias y escritura en contexto de educación superior en México, particularmente en enseñanza de inglés.

Palabras clave: *creencias de profesores, creencias en educación superior, escritura, escritura en educación superior, revisión literaria.*

Introduction

These days, as globalization has become more recurrent, the urgency of learning English as a foreign language has become a necessity in different economic, social, and academic fields (Crystal, 2003). One of the linguistic skills that has seen an increase in demand in recent decades is writing for different purposes, such as the academic and the professional ones. The broad field of study that English writing represents (English as a second language, ESL or English as a foreign language, EFL) continues to expand both theoretically and pedagogically and this is evidenced through practical, pedagogical, methodological and theoretical studies carried out with-

in this specialized field of study (Cumming, 1995; Carson and Leki, 1993; Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005; Grabe and Kaplan, 1996; Hyland, 2004; Kroll 1990; Leki, 1992; Matsuda and Silva, 2005; Silva and Matsuda, 2001a, 2001b; Zamel, 1998).

This chapter presents part of the literary review that was carried out with the purpose of developing a qualitative research regarding writing. The main objective of this research was to characterize the factors involved in the formation of a belief system, of a group of teachers, considering the role of emotions and its didactic influence on the teaching of writing in a bachelor's degree in English teaching at a public university in northwest Mexico (Pierre, 2023). However, for the purposes of this publication, knowledge and understanding of academic literature on the topic of writing beliefs situated in the context of EFL or ESL teaching is captured below.

As it will be seen, this review of the state of knowledge also includes a critical evaluation of the different sources (specialized articles, theses, edited books) at the time of carrying out this systematic review of previous research, as well as the description of the important role that this literary review had to develop the research as a whole. A general description of academic knowledge until the moment of carrying out this review is provided, which allowed the identification of salient theoretical, methodological and practical trends and also helped recognize relevant gaps in the existing knowledge. Also, this would allow the development of qualitative research of the same nature.

Methodology

With the purpose of providing a systematic review of the existing literature, we organized a list of all published and unpublished studies related to the topic of beliefs about the teaching and learning of writing in the context of higher education. The academic exploration was carried out in different databases such as the Digital Library of the University of Sonora (BIDI), Eric, Springer, Google, EBSCO Education, TESOL Quarterly, ResearchGate, as well as different published physical books. As it has been mentioned, we searched for studies that had the words beliefs, teaching

writing, and learning writing in their title. The search for previous studies was carried out geographically in order to have a first impression about the regions where the topic of writing and beliefs was being investigated and what the research trends were. At the beginning, there were a total of 43 studies, a discrimination was made of all those studies, which for various reasons, did not contribute to the particular topic of beliefs and writing, leaving a total of 25 that informed the general purpose of the research. To have a more systematic process of analyzing the information from the studies, the help of Atlas.Ti, which is a software tool for the organization and visualization of qualitative data, (figura 1) was used.

Once the documents had been added into *Atlas.Ti*, they were read repeatedly to create labels and to be able to visualize relevant aspects such as the summary, the research objective, the research paradigm, the participants, the research instruments, data collection method, data analysis, re-

Figure 1. *Atlas.Ti for the organization and analysis of qualitative data*

The screenshot displays the Atlas.Ti software interface. The top menu bar includes options like 'Crear cita', 'Agregar codificación', 'Codificar in vivo', and 'Codificación rápida'. The main window is divided into several sections:

- Left Panel (Navigation):** Shows a hierarchical tree structure under 'WRITING BELIEFS LITERATURE REVIEW'. It includes 'Documentos (43)', 'Códigos (5)', 'Memos (0)', 'Redes (0)', and 'Grupos de documentos (6)'. The 'Grupos de documentos' section is expanded to show geographical regions: AFRICA (1), AMERICA LATINA (0), ASIA (11), EUROPA (6), and EEUU CANADA AUSTRALIA (16). Under 'EEUU CANADA AUSTRALIA', there is a list of 28 PDF documents with their respective counts (e.g., 13 ARIZONA.pdf: 0, 14 BURNS, A.pdf: 0, ..., 28 THINKU, M..pdf: 0). Below this, there are sections for 'MEXICO' (9) and 'Grupos de códigos (0)', 'Grupos de memos (0)', and 'Grupos de redes (0)'. At the bottom of the left panel, there are options for 'Transcripciones de multimedia (0)' and 'Sin comentario'.
- Center Panel (Text):** Displays the content of a selected document, 'ETIOPIA.pdf'. It features three main sections:
 - Data Collection Instruments:** A sub-section titled 'Questionnaire' with a description: 'To collect data for the study, two types of instruments, namely questionnaire and observation checklist were used.' Below this, another section titled 'Questionnaire' explains that questionnaires are used to collect data on phenomena like attitude, motivation, and perception, which are not easily observed. It mentions that when opinions rather than facts are desired, a questionnaire with a rating scale is usually employed (Kumar 1996). It also notes that in this study, two types of questionnaires (questionnaire for teachers and questionnaire for students) were administered. Designed carefully and pilot-tested, the questionnaires contained both close-ended and open-ended items.
 - Observation:** A section titled 'Observation' describing the investigation of teachers' actual teaching of writing. It mentions a semi-structured classroom observation was carried out using a checklist prepared based on the literature and in line with the items of the teachers' questionnaire that focus on their writing instruction. It notes that four classes of Grade Eleven in three two preparatory schools (two from each) were selected through the lottery method and were observed for three consecutive weeks, and important activities pertaining to how writing was taught were recorded in the form of notes.
 - Data Analysis:** A section titled 'Data Analysis' stating that in this study, frequency, percentage, mean and average mean of means were used to analyze quantitative data in order to obtain descriptive statistics which provides a very basic summary of variables by showing a proportionate breakdown of the categories for each variable (Harries 1998). It also mentions that qualitative analysis was used to analyze the data elicited through open-ended items of the questionnaires and via the observation.
- Right Panel (Labels):** Shows a vertical list of labels or codes that have been applied to the text. Visible labels include 'analisis', 'instrumento QUAN', and 'instrumento QUAL'.
- Bottom Panel (Status):** Shows 'Página 4 of 24', '152 %', and options to 'Mostrar todas las citas' and 'Mostrar anotaciones PDF'.

Note: own screenshot

sults, and conclusion (table 1) for each of the investigations. From this process, a categorization of studies, detailed below, emerged.

Table 1. *Summary of information – revised research*

<i>Category</i>	<i>Condensed information</i>
Research	21 published in English and 4 in Spanish. These studies were conducted in countries such as Mexico, United States, Canada Chile, Argentina, Peru, Colombia, Costa Rica, Bangladesh, Iran, Japan, Turkey, Oman, Malaysia, China, Philippines, UK, Spain and Australia
Research design	Qualitative = 14 Quantitative = 5 Mixed design = 6
Instruments	Semi structured interviews = 15 Questionnaires = 9 Ethnographic observations = 7 Document reviews = 4 Likert scales = 3 Focus group = 1 Stimulated recall = 1 Story life = 1
Categories according to research topic	Teachers' beliefs about their experiences with writing = 7 Teachers' beliefs about teaching writing = 11 Teachers' beliefs about their students in relation to writing = 7

As it could be seen, three general categories emerged in which the studies could be classified according to the nature of each investigation: *a)* teachers' beliefs about their experiences with writing, *b)* teachers' beliefs about teaching writing and *c)* teachers' beliefs about their students in relation to writing. As mentioned before, this provides a clear idea of the trends and patterns for conducting research of the same nature. Likewise, a recurring theoretical direction (theorists and critics, as well as theory models) was obtained.

Next, the report of the studies mentioned above is presented, considering the thematic disposition previously explained.

Teachers' Beliefs about Their Experiences with Writing

First, it is important to mention that a large number of empirical studies in relation to beliefs (Borg, 2006) reveal the diversity of topics that have been

investigated in relation to this construct. As explained in the methodology of this literature review, these studies were categorized as follows:

- 1) studies on the nature of writing with respect to English teachers
- 2) studies about teaching and learning writing
- 3) studies on teachers about their students in relation to writing

Furthermore, it seems that a large part of the research carried out in relation to beliefs is related to the teaching of structural aspects of English such as grammar (Borg, 2003), leaving evidence of under-researched areas such as those that have to do with beliefs and emotions of the teachers. Below, some of the studies found in relation to the three categories mentioned above will be broken down.

Studies about the Nature of Writing in Relation to Teachers' Experiences

A type of study related to beliefs that seems to have greater relevance in research is the one concerning the experiences of English teachers and their relationship with the very nature of writing development. Street and Stang in 2009 conducted a study that sought to understand the ways in which teacher education courses affected the way teachers performed as writers. The data analyzed were obtained from a graduate writing course at a university in Southern California in the United States. The participants were 25 graduate students and because it was needed to have a clear idea and explore the teachers' experiences, a mixed methodological design was used. The results indicated that due to the pressure for more students to graduate from public schools with good levels of writing, it was vitally important to understand more effective ways to prepare teachers in charge of teaching writing. In this way, by having teachers with a greater degree of confidence in their writing skills, their classroom practices will be more effective and efficient.

Seifoori, Mozaheb and Beigi (2012) conducted a study in Iran exploring the qualities of what would be considered an effective EFL writing teacher.

The methods for obtaining data were interviews and class observations. A professor, who is considered by his students and his colleagues to be a good writing teacher, was observed for 1680 minutes. The purpose of this observation was to discover the characteristics that made him stand out as a good English writing teacher. The results indicated that being a teacher who likes reading and who seeks strategies to implement writing approaches in the classroom is a particularity that stood out. Other aspects that were noticed were the motivation given to the students, as well as the time devoted to planning the classes, among others.

Another study with similar characteristics to the previous ones was the one carried out by Hall and Grisham-Brown (2011) where two focus groups were developed to examine the beliefs and attitudes of student teachers about writing. The main objective was to understand how beliefs and attitudes developed and how past experiences affected them. The participants were 14 English student teachers at a public university in the Midwest of the United States. The results indicated that early or childhood education has a great influence on their writing work. In addition, the results presented aspects such as positive or negative attitudes about their experiences with writing, personal uses of writing, strengths and weaknesses as writing teachers, and plans for using writing within the classroom.

Daisey (2009) conducted a qualitative and quantitative study at a Midwestern university in the United States that prepares a large number of teacher candidates. Again, in this study, the objective was to evidence the writing experiences of 124 secondary English teacher candidates. To obtain data, a Likert-type survey was used in addition to individual interviews with randomly selected teachers. The results indicated that the participants enjoyed writing since they had had positive experiences in their secondary or upper secondary education with teachers who served as influences on them. This would encourage their work as writing teachers at this educational level.

Similarly, Correa et al (2013) carried out a study where the objective was to determine the personal theories about writing and its teaching in secondary education of six English teachers and six Language and Communication teachers who work in establishments. municipal educational

institutions of two regions of Chile. To access personal theories, teachers were interviewed in order to know their ideas about different aspects of teaching writing. The analysis methodology was qualitative and data processing was carried out with NVivo software. The results obtained indicate that teachers assign high importance to the development of writing, carry out sequenced activities, rely on model texts, favor individual work, and promote the writing of short texts.

Studies on Teaching Writing in English

Some studies have reported on the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices. For example, Uddin (2014) conducted a research with a mixed method approach where 15 professors from private universities in Bangladesh responded to a questionnaire and two professors from the same institutions were interviewed. The objective was to investigate teachers' beliefs regarding the teaching of writing, assuming it as a first step to bring innovations in teaching practices. The results showed a strong discrepancy between teachers' beliefs and their practice. Also, the lack of guidance from teachers regarding approaches to teaching writing was shown. According to Uddin, there is a great pedagogical need within the education of EFL teachers in relation to the training of different approaches to teaching writing, techniques for the development of more active students, ways to increase their motivation and the integration of technology when developing writing.

Similarly, Bidabadian and Tabatabaei (2015) examined and investigated the belief system of EFL teachers in relation to writing strategies and then explored the discrepancies or consistencies between their beliefs and their pedagogical practice activities in different institutes in Iran. Participants were teachers with a range of teaching experience between 5 and 25 years. A questionnaire was administered to these participants, which obtained data that revealed that the majority of Iranian teachers had positive beliefs towards most of the writing activities mentioned in the questionnaire. However, these teachers were not interested in the implementation of metacognitive, cognitive, or affective writing strategies which, accord-

ing to Bidabadian and Tabatabaei, are essential for the facilitation of students' written production tasks.

Another study focused on the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices in the EFL classroom was carried out by Khalizadeh and Allami (2012) in Iran. This research examined EFL teachers' beliefs regarding writing instruction. The sample of subjects in the study was 122 teachers collaborating in private language institutes who were randomly selected. The subjects had different levels of education, years of experience varied, as did genders. In order to obtain the data, a questionnaire was administered to the teachers to then analyze the data and determine if they had a vision of writing aimed at the form, the process or the social context. The results suggested that the majority of teachers were eclectic in their pedagogical orientations, but the form-oriented view of writing was the most predominant.

In a study carried out in Ethiopia, Ferede, Melese and Tefera (2012) carried out a research that examined the perception of English teachers in preparatory schools about writing and their pedagogical practice. Data were collected from 19 teachers and 295 students through questionnaires. With the purpose of obtaining an ethnographic perspective, class observations were carried out to collect additional information. The study identified a weak correlation between teachers' beliefs and their actual teaching practices. That is, although teachers believe that writing is as important as listening, speaking, reading, grammar and vocabulary, and that it needs regular practice, they fail to put their beliefs into practice. Second, despite their expression of views that the process approach to teaching writing is preferable to the product approach, most teachers were not seen regularly exposing their students to writing activities that would allow them to practice the writing process. The authors comment that based on these results, it is recommended 1) that more emphasis be given to the teaching of this important skill, 2) that teachers develop practical writing skills and put their beliefs in relation to this into action and 3) that the Ministry of Education of this country offers a greater number of training sessions for teaching writing.

Another research with similar characteristics was carried out by Yoshihara (2012) where the purpose was to explore teachers' teaching beliefs

and how they are formulated and put into practice in the classroom in Hawaii, United States. Three teachers participated in this study where interviews were conducted about their teaching beliefs, class observations were conducted, and questions were asked for continuity through emails. According to Yoshihara, the participants interpreted their roles with respect to what was proposed by the formal class curriculum because they believed that one of their roles was to understand what the students believed and needed. Teachers showed different approaches when teaching and used different strategies.

Eman (2014) conducted a similar investigation where the relationship between the teacher's cognition and her pedagogical practices was explored. For this study in Palestine, a qualitative multiple case study design was used with 12 EFL writing teachers working in universities in this country. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, classroom observation, stimulus-reminder interviews, and document review. The results show the influence that cognitions about the nature of writing in EFL, the teaching and learning of this skill and about themselves have on their teaching work.

Tagle, Díaz and Briesmaster (2017) carried out an investigation with the objective of identifying the beliefs of 37 prospective English teachers in their final year at two Chilean universities about the teaching of writing. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The results suggested that the participants have beliefs concerning the teaching of writing based on the use of grammar and vocabulary, the reproduction of different types of texts. In the same way, it was identified that these beliefs were acquired in university instruction contexts.

Díaz, Alarcón and Ortíz (2014) carried out a case study with 16 EFL teachers in Chile to identify their beliefs. Data were collected with the use of a semi-structured interview and a Likert survey. Semantic content analysis and qualitative software were used to transcribe, code and segment data and then establish categories and sub-categories that showed the participants' beliefs regarding the teaching and learning of English. The results show that beliefs are immersed in the semantic memory of teachers as cognitive and affective constructs that have different levels of fixation depending on their professional, academic or personal experiences.

Sawaed (2011) conducted a study where the objective was to investigate teachers' cognition about teaching writing in the English language in Libya. The results were generated through interviews, class observations and academic workshops with the participation of 21 English writing teachers from different universities in that country. These results showed that, although teachers share many characteristics of their teaching contexts, they have different visions about pedagogical practice. Furthermore, results demonstrate that participants rely heavily on their own professional development and informal learning to confront challenges such as inconsistent curricula.

A final study within this second category is the one conducted by Mora (2010) from the University of Guanajuato in Mexico who led a study that investigated teachers' feedback practices, focusing on the dichotomy of written feedback of native and non-native speakers of English, and how their attitudes and beliefs manifest in their practices. The study was conducted under the qualitative methodology using questionnaires, interviews and composition analysis of the participants. There were four teachers from a private university and four from a public university, and most of them had training in language teaching. The results demonstrated that teachers' feedback on errors are not congruent with their beliefs as teachers. Although teachers believed that students should learn to locate and correct errors, their written feedback practice often did not allow this to happen, and in some cases, their feedback could be considered aggressive.

Studies in Relation to Teachers about their Students

Another research interest related to beliefs in the field of foreign or second language has to do with students and their development as writers seen from the teacher's perspective. For example, Tunku Mohtar et al (2017) investigated the beliefs and effectiveness of an English teacher teaching students who had linguistic weaknesses, particularly in written ability at a university in Malaysia. The research was a case study where a semi-structured interview was conducted to probe the pedagogical strategies used to improve or enhance their beliefs about their own teaching abilities. Also,

class observations were conducted to investigate students' development specifically in writing. The results showed that the English teacher's beliefs about her students helped shape the activities implemented in her classes and helped her decide about which writing learning activities to use because she trusted them and her teaching skills.

In 2011, Méndez López conducted a study with the purpose of obtaining a better understanding of the emotional experiences originated during classroom instruction and their impact on student motivation. This was a qualitative study focused on 18 students in an English teaching program at a university in southeastern Mexico. Data were collected through personal narratives, a diary of emotional reactions, and semi-structured interviews. Analysis and interpretation of the findings was conducted using a grounded theory approach to focus on the views of the participants. The results reveal the widespread influence of emotional reactions on students' motivation. The emotional reactions reported by participants primarily originated from the teachers' interpersonal skills and the classroom environment. Although participants in this study reported more negative than positive affective experiences, the outcomes of these experiences were positive. This research highlights the crucial role of language learners' emotional experiences. Recommendations are offered for language teachers so that they can help foreign language learners minimize the negative impact of emotional experiences on their learning process.

A study by Méndez (2015) reports on the emotional experiences of Mexican language students in their second year of an English teaching program at a state university. The objective was to identify the effects of emotions on the motivational behavior that students showed in their daily classes. The instruments used were personal narratives, electronic journals and semi-structured interviews. The results demonstrated that emotions are a source for students' development and that meta-emotions can help them feel more motivated. The study revealed that emotions, both positive and negative, can help students develop awareness, responsibility and commitment to their language learning process.

Ross (2015) conducted a doctoral study in Australia where a mixed methods research approach was adopted, with semi-structured qualitative interviews used to investigate into students' emotions, and then a quanti-

tative structural equation modeling approach to investigate the causal relationships between emotions and aspects of motivation. The quantitative aspect was driven by two separate survey instruments: one focused on emotion and another on motivation. The results of the study suggest that students' emotional experiences are significant and diverse and are an important part of their language learning experience. Furthermore, there are significant causal relationships between emotions and motivation, and the concept of ideal second language learners. As such, the results suggested that there is a need for greater consideration and investigation of language learners' emotions in future research as well as in the situated classroom environment.

In 2016, Manchón, Conesa and De Larios conducted research on writing and beliefs. In this study, Spanish students' beliefs about various aspects of composition in a foreign language context were investigated. The participants were two groups of college English students with different amounts and types of writing and instructional experiences. The data came from a questionnaire completed by the students and an interview with the writing teacher. The results indicate the existence of well-founded beliefs about the learning potential of writing in ESL, the strategic dimension of writing and feedback processes. Other beliefs related to the personal dimension of writing proved to be dependent on the instructional context.

With very similar characteristics to the aforementioned studies, Miras, Solé and Castells (2013) carried out an investigation on the relationships between the beliefs of 120 Spanish students about reading and writing, the quality of their synthesis writings, and the level of learning they reached after completing it. The secondary education students participated in the study, who wrote a summary text after reading three texts. The results indicate that the writings of students who hold more transactional beliefs show better organization and greater integration of content; They also indicate that those who create more integrated texts are those who obtain the greatest benefits in terms of learning.

Tapia-Carlin (2010) was in charge of leading a dissertation writing and professional development investigation. The objective of this case study was to identify the beliefs of eight pre-service professors about thesis writ-

ing after they finished writing their bachelor's thesis. The research was carried out in the Modern Language Teaching area of the Autonomous University of Puebla. The participants had just taken two courses where they wrote their bachelor's thesis. The methodology used to identify students' beliefs was survey research with a questionnaire designed for this study: Thesis and Professional Development Questionnaire. The Likert scale findings showed that the majority of participants had similar beliefs about dissertation writing. Regarding their self-assessment as thesis writers, their responses are unequal because each subject had different experiences.

Critical Evaluation of the Studies Revised

The three categories into which the studies visited were broken down with the purpose of taking a look at the state of current knowledge about writing and beliefs show a certain inclination towards the development of research by theorists and critics within this field. The section that shows the studies in relation to the beliefs of English teachers and their teaching and learning practices (as is the case of the present research) shows a greater number of studies in the different geographical contexts. Considering the present investigation of studies carried out, it seems that the relationship between beliefs and writing has not been the focus of empirical studies in our disciplinary field. Given these research gaps in relation to the constructs involved here, it was considered pertinent to carry out an investigation that included the teachers' beliefs regarding the teaching of writing and that contemplated the affective role of emotions for making teaching decisions.

Teachers' beliefs about their experiences with writing are critically important in determining how they approach teaching this skill. From the review of research in different contexts that were listed here, it could be said that the theoretical construct of beliefs is perceived as a system of particular knowledge about writing which considerably influences decision making in relation to writing, the teaching and learning of written communication skills in English (Pajares, 1992; Rokeach, 1968). In fact, it is possible to note that this belief system has a clear presence in relation to

didactic instruction in aspects such as the adaptation of the official curriculum of the subject, what teachers consider appropriate in terms of didactic material and their own criteria for determining how they are progressing in writing issues.

The studies visited, at the time of carrying out this research, show that the authors begin by conceptualizing writing in different ways and this seems to have a reflection within the classroom. Apparently, beliefs about writing are the result of teachers' own experiences and their personal and professional system of knowledge, because of this, individual aspects make it evidently reflected within the classroom. Likewise, it seems that the conception of beliefs about writing are part of a continuum where at one end students are required to master structural aspects and skills of writing while, at the other end, there are teachers who see writing more holistically. The vision and beliefs of teachers who view writing in a more structural way could be associated with more traditional approaches to writing such as the product or even process approach (Hyland, 2009) while teachers who view writing in a more integrative and holistic way, that could be associated with the genre approach (Hyland, 2004).

Conclusion

Teachers' beliefs seem, then, to affect the environment within the classroom. According to some of the studies (Street and Stang, 2009; Hall & Grisham-Brown, 2011; Daisey, 2009; Correa *et al.*, 2013), an important function of teachers is to create environments conducive to the development of students' writing through the planning, organization and implementation of learning experiences for the pedagogical instruction of writing. It seems that the teachers' decisions regarding the position of writing are based on their own past experiences and their beliefs about the very nature of this linguistic skill.

This chapter focused on the investigation and discussion of beliefs and emotions in relation to teaching or learning writing. The above is framed in the understanding that writing in English is a socially constructed phenomenon which involves collaboration from culturally structured

contexts (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006). Information that conveys specific meaning, functions, and values is derived from the interactions and relationships that occur at the time of writing. Pajares (1992) comments on this by mentioning that teachers have well-defined and labeled beliefs about their work, their students, their subjects, and their roles and responsibilities.

Being more familiar with and knowing the relevance of teaching EFL writing in the context of higher education leads us to understand that currently there is a need for a greater amount of research of this nature that allows developing approaches and methodologies that manifest characteristics social and cultural in the aforementioned environment (Canagarajah, 1999; Pennycook, 2001 and Warschauer, 2000). For this reason, it is necessary to consider the teachers' beliefs about writing teaching and the factors that are influencing their teaching practice that will allow us to visualize real situations in our country.

From this systematized review of the aforementioned studies, we can also highlight the fact that Mexico is a fertile area to pay attention to the topic of beliefs and emotions regarding the teaching and learning of writing in the context of foreign language teaching. According to Reyes Cruz (2009), in Mexico studies on beliefs in language teaching are very incipient. With an investigation of the nature of the present study, we contribute to the field of research on beliefs and emotions and offer supported data that allow us to grasp an idea about the didactic and pedagogical structures and the reasons for these in Mexico.

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Chapter 5

Linguistics Teachers' Implementation and Assessment of Out-of-Class Teamwork

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Abstract

Teamwork is of extreme importance for the learning process. However, studies still evidence difficulties in its implementation and assessment. This qualitative study investigated university teachers' implementation and assessment practices of out-of-class teamwork. The participants were teachers from seven different states in Mexico and belonged to the area of linguistics. Semi-structured interviews were analyzed using MAXQDA software in which six themes and 16 subthemes emerged. Important findings are that teachers integrate socio-constructivist approaches with traditional methodologies, ensure the balance of students' participation inside the teams and, design rubrics and qualitative assessments. The participants also mentioned challenges. The study concludes with a proposal to guide effective out-of-class teamwork implementation.

Keywords: *collaborative practices, linguistics teachers, out-of-class teamwork, teamwork assessment, teamwork implementation.*

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Resumen

El trabajo en equipo es de extrema importancia para el proceso de aprendizaje. Sin embargo, estudios aún evidencian dificultades en su implementación y evaluación. Este estudio cualitativo investigó la implementación y evaluación de los profesores universitarios acerca del trabajo en equipo fuera del aula (TEFA). Los participantes fueron profesores de siete estados diferentes de México pertenecientes al área de lingüística. Entrevistas semi-estructuradas fueron analizadas usando el software MAXQDA del cual emergieron seis temas y 16 subtemas. Importantes hallazgos son que los docentes integran enfoques socio-constructivistas con metodologías tradicionales, aseguran el balance de participación de estudiantes dentro de los equipos, diseñan rúbricas y evaluaciones cualitativas. Los participantes también mencionan retos. El estudio concluye con una propuesta para guiar la implementación de un TEFA eficiente.

Palabras Clave: *prácticas colaborativas, profesores de lingüística, trabajo en equipo fuera del aula, evaluación del trabajo en equipo, implementación del trabajo en equipo.*

Introduction

Modern methods in education based on socio-constructivist learning approaches place great emphasis on collaboration and interaction among students to promote significant learning (Blatchford *et al.*, 2003). Following modern pedagogy, teachers design tasks to be carried out by students in teams inside and outside the classroom. In these teams, students need to share new information, debate, and evaluate different points of view, restructure their thoughts, and come to new conclusions to meet the assignment. Finally, this product is to be graded by their teacher.

Although the collaborative learning process can be supervised inside the classroom, teachers cannot oversee the work students carry out in teams outside the classroom. As the research literature suggests, several

problems are commonly found in the implementation of teamwork and its grading process. However, not many of these studies have investigated out-of-class teamwork. Adding to these difficulties, the international Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reports that the “teaching, learning and assessment still take place in a somewhat ‘traditional setting’ in Mexico” (Santiago *et al.*, 2012, p. 4). Borg (2006) points out the challenge that implementing teamwork represents in higher education where students’ learning modes have not included previous experiences of this type. In the case of Mexico, if students have been exposed to traditional learning modes, it would be difficult to engage them in modern methods of education in which teamwork is a common practice. The students need the knowledge and skills to carry out collaborative tasks and projects by themselves particularly in an out-of-class situation.

Therefore, because of the problems and challenges that have been stated, it becomes essential to investigate the Mexican higher education context in relation to out-of-class teamwork. This study aims at exploring the implementation and assessment practices of college linguistics teachers concerning out-of-class teamwork in seven different states in Mexico.

Theoretical Framework

Definition of Teamwork

Based on a large body of research, the terms group work and teamwork are widely used across disciplines but their difference in terms of meaning is not easy to grasp. Schmutz *et al.*, (2019) agree with this statement referring to teamwork while Chiriac (2014) is also in accordance but referring to group work. In addition, Blatchford *et al.*, (2003, p. 2) state that “By group work, we mean pupils working together as a group or team”. In this statement, it seems there is not a difference between the terms group work and teamwork. An interesting contribution made by Chiriac (2014) is the differentiation between two types of group work: working in a group and working as a group. She explains that the first type is accomplished by individuals working alone in separate parts of the assignment, while the sec-

ond one means working all together, using their skills to achieve the common task. In technology enhanced language learning, Shibani *et al.*, (2017) use the term teamwork to investigate language learners' online dialogues. Therefore, as there is not a clear distinction between the terms of group work and teamwork, the term teamwork will be used in this paper.

Teamwork Challenges

Although difficulties in the implementation of teamwork are not new and research has suggested many solutions, challenges continue. Alfares (2017) explains that motivation may decrease specifically in mixed ability teams since high achievers prefer to work individually and not "waste their time" with low achievers. Medrano and Delgado (2013) in their study found out that in some self-selected teams, stronger students did all the work due to friendship and felt relieved when the teams were teacher selected. One longtime common problem explained by Davies (2009) is the existence of free riders or uncommitted members who do not work causing "the sucker effect" that is, more free raiders. These members can also cause social loafing which is a reduction in effort from the other members of the team (McGraw & Tidwell, 2001). Therefore, motivation and group formation are still problematic.

Another problem detected in recent research is the division of the task into equal parts by the team members who complete their part individually. Then, they just add their pieces to complete the assignment without discussing the work or synthesizing the information (Wilson *et al.*, 2018). In this case, the benefits of modern approaches to learning such as developing higher-order cognitive abilities, social and critical skills, collaboration, integration, promoting the construction of knowledge through negotiation and the building of consensus are not met.

Another obstacle is the difficulty to find time to carry out out-of-class activities as a team. A common fact is that there is a population of students who have to work and, thus, it is difficult to find time to meet or a place close enough of their home or work sites to get together. Although, there is a debate on whether employment is detrimental to academic performance

in students who prioritize work or school, Baert *et al.*, (2018, p. 1) investigated this issue and found out “only a negative association between hours of student work and the percentages of courses passed” by students who prioritize work. However, they do recommend to discourage students who prioritize their job over their studies.

Finally, a last problem refers to the grading of teamwork since a mark is given to the team product. Therefore, all the team members get the same grade including uncommitted members. Although, suggestions are given in the literature to make students peer assess several aspects of group member's performance inside the groups, students refuse to peer assess, pinpoint the free riders or social loafers because it causes relationship conflicts. Scager *et al.*, (2016) found out that team members showed empathy towards social loafers as students stated that the work was beyond the capabilities of peers who contributed less.

Advantages of Promoting Teamwork

There are several benefits for assessing teamwork. The first one is that assessment guides students into using certain learning strategies depending on the type of task that they will have to accomplish. A teamwork task will guide team members to develop the use of high-order cognitive abilities. Levine (2009, p. 537) states that these abilities are “concept acquisition, systematic decision making, evaluative thinking, brainstorming (including creativity), and rule usage”, among the range of sophisticated thinking skills. Therefore, teamwork assignments are important for developing what Volkov and Volkov (2015) calls “a deep approach to learning” and “a deep approach to studying”.

A second advantage is that teamwork also provides the practice of social skills needed for the labor market and are part of the ones mentioned by Rotherham and Willingham (2010). These 21st century skills are communication, collaboration, and flexibility. The authors call for policy makers to address these 21st century skills in the curricula. Modern approaches to education require a more participative student role in instruction and assessment in which peer and self-assessment practices are promoted

(Assessment Reform Group, 2002). Marking alternative assessment tasks also require the development of other means of assessing as observations, the development of rubrics (Coombe *et al.*, 2007), checklists, report sheets, etc. Therefore, teamwork needs knowledgeable teachers who can implement these methods of assessment and guide the students into performing alternative and collaborative tasks successfully (Volkov & Volkov, 2015). In relation to rubrics, a third advantage refers to the comprehension of the work expectations by the students when a rubric is explained before or while the assignment is given.

Finally, a fourth benefit is that performance and authentic tasks cater more to students' needs and therefore increase the validity of the assignment. Puppin (2007) adds that valid assignments have a clear demonstrable link to the skills that are being assessed and that they provide a positive washback effect.

Recent research demonstrates that out-of-class teamwork still represents challenges in its implementation and assessment. It is crucial for teachers in higher education to become aware of what is really happening inside the groups particularly where students do not come with the skills needed for this type of work if they want to meet the benefits of modern approaches to education.

Methodology

As previously mentioned, the authors sought to understand a group of Mexican university teachers' implementation and assessment practices of the teamwork that they ask their students to do outside their teaching and learning contexts. Following the purpose of examining their implementation and assessment practices, we decided to adopt a qualitative research approach. This approach enabled us to understand the participants' "words and actions in narrative or descriptive ways closely representing the situation as experienced by the participants" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 2). In line with this, Dörnyei (2007) contends that "[q]ualitative research is concerned with subjective opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals and thus the explicit goal of research is to explore the partici-

pants' views of the situation being studied" (p. 38). This in turn allowed us the researchers to study the participants' views and experiences concerning teamwork as they carry it out in their natural settings with the purpose of "making sense of or interpret the phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 2). To do this, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) suggest that a wide variety of data-collection tools can be used to "describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in individuals' lives" (p. 2). In this study, we conducted interviews (see below) with the participants in their contexts. Overall, a qualitative paradigm was necessary because it helped us uncover the views and experiences of the participants for the purpose of the present study and the context where the phenomenon was taking place.

Context

The study was conducted in seven Mexican university contexts located in different parts of the country with the purpose of getting a wider Mexican perspective instead of a local one. The universities are located in central, southern and northern areas of Mexico and are all public which means that are government funded. They all offer undergraduate and postgraduate programs of different disciplines, from high school to PhD. Specifically, the study took place in the linguistics areas or departments following our objective of making sense of the participants' implementation and assessment practices concerning their students' teamwork outside the classroom. In all of these contexts, teamwork has been used as a strategy to promote student autonomy, responsibility, and collaborative practices. However, there have been few attempts to implement this kind of student work in these contexts and there is no formal evidence that shows how linguistics teachers view and experience these peer collaborative practices.

Participants

Following the objective of understanding the implementation and assessment practices of Mexican university teachers concerning teamwork, we advertised our research project in seven Mexican universities, specifically, in the linguistics departments. Seven teachers expressed their desire to participate in the study.

All of the participants were informed of the purposes of the study, their expected participation, the use of their data, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. To protect them from identification, the participants' names and identities were carefully anonymized. Instead, Teacher 1 (T1), Teacher 2 (T2) and so on are used. Also, to avoid identifying the teacher's gender, the pronoun he will be used.

Data Collection and Analysis

To collect the data, interviews were collected and transcripts were made. It is widely known that interviews are useful for obtaining significant information about perceptions and experiences of participants who are immersed in teaching and learning contexts. Interviews are claimed to provide an understanding of how informants make sense of interactions in relation to the context which they inhabit (Snape & Spencer, 2003). The final version of the interview guide that was used in this study contained 11 items (see Appendix). The eleven items were open-ended questions. All the questions asked for the participants' experiences and practices regarding teamwork in their contexts. It is worth mentioning that the interview was piloted by a group of researchers and modifications to clarify or shorten some of the questions were conducted.

After the data were collected, it was analyzed following a meaning categorization which facilitates the identification of patterns, themes, and meaning (Berg, 2009). To do this, coding was helpful for identifying and retrieving data relevant for the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Fernandez, 2006). The MAXQDA software for analyzing qualitative data was used and as a result of this process, six broad themes and sixteen subthemes

emerged. To ensure reliability of these data analysis, the theme categorization was validated by three researchers with knowledge of English teaching and applied linguistics. The emerging themes and sub-themes, which are detailed in table 1, provided the framework for interpreting the data.

Table 1. *Themes and Subthemes*

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Subthemes</i>
1. Reasons for assigning teamwork	a) Competencies and, b) collaborative abilities.
2. Assignment types	a) Projects, b) tasks and presentations.
3. Teacher strategies	a) Preparation, b) follow-up sessions and, f) assessment.
4. Evaluation criteria	a) Rubrics, b) definition of rubrics, c) product or content based, d) Individual or global mark and, e) evaluation agents.
5. Challenges	a) Student commitment and, b) training related.
6. Washback effects	a) Positive and, b) negative.

Findings and Discussion

Reasons for Assigning Teamwork: Development of Competencies

Among the reasons for assigning teamwork, teachers mentioned the development of competencies in students, a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes. T3 expresses “they [students] should be able to put the theory into practice”. In this statement, T3 is talking about a deeper understanding of theory and combining skills and knowledge related to Competency-based education. T4 and T7 explain “they should find out their strengths and weaknesses while T7 adds “if they are artistic or more creative”. These two teachers are discussing the development of the self, which starts by raising awareness. T1 and T5 emphasize the importance of developing responsibility in students. T5 states “I explain that they are responsible for the grade their classmates get”. And T2 states that students in their workplace are not going to be working alone. This statement suggests that T2 is preparing the students for the future. The relationship between employment and education is present, another characteristic of Competency-based education.

Reasons for Assigning Teamwork: Collaborative Abilities

There were several reasons that specifically dealt with the development of collaborative abilities. T2 expresses that students need “to learn to work in a collaborative way” so that “they can explain their classmate part and rescue their classmate” and “that they also say if their partner worked”. This is an interesting example of the development of attitudes and values through teamwork since it suggests the teacher is promoting “rescuing” the partner, possibly in a group presentation and at the same time honesty, possibly for the grading stage. Another example of developing attitudes and values is stated by T4 “students should be aware of their strengths and weaknesses to help the team”. T5 adds that students should “learn how to arrive [approach the group] and, how to interact with the team members”. In accordance with T4 and T5, T7 says “they learn negotiation, to take roles such as leadership and in agreement with their strengths take charge of a part of the work, help and learn from each other”. Therefore, T5 and T7 are talking about the development of social skills while T5 refers to Socio-constructivism.

Therefore, in relation to theme one of Reasons for assigning teamwork, the teachers know about modern methods of education since they are referring to Socio-constructivism, Competency-based learning and Collaborative learning benefits. Therefore, they assign out-of class teamwork to develop whole learning combining, knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, in a collaborative way. One of the most complex tasks for linguistic teachers is assessing teamwork skills fairly because students might not find the usefulness and purpose of working together, or they prefer to work individually. Rogier (2014) asserts that “teachers must consider what the purpose of a particular assessment is and whether this purpose is congruent with the students they are testing and the course they are teaching” (p. 3). Also, the findings in this theme suggest that teachers are “knowledgeable” since they are implementing what Volkov and Volkov (2015) calls “a deep approach to learning”. This finding also contradicts the OECD report that the “teaching, learning and assessment still take place in a somewhat ‘traditional setting’ in Mexico” (Santiago *et al.*, 2012, p. 4).

Assignment Types: Projects

Teachers assign a variety of class projects. T1 states “I give them [students] projects dealing with class topics to research” as T3, who assigns “research projects which imply gathering information and applying theory seen in class”. T5 asks students to carry out “field work and observations in real contexts”. In addition, T7 expresses “My class is based on mini projects [as a preparation] students do individual work and then they get together and form the teams”. Only T6 states “I usually do not leave out-of-class teamwork, I prefer to do it as part of classroom activities”. The reason for this is “I want to make sure all of the students really work”. Finally, as can be observed, most of the projects ask students to carry out some type of research work.

Assignment Types: Tasks and Presentations

Although many of the teachers asked the students to present the projects, two teachers mention other tasks and presentations. For example, T2 assigns the students to carry out class observations “in teamwork students help and observe teachers and write a report”. T2 adds that he asks for “Power-Point presentations and class practices” while T4 mentions “presentations of synthesis about course contents”.

In regards to the second theme of Assignment tasks, the participants assign different types of out-of-class projects, most of them deal with research work. Teachers also ask for presentations. Just one participant pointed out that he did not assess out-of-class teamwork because he believed that sometimes one member of a team might have worked more than others. This finding reflects the common challenges of the existence of free riders (Davies, 2009) and social loafing (McGraw & Tidwell, 2001) explained earlier in this paper.

Teacher Strategies: Preparation

Teachers plan what is going to be achieved and developed, as discussed in their reasons for assigning out-of-class teamwork and they also prepare the students for the task, as can be noted in the next statements. T5 states that she prepares students for the projects “I delegate tasks since the beginning of the activity, plan everything that they are going to do” and adds “so that all of them [team members] commit”. In addition, T2 expresses that “I emphasize to students that they need to allocate the time since they need to research information and add things” while T1 says “I give them guidelines about what means to work in teams”.

Teacher Strategies: Follow-up Sessions

After the teachers assign the projects or tasks, they carry out follow-up sessions, as can be observed in the following statements. T2 states “I give tutorial sessions in class”. T3 says “there are always feedback and tutorial sessions” A strategy that T4 uses is to “leave the last 20 minutes of class for feedback sessions to clarify doubts or answer students’ questions”. T5 mentions that it is “through observation of what they are doing in the integrative projects and revising advances in class”. T7 gives time at the beginning of the class “always the first 15 or 20 minutes, I revise how they are doing, if there are doubts” and adds that he checks “if they are researching and verifying valid sources or if they don’t know where to look”. Even, T6 adds that he would “ask students to turn in advances every week” in the case, he assigns out-of-class teamwork. Therefore, the strategies for follow-up sessions the teachers mentioned are tutorials, progress revisions and feedback on work.

Teacher Strategies: Assessment

Two different strategies T1 comments deal with analysis and assessment of the task. T1 explains that students as an activity “analyze the work done

and tell me exactly how they did it and there are suggestions [feedback from the teacher]” to improve the way they work and the task. T1 adds “another strategy that I have is an individual reading comprehension test about the topic to see if they are involved in the task”. Therefore, T1 makes sure that the students are participating equally and know the required information that will enable them to discuss this information or the work among the team members. T1 is preventing what Wilson *et al.*, (2018, p. 4) state that students “just add their pieces to complete the assignment without discussing the work or synthesizing the information” and also, he is enabling them to take Volkov and Volkov’s (2015) “deep approach to learning”.

In regards to the third theme of Teacher strategies, the participants offer a variety of strategies that they use that can be summarized as follows: *a)* student preparation, *b)* follow-up sessions of various kinds, and *c)* analysis or assessment of the work. Offering tutoring and providing feedback have been effective strategies already known, but the addition of student preparation or training before teamwork and the analysis strategy during teamwork seem to complement the follow-up sessions and would ensure a high quality work by team members.

Evaluation Criteria: Use of Rubrics

The participants’ evaluation criteria for grading projects and presentations are the following. T1 uses a checklist “to know what activities they have already done and how they did them and if they considered the guidelines of teamwork skills” while T2 uses rubrics and report sheets. T2 bases the grade on the rubric elements such as “content, how it is presented, topic domain, means of presentation, amount of text on the visuals and questions for the audience”. T4’s rubric elements are based on “whether the content is precise, complete and logical, whether it [the product] is understandable, presents charts or illustrations to make the document [or presentation] attractive”. T5 also uses rubrics and checklists while T7 states “I always give them rubrics, they can be used for self-assessment, and it includes competencies to develop and measure if they achieve them”. There-

fore, the teachers use qualitative instruments to grade the out-of-class tasks and projects and these are checklists, rubrics and report sheets. This finding agrees with Coombe *et al.*, (2007) statement explained above that marking alternative assessment tasks also require the development of other means of assessing as observations, the development of rubrics, checklists, report sheets, etcétera.

Evaluation Criteria: Definition of Rubrics

The teachers give definitions for what a rubric is. These are their responses. T1 defines a rubric as a “series of guidelines or requirements to assign a mark and depends on what grading system it is used and it must achieve learning outcomes”. T2 states “a rubric helps us [teachers] see the important aspects to consider” and “given before, it helps students not to forget what they need to include”. T3 comments that a rubric “is a way to standardize the evaluation criteria for the students”. T4 says that “A rubric is like a criterion that includes elements or descriptors to consider for grading and it also has its weights”. T5 explains that a rubric “has its respective criteria but each criterion is graded to assign a certain percentage”. T7 defines a rubric as a “table with the basic elements for that will be evaluated and a rating scale”. By the participant’s rubric descriptions, they are well aware of what a rubric is. It is noteworthy that T2 and T3 specifically refer to sharing the rubric with the students. This finding is in agreement with Brookhart (2018) who states the importance of giving the rubrics to the students to clarify the teacher expectations for a task.

Evaluation Criteria: Product or Content Based

The teachers expressed the following for whether they assess the process or the product. T2 states “I just grade the final product not the process of teamwork and I am not aware of their meetings, if they meet, work online or face to face”. T3 adds “in general, I do not grade the process only the product” while T4 says “In the feedback sessions I revise the student’s

progress, but for marking I focus on the content not on who did what". T5 comments "I check the student progress". However, T5 does not mention allocating a mark. And finally, T7 states the following:

(Extract 1) Students are sending me their progress. For example, I ask for an individual note- taking activity and they send me their notes individually. Later they work as a team and send me the most important notes and photos until they get their first draft little by little. It depends on the project or if it is the final project, it will be complete, clean and organized, but it will also depend on the rubric because it will be focused on language and content rather than measuring process skills.

As can be observed by the teachers' statements, although teachers are constantly revising students' progress, they focus on the product and not on the process at the time of allocating a grade. Exceptions can be T5 and T7 who can evaluate the student progress with the evidence he asks student to send. However, at the end of Extract 1, T7 implies that the rubric does not contain elements for measuring the process. Therefore, at this point, it is not clear whether they are grading the process. This finding reflects what Ghaith (2002) expresses that there are assessment methods that can promote interpersonal skills since "cooperative learning is an instructional strategy that utilizes group work. It is based on interpersonal skills and group processing as means to achieving individual and group goals" (p. 2). Therefore, the teachers might not see a need for allocating marks for the process. However, in the analysis of the next subtheme, T7 clarifies the way she grades the process.

Evaluation Criteria: Individual or Global Mark

The participants' commented about whether they granted a global or individual mark as follows. T1 expresses "[I grade] both ways I give a grade for the whole team and later I give them an individual activity to see their comprehension about the topic, it can be reading comprehension". This statement suggests that T1 gives a global mark for the team and then tests

each of the students to obtain the individual grade. T2 says “when they present a task orally and one member is better than another one, I cannot assign the same mark, so I grade individually”. In an oral presentation, the students present different parts so this statement suggests that T2 combines the individual and the team grade, which gives a different mark to each team member. T3, T4 and T5 state that they give a global mark for the team. T4 adds “Global, because it is easier to assign a mark to the teamwork”. An interesting finding is T7 remark:

(Extract 2) I give three percentages..one is for a self-assessment..a reflection on how they felt working in the team..then there is peer assessment so students can express and provide feedback to others anonymously and the [teacher's] rubric of the teamwork... So, I obtain the whole grade considering these three aspects.

In respect to the findings for the subtheme of Individual or global, three teachers give a global mark while other three grade individually. However, the ones that grade globally follow-up carefully the teamwork process, as seen in the analysis of the strategies the participants use. On the other hand, the teachers that grade individually reflect what Gibbs (1995) states that mixing teamwork and individual marks is called hybrid “in order to limit the possibility of unfairness or bias associated with any system and to assess a wider range of skills or competencies than any method alone could achieve” (p. 10).

Evaluation Criteria: Evaluation Agents

Two teachers mention specifically the evaluation agents, T2 expresses “I give them feedback and they know their classmates’ opinion which I average and give them a grade” T2 is talking about peer assessment since he averages the grades. T7 in extract 2 talks about combining self-assessment, peer assessment, and teacher’s assessment. These findings stated by T2 and T7 follows important suggestions in modern approaches to education. Moreover, modern literature states the need to develop these capaci-

ties in students. Jalil *et al.*, (2017) study revealed that both self-assessment and peer-assessment practices had a positive impact on the self-regulated learning of their 65 participants.

Challenge: Student Commitment

There are several teachers' comments that deal with student commitment. T3 expresses that a challenge is "not knowing whether the team members participated equally". T5 says that there were "a number of students that do not focus on the criteria or techniques that are used to assess their learning and they also protect each other even though they did not work". T2 states that a challenge is "students not working inside the groups" and told the following experience:

(Extract 3) I had to disintegrate a team because only one student worked, and I placed her in another team. The rest of the students had the opportunity to work individually, but they decided not to work well and they failed the course.

As can be observed by the teacher's statements, they reflect the long-time common problem of uncommitted team members discussed by Davies (2009). In the case of T7, the problem is the sucker effect that is free riders causing more free riders because only one student worked. In regards to T3, he is not sure of the degree of student commitment thinking that some students could have worked more than other members of the team. Lastly, the findings of T5 suggest that the students worked, but turned in a weak product since they did not revise what they had to do and thus, took a superficial approach to learning. Therefore, the challenges T3 and T5 mention deal with degrees of involvement what McGraw and Tidwell call "social loafing" which is the reduction in effort from the other members of the team (McGraw & Tidwell, 2001).

Challenge: Training Related

Two teachers express other types of challenges. T1 says that it was a challenge “to make students understand what collaborative work entails and then they complain to the authorities that the teacher doesn’t work”. T7 adds the other challenge “at the beginning of the course, I do not know the students personal and teamwork skills, so I let them free until I start to know them, [and then] I can control some of the variables”. Therefore, T1 statement suggests that the students come to the university not used to working in teams. This finding reflects the problem explained by Borg (2006) about difficulties in implementing teamwork in higher education when students have not been exposed before in previous levels of education. In case of T1, the finding supports the OECD report that the “teaching, learning and assessment still take place in a somewhat ‘traditional setting’ in Mexico” (Santiago *et al.*, 2012, p. 4). However, it will refer to lower levels of education. In the case of T7, the challenge refers to knowing the students’ strengths and weaknesses in order to set the teams. An important issue is team setting whether it is teacher- or student-led. Team setting needs to vary for the students to experience different kinds of roles inside a team. This will give them the chance to develop different collaborative abilities. For example, working with others, being flexible, negotiating differently, not being always the leader, among others.

Washback Effects: Positive

The participant teachers commented several washback effects. T2, who previously expressed to average peer and teacher assessments, says “I like observing students being happy with their work, their classmates’ opinions and my feedback”. He adds “they [students] understand that they are not going to be working by themselves in the workplace”. It can be noted that T2 is preparing his students to enter the workforce and has a positive washback effect because of the students’ satisfaction with their work. T3 states that he is “generally satisfied with teamwork and its results, however, there are many things to improve”. T7 explains “I’ve seen a positive impact

on the students, they are developing self-critique, self-analysis, self-reflection and they are not only developing learning strategies, but also life competencies". However, T7 also recognizes that "there are not specific guidelines to assess teamwork because we find many ways, and there is no training on how to do it". Therefore, T2, T3 and T7 after implementing and grading teamwork have a positive washback effect caused for several reasons. These reasons are observing a positive impact on the development of learning strategies, abilities and competencies as well as, preparing the students for their future life. However, they recognize the need for training and that there are aspects to improve.

Washback Effects: Negative

On the other hand, there were teachers who express negative feelings. T1 states "I am not quite satisfied because I believe that I need to look for more teaching tools for teamwork, maybe there are aspects I do not know". In the same vein, T4 expresses "I am more or less satisfied... and not satisfied because we find a diversity of ways and not specific guidelines to assess teamwork." T5 adds "I think I need to revise the teamwork assignments and monitor my students better". Lastly, T6 who does not assign teamwork said "I don't believe in teamwork" arguing that the grade is subjective since all of the students work and receive a same grade thus, asks for individual work. By these teacher statements, it is the teachers' claim for more and specific training on implementing and evaluating teamwork.

In regards to the theme of Washback effects in general, most of the teachers have mixed feelings and degrees of satisfaction. They are satisfied when they see the positive impact that teamwork has on the students' academic and personal development. An interesting result is that although they are doing a very good job, they feel insecure of what they are doing and thus, claim for more training on how to implement and evaluate teamwork.

Conclusions

The study set out to explore the implementation and assessment practices of college linguistics teachers concerning out-of-class teamwork in seven different states in Mexico. Results evidence that the participants are knowledgeable about modern methods of education and the benefits and challenges of teamwork. They are also experienced in the implementation and assessment practices with the exception of one teacher who prefers individual work. This finding contradicts the OECD report that the “teaching, learning and assessment still take place in a somewhat ‘traditional setting’ in Mexico” (Santiago *et al.*, 2012). Another result was that most of the teachers assign projects, tasks and presentations that include some research work. The participants use qualitative instruments such as rubrics checklists and report sheets in agreement with Coombe *et al.*, (2007) who claim that marking alternative assessment tasks also require the development of other means of assessing. An interesting result was that some teachers grade the product and others also the process using hybrid marking that is, combining peer assessment, teacher assessment and self-assessment. The challenges that teachers mentioned referred to different degrees of student commitment, team setting and the need for training in students and teachers in regards to teamwork. The need for more teacher training was verified when the participants expressed mixed feelings and degrees of satisfaction in implementing and assessing teamwork even though, they carry out good work.

Therefore, an implication drawn from this study is the need for teacher education programs to include specific guidelines for implementing and evaluating teamwork since teachers feel insecure about their work. Noteworthy findings are the strategies teachers use to make teamwork effective and balance students' active participation in their own team to promote deep learning. These strategies are student preparation, diverse follow-up sessions and analysis of teamwork strategies and work.

As a result of this study, a proposal is made to guide effective teamwork to help novice teachers or teachers who feel insecure. This proposal is to follow six steps. First, prepare student on what teamwork entails, ex-

plain the project or task and ensure understanding. Second, set teams varying team formation for each new assignment to develop the practice of different roles inside the teams. Third, conduct follow up strategies to ensure students involvement such as tutorials, handing in individual progress work or reports, progress revisions and feedback sessions. Forth, plan activities for analysis of task collaboration and content objective by the team members to reflect on further modifications of the work. Fifth, remind students to compare the work with the checklist or rubric before handing in the project or designing the presentation. Sixth, use hybrid marking for the assessment stage.

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Appendix

Question Guide for Interview

1. Independently of the subject that you teach, what kinds of out-of-the-class teamwork assignments do you ask your students to do?
2. What kinds of knowledge or competencies do you expect that your students develop in that assignment?
3. How do you promote your students' individual responsibility within teamwork activities?
4. What kinds of strategies do you normally use to follow up teamwork or to find out any potential problems [for example: mentoring, class time to provide feedback, etc.]?
5. What are the evaluation instruments and criteria you use for teamwork?
6. What do you consider a rubric?
7. How do you grade teamwork activities outside the classroom?
8. How do you evaluate teamwork activities? Do you evaluate globally or each student separately?
9. What are the challenges that you face when you evaluate teamwork and how have you addressed them?
10. Are you satisfied with the process of evaluating teamwork outside the classroom? Why?
11. Do you believe that the evaluation strategies you use obtain a positive effect on students? Why?

Chapter 6

Standardized Tests for Assessing Young Learners' English Proficiency

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Abstract

With the growth of English language teaching in elementary education around the world, a demand to assess language proficiency has emerged. Language testing companies have developed tests to determine achievement, certification, progress, and proficiency. These tests are designed for audience ranging from 7 to 12 years old. This chapter analyzes seven tests to assess English proficiency of young language learners around the world.

Resumen

Con el crecimiento de la enseñanza del idioma inglés en la educación primaria en todo el mundo, ha surgido una demanda para evaluar el dominio del idioma. Las empresas dedicadas a la evaluación de idiomas han desarrollado exámenes para determinar los logros, la certificación, el progreso y el dominio. Estas evaluaciones están diseñadas para público de entre 7 y 12 años. Este capítulo analiza siete exámenes para evaluar el dominio del inglés de jóvenes estudiantes de idiomas en todo el mundo.

Introduction

In recent years, English language programs have been implemented as part of the school curricula in many countries where English is not the

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means of communication outside the classroom (Rich, 2014). In these English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, schools may have also considered administering a test. But, what test would be most suitable for their students?, their curricula?, their needs? There are several options that testing companies have made available to schools. The purpose of this article is to provide information on English language tests that school administrators, and teachers may consider when deciding which test to administer. The information presented here is an overview of seven tests designed to measure young learner' proficiency in English.

First, let us turn our attention to the target audience for these language tests. Young language learners are students between the ages of 5 and 12 learning another language besides their native language (Hasselgreen, 2012). In general terms, the students in this age group are attending elementary education where learning a language is one school subject. They usually do not have a choice in the language they would like to study, nor the types of assessments they would have. Young learners have specific characteristics such as cognitive development, learning stage, motivation, and attention that require special attention. When developing curricula, materials, activities, and assessments, these characteristics must be considered to develop language assessment instruments to be age appropriate.

There are at least six considerations to be made when assessing young language learners. According to Rea-Dickins (2000), there is a consensus that the following features should be present: *a*) tasks should be appealing to the age group, interesting and captivating, preferably with elements of game and fun; *b*) many types of assessment should be used, with the pupil's, the parents' and the teacher's perspectives involved; *c*) both the tasks and the forms of feedback should be designed so that the student's strengths (what he or she can do) are highlighted; *d*) the test taker should, at least under some circumstances, be given support in carrying out the tasks; *e*) the teacher should be given access to and support in understanding basic criteria and methods for assessing language ability; and, *f*) the activities used in assessment should be good learning activities in themselves. In general, tests for children have visuals and colors, are age appropriate in terms of tasks and length, should be scenario based, should be a good learning experience, and should be motivating to learn (Choi, 2008; Shaaban, 2001).

To be more specific, large-scale testing has four characteristics. McKay (2006) pointed out that they should be targeted for schools, administrators, and parents and should have a rigorous development process. Also, tests and examiners should be available. The use of technology was also emphasized. The author also indicated that the use of these tests are for institutions, program administrators teachers, and parents to make changes to curricula, modify teaching (long run), certify their students, and track students' performance.

This chapter will present a test review of seven standardized tests to assess proficiency in EFL learners. First, the procedures to select the tests will be presented. This will be followed by information about the tests.

Procedures

Reviewing tests consists of systematically analyzing information on tests. The first step in a test review is to locate the tests according to specific criteria for allowing the selection of available tests for assessing young learners in EFL contexts. In this case the criteria were the following: 1. standardized tests, 2. in English, 3. targeted to young learners (6-12 years old), 4. in EFL contexts, 5. designed by testing companies, and 6. currently available for administration. An online search using key words such as "English," "tests," "young learners," "children," "EFL" was conducted. After that, websites for major testing companies and publishing companies were searched to look for tests that met the criteria. Finally, a selection of tests to be included in the test review was done. Seven tests were chosen because they fulfilled the criteria established. Table 1 shows information at a glance on the tests in the first column of the table. General information about the developer (i.e. publishing company), delivery mode (paper and pencil, computer, or online), skills assessed (listening, speaking, reading, writing), Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) target level (Pre A1 to C2), and website is provided.

Table 1. *General Information about English Tests for Young Language Learners*

<i>Test</i>	<i>Developer</i>	<i>Delivery Mode</i>	<i>Skills Assessed</i>	<i>CEFR Target Level/ Results</i>	<i>Notes:</i>
Center for Applied Linguistics English Proficiency Test for Students: Listening and Reading (CAL EPT)	Center for Applied Linguistics	Paper-pencil	Reading Listening	CENNI (0-10) PreA1 to B1	Designed and administer for Programa Nacional de Inglés in Mexico
A2 Key (KET for schools)	Cambridge English	Paper-pencil or computer based	Reading & Writing Listening Speaking Grammar & Vocabulary	A2 but results may be from A1 to B1	Formerly named Key English Test for Schools
Pre A1 Starters, A1 Movers, A2 Flyers (YLE Test)	Cambridge English	Paper-pencil or online	Listening Reading & Writing Speaking	Pre A1 to A2	Formerly named Young Learners of English (YLE) Test
Bronze, Silver, Gold Michigan Young Learners of English (MYLE)	Michigan Language Assessments	Paper-pencil using an answer sheet	Listening Reading & Writing Speaking	Pre A1 to A2	
Pearson Test of English Young Learners (PTEYL)	Pearson	Paper-pencil	Listening Reading Speaking Writing	Pre A1 to A2	
Oxford Young Learners Placement Test (OYLPT)	Oxford University Press	Online (adaptive)	Language Use: Vocabulary, Functions, & Grammar Listening	Pre A1 to B1	
Test of English as a Foreign Language Primary (TOEFL-P)	Educational Testing Service	Paper-pencil and computer	Reading Listening Speaking	Pre A1 to B1	

Note: The text will use the acronyms in parentheses.

Information about the Tests

After reviewing the tests, several salient features across tests can be observed. The analysis will focus on: 1) the skills used to measure proficiency in a language, 2) the framework used in tests, 3) the tasks examinees have to do, 4) the variety of English used in tests, 5) the reporting methods, 6) the materials offered by testing companies, 7) the reliability and validity evidence provided, 8) the delivery modes used, and 9) strengths and weaknesses.

The tests were designed to measure the construct of proficiency in English through assessing a combination of the language skills. All of the tests assessed the receptive skill of listening. The OYLTP did not assess reading as a separate skill but used written text to test language use through vocabulary, function, and grammar. The productive skill of writing was usually combined with reading as can be seen in YLE, and MYLE. It seems that writing was limited to being able to write words or phrases. Only the KET for Schools and PTEYL had a writing task. In the former, the task was writing an email, while the latter was an integrated task with listening. For speaking, the OYLPT and CAL EPT did not assess it at all. For the rest of the tests, assessing speaking varied greatly. The KET for Schools had an interview with an examiner and two examinees at a time. A role-play between the students was one of the tasks. The YLE and MYLE had one-on-one conversation between the oral examiner and the examinee. There were tasks for finding differences, completing a story, finding the picture that did not belong, and a casual conversation about the examinee's life.

The PTEYL prompted speaking using a board game with the examinees which might make it less stressful in a testing situation. For the TOEFL-P, the speaking section consisted of descriptions, expressions, requests, questions, directions, and a narration. This was done using a computer in order for the rating to be scored by e-raters in a remote location using the feedback tool provided by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). All seven tests were aligned with the CEFR levels. This framework was developed to standardize curricula, materials, assessments of language in Europe (Council of Europe, 2001) but it has been adopted by other countries. Interestingly, one of the tests, the CAL EPT, was also aligned to the levels in

the Mexican certification of level in languages (CENNI) developed as a framework to assess and certify foreign language proficiency in Mexico, particularly in English (Secretaría de Educación Pública, n.d.). There are 20 levels in CENNI but the CAL EPT assessed up to the first 10 levels, which correspond to Pre-A1 to B1 levels in the CEFR.

The tasks that these tests present for the examinees attempt to resemble the tasks that school age children do in class. These are matching, completing sentences or paragraphs, coloring, describing pictures, completing stories, playing a board game, among others.

Hasselgreen (2005) highlighted the need to have a variety of tasks when assessing young learners. The tests that were examined offered a variety of tasks for the students but within the same format or context. Moreover, Wilson (2005) pointed out that tasks in tests for young learners should be a pleasant experience for the test takers. A common feature among the tests was the use of visuals as part of tasks throughout the tests. The KET for Schools, TOEFL-P, YLE, and MYLE had tasks that require examinees match pictures as part of the listening tasks. Table 2 has information of input, tasks, items, and time each section in the test has.

Regarding the variety of English used and accepted in the tests, British and American English were the dialectal varieties present. The KET for Schools, YLE, and OYLPT use British English in instructions and speech input but accept American English as responses to the tasks. MYLE focuses on American English accepting international varieties. The CAL EPT and TOEFL-P are tests that have been designed by American testing companies, and even though not specifically stated in the information available to the public, the focus might be American English but accepting other varieties in the responses from the test takers.

In terms of delivery mode, three different types were observed: paper-pencil, computer adaptive, and computerized. The most common was the paper-pencil administration. The OYLPT is the only computer adaptive tests. The YLE has a computer version but it is not adaptive. The purpose of the OYLPT is to place students in a level based on the answers they give through the computer.

When reporting scores to children and parents, due to the nature of these tests, the certificates have symbols such as shields (YLE), medals

Table 2. Skills Assessed per Test

Test	Listening			Reading			Writing			Speaking		
	Input	Tasks/Items	Time	Input	Tasks/Items	Time	Input	Task	Time	Input	Tasks	Time
CAL EPT for Students	Not specified	Not specified	45 min	Not specified	Not specified	45 min						
YLE	Conversations	5 25	25 min	Labeled pictures Picture Story Sentences Passage	6 40	30 min	Included in Reading testlets		In Reading time	Find the differences Story with pictures Odd one out Personal questions	4	5
MYLE	Multiple dialogues Conversation Dialogues	5 25	25 min	Labeled pictures Picture Story Sentences Passage	6 40	30 min	Included in Reading testlets		In Reading time	Find the differences Story with pictures Odd one out Personal questions	4	6
KET for Schools	Short conversations Long conversations Radio host	5 25	30 min	Ads Sentences Conversations Article Definitions Cloze Invitation	8 55	70 min	Email	1	In Reading time	Personal conversation Roleplay among candidates	2	10
OYLPT	Monologues Dialogue	3 12		(Not Reading) Language Use: Vocabulary Function Grammar cloze	3 18							
PTEYL	Continuous dialogues on the same topic	2 15	60 min total	Questions in dialogue Sentence to Picture Picture Passage	3 20	60 min total	Answer questions	1	60 min total	Board game Short talk	2	20
TOEFL Primary	Sentences Conversations Lecture	Not specified 36	30 min	Picture to choose sentence Definitions Email Passage	Not specified 36	30 min				Description Expression Requests Directions Narration	6	20

Note: Center for Applied Linguistics English Proficiency Test (CAL EPT); Key English Test for Schools (KET); Young Learners of English (YLE) Test; Michigan Young Learners English (MYLE); Pearson Test of English Young Learners (PTEYL); Oxford Young Learners Placement Test (OYLPT); Test of English as a Foreign Language Primary (TOEFL-P)

(MYLE), badges, or stars (TOEFL-P) and even a metaphor of launching a rocket (OYLPT). This makes the reports more appealing and easier to understand for the target population, children. However, this type of report might also be vague complicating the process of making decisions such as curricular changes or teaching training for institutions. For the institutions, the testing companies provide different types of reports that are numerical and have more information that can be used to monitor progress, or achievement. The CAL EPT reports provide two results; one is on the CEFR and the other on the CENNI. The reason for this might be to provide information to teachers, school administrators, and curricula developers in Mexico about the proficiency and progress of students in public schools.

Most of the testing companies offered preparation materials for the students and teachers to use in class. The materials could be vocabulary lists (KET for Schools, YLE), sample items (TOEFL-P), previous tests (YLE, PTEYL), even lesson plans (OYLPT).

Regarding psychometric information on these tests of English for children, the information on reliability indices and standard error of measurement, was not available to the public in most of the cases. YLE and KET for Schools are produced by Cambridge English Language Assessments and information on reliability was provided. The coefficients for Cronbach's alpha and the Standard Error of Measurement provided indicate that they are reliable assessments. CAL EPT pilot test data was analyzed using the Rasch model. In that case, medium to high coefficients of person reliability were found. This reliability shows how well test takers' proficiency levels are differentiated (Myford, 2006). Higher values indicate higher differentiation. MYLE reported the percentages of distribution of test taker scores (in medals) per section in each of the tests for the 2014 administrations. This information did not provide evidence for reliability. An interesting aspect to mention is that Cambridge English Language Assessment and Michigan Language Assessment have similar tests since both organizations have worked closely. Weyant and Chisholm (2014) described the how test fairness is approached by both institutions. CaMLA and Cambridge English Language Assessment adhere to six principles of fairness: demonstrate respect for people, demonstrate respect for personal convictions and beliefs, demonstrate sensitivity to population differences and world knowledge,

avoid undue negativity, avoid unduly controversial or upsetting topics, and avoid construct-irrelevant knowledge.

Each test had different strengths and weaknesses. These features may depend on the use that the test had. In other words, it depends on what the test is needed for, the institution's resources (computers, spaces, finances), and practical implications, that the characteristics may make a specific test more suitable than the rest. The last two columns of table 3 show the strengths and weaknesses of each test.

Table 3. *Analysis of Tests*

<i>Test</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Delivery Mode</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Skills Assessed</i>	<i>Reliability</i>	<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
CAL EPT	Proficiency (Program success)	Paper and Pencil	90 min	Listening Reading	IRT person index around .80	– Tailored for a specific context	– 2 skills – Lengthy
KET for Schools	Certification at A2 CEFR	Paper and Pencil or Computer	110 min	Reading & Writing Listening Speaking	Total alpha higher than .90	– Designed with school topics	– Lengthy
YLE	Proficiency and Achievement	Paper and pencil or Online	60 min	Listening Reading & Writing Speaking	alpha per section higher than .80	– 4 skills – Trained oral examiners	– Oral examiners needed on site
MYLE	Proficiency and Certification form Pre-A to A2 CEFR	Paper and pencil with answer sheet	60 min	Listening Reading & Writing Speaking	Not available	– 4 skills	– Oral examiners needed on site
OYLPT	Placement	Online	30-40 min	Language use (Gr and Vo) Listening	Not available	– Fast scores (Computer adaptive)	– Not by skills
PTEYL	Proficiency	Paper and Pencil	60 min	Listening Reading Speaking Writing	Not available	– Scenario based	– Limited times for test administration
TOEFL-P	Placement and Achievement	Paper and Pencil with computer for speaking	80 min	Listening Reading Speaking	Not available	– Academic oriented	– Multi-mode delivery – Tasks may not be appropriate for target population

Conclusion

This chapter presented an overview of the tests that may be useful for different purposes. Each test has a unique set of features that make it a good fit for the purposes that schools and programs may have. It is up to the user to decide which test would be the most beneficial for their goals. In the case of young language learners, it is important to consider the tasks, testing time, as well as cognitive maturity to select the test that will be used.

In summary, the analysis of standardized tests for assessing young learners' English proficiency underscores the diverse array of options available to educators and institutions. Each of the seven tests reviewed offers distinct features tailored to various needs and contexts, reflecting the growing emphasis on accurately measuring language development in young learners.

The effectiveness of a language assessment tool hinges on several factors, including the alignment with developmental stages of children, the range of language skills evaluated, and the relevance of the tasks to everyday language use. This review highlights that while all the tests incorporate essential elements such as listening comprehension and reading, their approaches to assessing writing and speaking vary significantly. This variation points to the necessity for schools and programs to carefully consider the specific requirements and contexts of their students when selecting an assessment tool.

Furthermore, the diverse delivery modes, ranging from paper-pencil tests to computer-based formats, demonstrate the integration of technology in modern language assessment, offering flexible options for administrators. The choice of assessment should also consider factors such as the test's alignment with established proficiency frameworks like the CEFR, and the availability of preparatory materials which can enhance both teaching and learning experiences.

Ultimately, the decision on which test to implement should be guided by the test's suitability to the educational objectives, the cognitive and developmental needs of the learners, and practical considerations such as resources and administrative capacity. By aligning assessment tools with

these factors, educators can better support young learners in their language development journey, ensuring that assessments are both effective and meaningful in evaluating English proficiency.

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Chapter 7

Emergency Remote Teaching Experiences of Language Teachers during the Pandemic in Mexico: Challenges and Recommendations for the New Normal

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted traditional education, emergency remote teaching (ERT) was the answer to try to solve the situation. This transition to ERT posed significant challenges, such as the limited technological resources, and unpreparedness among educators. Many teachers lacked the necessary knowledge and skills for effective online instruction, and although some courses were offered to help them improve their professional development, there was the perception of a need for other courses related to keeping students motivated and providing emotional support. This mixed-method explanatory sequential research includes a quantitative followed by a qualitative phase with the aim to show the perspectives of language teachers in Mexico about their ERT experience during the pandemic and their recommendations after it. 257 teachers answer the survey and 26 agreed to answer a follow up semi-structured interview to provide further insights into their practices. The Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework was used to interpret results pertaining the teaching practices of language instructors during emergency remote online learning and highlight challenges and recommendations.

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Resumen

La pandemia de Covid-19 alteró la educación tradicional, la enseñanza remota de emergencia (ERT por sus siglas en inglés) fue la respuesta para intentar solucionar la situación. Esta transición a ERT planteó desafíos importantes, como los recursos tecnológicos limitados y la falta de preparación de los educadores. Muchos docentes carecían de los conocimientos y habilidades necesarios para una instrucción en línea efectiva y, aunque se ofrecieron algunos cursos para ayudarlos a mejorar su desarrollo profesional, se percibía la necesidad de otros cursos relacionados con mantener motivados a los estudiantes y brindarles apoyo emocional. Esta investigación secuencial explicativa de método mixto incluye una fase cuantitativa seguida de una cualitativa con el objetivo de mostrar las perspectivas de profesores de idiomas en México sobre su experiencia de ERT durante la pandemia y sus recomendaciones después de la misma. 257 profesores respondieron la encuesta y 26 aceptaron responder una entrevista semiestructurada de seguimiento para entrevista para proporcionar más información sobre sus prácticas. El modelo de la Comunidad de Indagación (CoI) fue utilizado para interpretar los resultados relacionados con las prácticas de enseñanza de los profesores de idiomas durante el aprendizaje remoto en línea de emergencia resaltar desafíos y recomendaciones.

Keywords: Community of Inquiry (CoI), Covid-19 pandemic, emergency remote online teaching, instructor practices, instructor satisfaction.

Introduction

The involuntary confinement caused by the Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) Pandemic forced teachers and students to rely heavily on technology to continue planned educational programs. This alteration was driven by emergency and involved minimal adjustments to existing course materials, focusing on instructional continuity rather than a fully developed digital learning experience. Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) was the term coined by Hodges *et al.*, (2020) to refer to a situation such as the one previ-

ously described. Hodges *et al.*, emphasize that ERT has three defining characteristics: it is temporary, driven by emergency, and it is conducted remotely. ERT is different from online education mainly because online education is intentionally structured for a digital environment, incorporating specific design elements to optimize online interaction and engagement. Also, online education includes more comprehensive interactivity between participants than distance learning, which may not include regular interactive sessions. This distinction between ERT, online education, and distance learning is important since it highlights that in ERT there is the need for adaptable educational frameworks in unplanned shifts to remote learning.

According to a study by the World Economic Forum in 2022, due to the flexible access to online education, online learning courses have been growing steadily in popularity. Before the Covid-19 Pandemic, online learning courses were still lacking of a good reputation. However, the need to resort to online teaching due to the lockdown helped to prove that online learning was not only possible but that it could have positive results. (Wood, 2022).

ERT, introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic, led to a quick shift to online platforms without the more careful planning typical of the regular online course design. This change impacted the field of language teaching as well, since language learning requires continuous communication practice and this is usually provided by having students participate in situations that foster foreign language use. This type of activities was thought to be easier to conduct in face-to-face settings and more challenging in an online format especially when most teachers lacked of knowledge about the resources that could be used for the practice of productive and receptive language skills.

Considering the latter, the teachers could have felt overwhelmed by having to design online activities that mirrored the ones normally carried out in the face-to-face setting. A model that emphasizes the creation of meaningful online instruction and that could be found helpful as a guide to the planning and design of online educational experiences is the Community of Inquiry. This model was proposed by Arbaugh *et al.*, (2008) and considers three types of presence: cognitive, social, and teaching presence

so that the elements necessary for a successful online learning experience are provided since they help foster the establishment of a learning community. Starting from the exploration of the perceptions of those involved in the online teaching-learning process affords information that will serve as the basis for the improvement of courses in this modality.

The purpose of this study in a first phase was to document and analyze the perceptions about emergency remote teaching by language teachers in Mexico; that is, to know about the perceived challenges of teaching and learning online found during this time. In a second phase, in order to propose recommendations for an effective online language teaching experience, it was intended to know more about the type of professional development necessary for the foreign language teachers and their opinion on the effective pedagogical practices for a hybrid or fully online language learning practice while still working in the Pandemic and after this emergency.

Based on the purpose of the study, two main research questions were used as a guide:

1. What was the language teachers' experience of in the ERT during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Mexico?
2. After having this experience, what are some recommendations to have a more effective online language teaching experience in online or hybrid courses in the near future?

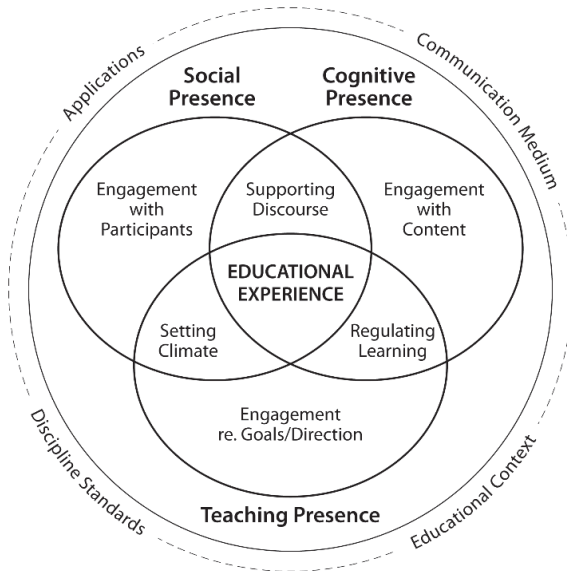
The option of offering online or hybrid language courses is an aspect to consider in institutions that aim to bring educational training to a larger student population. It is therefore important to explore this possibility considering the main providers of this instruction, that is, the language educators. Thus, this work will share language teachers' perspectives and recommendations about online language teaching education after having experienced the need to teach online, overcome it, and learned some lessons.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

The Community of Inquiry (CoI) Framework

The Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework proposed by (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000) is a collaborative-constructivist model that considers Dewey's educational philosophy and social constructivism. In this community instructors and students are the main participants in the educational process. The core elements that foster the interaction between the participants are three, namely, cognitive presence, social presence, and teaching presence (see figure 1). Cognitive presence refers to the extent to which the learning objectives are achieved. Social presence is about encouraging collaboration among the ones involved in the online course;

Figure 1. *The Community of Inquiry (CoI) theoretical framework*



Note. The Community of Inquiry (CoI) theoretical framework (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2001) is perhaps the best-known and most researched approach to designing learning experiences for the online environment. The Community of Inquiry framework. Image used with permission from the Community of Inquiry website and licensed under the CC-BY-SA International 4.0 license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>). The original image is located at <https://www.thecommunityofinquiry.org/coi>.

technological tools are used to provide an environment of open, affective and effective communication. The presence of the teacher or teaching presence is related to the designing and organizing the course, facilitating discourse, and providing direct teaching, so that the elements necessary for a successful learning experience are provided. Although this framework has had some critiques from other researchers saying that other presences should be included, it has been widely used in online teaching and learning in general (Castellanos-Reyes, 2020). Arbaugh *et al.*, (2008) developed a 34-item CoI instrument, which was found to be reliable after conducting qualitative research. This instrument, the CoI survey, has been used as a reliable resource to evaluate and develop online courses as a tool to designing community in virtual environments.

a) Cognitive Presence

Garrison *et al.*, (2001) defined cognitive presence as “the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse in a critical community of inquiry” (p. 11). The Cognitive Presence focuses on the learning process; it helps maintain rigorous cognitive engagement. According to the same authors the cognitive presence includes four phases: triggering, exploration, integration, and resolution. Triggering means the inclusion of a situation or problem that will initiate the inquiry process; exploration is conducted when searching for relevant information, engaging in reflection, and sharing explanations; integration is when the information from different resources is compared and contrasted to construct the meaning; finally, in the resolution, possible solutions are presented with their respective support in which learning and comprehension is visible.

b) Social Presence

According to Rourke *et al.*, (1999) open and affective communication, and cohesiveness are the three necessary elements to have as part of social

presence. Open communication refers to being able to have the ones involved in the online interaction(s) feel that they can express themselves freely and respectfully responding to others inquiries and feedback. Affective communication is related to the ability to express emotions and feelings since this facilitates interaction, inclusion, reduces isolation and values personal experiences. This can be done perhaps by using humor, sharing personal experiences, and using words or phrases to how support. Cohesiveness refers to the ability of work as a team to achieve a common goal, in this case a learning goal. This can be achieved by making everyone feel part off the community, for example, using “we”, calling each other using the names. In the light of this, it can be said that social presence might have an influence in students’ performance due to the link it has to interaction, motivation to participate and to commit to the course that can foster better learning (Anggraini & Zuraida (2023).

c) Teaching Presence

Anderson *et al.*, (2001) define teaching presence as the design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social processes to be able to reach to meaningful educational learning outcomes. They also state that the three characteristics of the online instructor can be contained in the following categories: design and organization, facilitating discourse, and direct instruction. In an online course the process of designing and organizing might be more time consuming than a face-to-face classroom based one. There must be a clear structure for the learners since they will have access to it at different times. In this sense, instructors have to set curriculum goals clearly, design methods, establish time parameters, use the medium effectively, and establish netiquette. In regards to the instructor being a facilitator of discourse, the authors mention the importance of moving the conversation forward by identifying areas of agreement and disagreement, encouraging students’ contributions, setting climate for learning, prompting discussion, and assessing the process. The instructors also have to show that they have an in-depth knowledge of the topics and students also expect them to explain and solve doubts; indicators of this are the presentation of content,

summarization of discussion, diagnose and clarification of misconceptions, and answer to technical concerns.

Intersection of the CoI Elements

As it can be observed in figure 1, the convergence of the CoI elements at its core provides the educational experience. The goal is to that through this experience the participants in the community collaborate and engage in significant discourse and reflection to co-construct meaning and reach to an understanding.

The intersection of the social presence with the cognitive presence shows as a result “supporting discourse”. Cognitive engagement is desired to encourage students’ analysis and co-construction of knowledge and with the help of the creation of a space where students can socialize with others and have access to instructor support and motivation, discourse can be more open and interactive.

Social presence and teaching presence intersection “sets the climate” for the exploration of ideas and new content. Social presence helps to establish a respectful environment were students can feel included and can engage in meaningful interactions.

Teaching presence and cognitive presence help in the “regulation of the learning” by designing appealing authentic tasks that maintain the learning community active. Instructors have to provide direct instruction and assess their own teaching approaches to obtain feedback to guide in their teaching practice.

Principles of Good Practice for the Online Environment

Also used as a guide to develop online courses we can find “the seven principles of good practice for the online environment” adapted by Sorensen and Baylen (2009) from Chickering and Gamson’s (1987) widely used “Seven Principles of Good Practice for Undergraduate Education”. The

principles for the online learning space are the following: student-teacher contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, time on task, communicate high expectations, and respect diverse ways of learning.

Fiock (2020) used CoI and the good practice principles by Sorensen and Baylen (2009) results from research studies to combine the framework and the principles and provide a summary of instructional activities to be used in the online setting and produce a better online experience. For example, the instructional activities “Incorporate audio and video within the course content” and “Share personal stories, professional experiences, and use of emoticons” would be part of establishing social presence from the CoI and the principle of student-teacher contact from the good practice principles.

Col in ERT and Language Teaching

In the context of ERT for language teaching, the CoI framework provides a valuable lens through which to examine the challenges and opportunities presented by the sudden shift to online instruction. It emphasizes the need for language teachers to not only deliver content but also to foster a sense of community and facilitate meaningful interaction in the virtual environment. Establishing social presence in the online setting helps to reduce anxiety and the feeling of isolation and supports language practice by having students work in groups using breakout rooms and thus creating community. Promoting cognitive presence helps in the encouragement of developing critical thinking and meaningful activities for the stimulation of interaction and reflection about language use. The teaching presence is exercised by establishing clear and organized language learning goals and by providing feedback on spoken and written language. This application of CoI highlighted the importance of designing online language learning tasks with intentional strategies for building community, fostering engagement, and ensuring clarity and support, which are beneficial aspects for all online language instruction, not just in emergency settings.

Technology Use in ERT Contexts

According to Maggio (2021) the experience in emergency remote teaching presented two phases in regards to teaching practices. The author mentions that in the first phase, instructors tried to provide online spaces full of content or information and in the second phase, the main goal was to develop process of interaction by trying to have the face-to-face communication forms in synchronic videoconferences; a technological resource that existed but was not as popular. ERT was different from the regular online teaching experiences since the intensive use of technological resources had to be improvised and many of the materials used was not carefully selected.

Challenges in ERT for Language Teaching

Studies related to the challenges faced by instructors mention issues in relation to teacher preparation, students' engagement, assessment, and feedback. In Akram *et al.*, (2021) mixed methods research with surveys and interviews about the challenges faced by university professors in Pakistan during the Pandemic the themes that emerged were class management, lack of guidance, limited resources, low attendance, lack of technical skills, communication barriers, and difficulty in assessment. 82 faculty members from different disciplines answered the survey and 15 of them were interviewed. Difficulty in monitoring students, lack of student engagement, poor time management, difficulty delivering content, difficulty in practical work were the aspects related to class management. Lack of training, lack of guidance and lack of workshops were mentioned and classified under lack of guidance. Among the limited resources the professor mentioned electricity failure and lack of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) infrastructure, poor internet connectivity and lack of time. Students' low-interest, less participation, and limited work-space were the aspects included under low attendance. Limited technology competence, technical use in pedagogy and technological experience showed faculty's lack of technical skills. The communication barriers found were insuffi-

cient feedback, improper online discussion and less student-instructor interaction. As for the difficulty in assessment, professors perceived students' resistance, teachers' incompetence, and also found the online experience less useful for practical evaluation.

According to Shieh & Hsieh (2021) the use of interactive content also plays an important role in online learning. It is recommended to use multimedia: videos, audio clips, and interactive exercises to keep learners engaged and enhance comprehension. Game-based elements such as quizzes, badges, and leaderboards also help to motivate and engage students. Their study involved 275 product design students who engaged in e-learning for 15 weeks. The instrument used was a questionnaire which was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), factor analysis, reliability analysis, regression analysis, and analysis of variance to test the various hypotheses.

A quantitative study by Rakhmanina *et al.*, (2021) about students' participation in online courses during the Pandemic also showed that students perceived that they found the listening skill as the most difficult to develop online. The study had 66 participants and the questionnaire metrics had four main indicators: 1) student's participation, 2) language difficulties levels, 3) internet issues, and 4) online learning platform suited with their needs and conditions. Most of these students answered that they found listening (40%) as the most difficult skill to practice online followed by speaking (20%). Some of the reasons were that it was difficult to find a quiet place to practice listening or had trouble accessing the exercises. About speaking, they mentioned that they felt shy and it seemed odd to practice role plays and other speaking exercises in front of the screen. 42% mentioned that the internet connection was not adequate for online learning.

In a mixed methods study that included answers from 725 teachers from the European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education (CercleS), Schaffner & Stefanutti (2021) found that teachers need constant training and that teachers perceived that most students were able to learn; however, they felt that the students lacked of speaking skill practice.

In a qualitative study in Philippines by Gipal, Carrillo and Mallonga (2022) that involved three English as a Second Language (ESL) university teachers, about teacher challenges and experiences during the pandemic

findings addressed students' lack of participation and motivation, internet connection problems, and a need for professional development.

Advantages of ERT in Language Learning

According to a study by Hickenlooper & Bell (2022), Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) in language teaching presented disadvantages; however, some advantages could also be perceived. Increased accessibility is a major benefit, as ERT allowed students to participate in language learning from diverse locations, overcoming geographical barriers and making education more inclusive. Additionally, ERT fostered the development of digital literacy, equipping both students and teachers with essential digital skills, from navigating virtual platforms to utilizing online resources effectively—skills that are increasingly valuable in the modern, technology-driven world (Nayman & Bavli, 2022). Furthermore, ERT encouraged innovative teaching methods by prompting educators to experiment with multimedia tools, gamified learning, and interactive applications. These methods engage students in ways that may not have been explored in traditional classrooms, ultimately enhancing language acquisition and student motivation.

Recommendations from Previous Studies

Professional Development

Isaee & Barjesteh (2022) conducted phenomenological research and interviewed 18 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers who had practiced online and face-to-face (F2F) teaching. Results from the semi-structured interviews showed that online teaching was perceived as more demanding than F2F instruction and that EFL teachers' Professional Development needs for online teaching could be classified into five main categories including pedagogical, content, designing and technological, communication and social skills, and classroom management.

According to Compton (2009) online language teaching requires dif-

ferent skills than face-to-face language teaching and teaching content subjects online. This is because the objective of language teaching is for students to develop their communicative competence which involves team interactions, for example. Compton proposes a framework of important skills, roles, and responsibilities in the online language teaching environment according to novice, proficient and expert teachers. The features in that framework are related to technological and pedagogical aspects and the evaluation of online language teaching. Technological aspects refer to knowledge and ability to handle software and hardware related issues; the pedagogical aspects refer to the facilitation of learning activities; and teaching and learning and assessment skills refer to the analytical skills to assess tasks and the course in general to do the modifications necessary to achieve the objectives.

Language teachers had to adapt their face-to-face (F2F) methodologies to the online environment. One of the main objectives was to foster or facilitate interaction. A mixed method study by Lee (2021) that involved the use of a survey, interviews, students' reflection papers, and the instructor's field notes, aimed to identify factors that enhanced the quality of online education and learner satisfaction of the 20 college students who participated in the study and who were enrolled in an online Multimedia-assisted Language Learning (MALL) course. It is important to mention that the instructor developed the course based on the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation & Evaluation) (Hess & Greer, 2016). This is an instructional design model that has proven to be effective (Tamilarasan, Vijayakumar & Anupama, 2021). The results indicated that the students preferred face-to-face classes mainly, however, they perceived online learning effective because the instructor's provided prompt feedback, promoted interaction among students, and designed tasks carefully. In the same study, Lee (2021) used a survey to ask students about their perception of previous online courses and they answered that their teachers lacked training to teach online. Additionally, students stated that teachers were promoting teacher-student interaction and student-content interaction but not student-student interaction. We have to remember that in the beginning of the Pandemic some of the features such as breakout rooms, now commonly found in Zoom, Meets or TEAMS, the main plat-

forms used to teach online, were not yet available and that could have been one of the reasons why teachers were not promoting student-student interaction.

Liang *et al* (2021) wanted to know how Chinese students had perceived their meaningful online English learning (MOEL) during the Pandemic; thus, they applied a survey to 529 Chinese university students on their perceptions of authentic language learning (AULL), self-directed learning (SDL), collaborative learning (CL), and their English self-efficacy (ESE) during this period. The survey was validated through factor analysis, and structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to identify the role of authentic language learning in predicting students' English self-efficacy. Their results showed that AULL through CL and the use of technology led to language improvement and more confidence in the foreign language use. That is, the use of authentic tasks and collaboration among students fostered language learning.

In summary, Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) unlike planned online education, lacks the deliberate course design. Online learning environments benefit from a more structured, interactive framework that supports student engagement, since it is paramount for communication and interaction. During the ERT period, many language courses were adapted quickly to online formats, creating challenges in engagement, motivation, and communication. The Community of Inquiry (CoI) model provides a framework to guide effective online teaching. CoI emphasizes three interconnected elements crucial for online learning: social, cognitive, and teaching presence. Applying CoI principles in online language teaching, especially during ERT, helps create a more supportive and engaging learning environment despite the sudden transition.

Research Methodology

The present study adopted a mixed-method explanatory sequential research design in which there was a quantitative followed by a qualitative phase; a survey was applied and some interviews were conducted after it in order to elaborate on the quantitative results found in the first phase (Cre-

swell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) this combination of quantitative with qualitative research can provide a general understanding of the problematic studied. Thus, this investigation was conducted in two phases. In the first phase the language teachers' perceptions were documented and analyzed through the use of an online survey. In the second phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a selected group of participants to explore the language teachers online teaching experience views in more depth.

Participants

An online survey was distributed in mail lists and shared in different social media and 257 language teachers in different states of Mexico answered it. Their participation was voluntary and no compensation was provided. These professors work in education institutions in different levels from elementary to college and university, and teach different languages not only English. The majority of the participants were women ($n = 177$, 68.9%), while men represented 31.1% ($n = 80$). Also, the majority were more than 40 years old ($n = 143$, 55.6%), and had more than 15 years of teaching experience ($n = 120$, 46.7%). Additionally, most of them worked in higher education institutions ($n = 213$, 82.8%) in Sonora ($n = 68$, 26.4%) and taught English ($n = 239$, 93%). Table 1 below presents the participants demographic details:

Instruments

The research instruments included a survey and a semi-structured interview. The survey was administered online using Google Forms. It consisted of a total of 28 items, 6 were used to gather demographic information (age, gender, experience, state and level of the institution where they worked). The following items included Likert scale items, multiple choice and open questions and asked about the resources used for online teach-

Table 1. *Participants demographic information*

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Details</i>
Gender	Male: 80 Female: 177
Age	25 years old or less: 5 26-30 years old: 35 31-40 years old: 74 More than 40 years old: 143
Teaching Experience	1-2 years: 6 2-5 years: 21 5-10 years: 47 10-15 years: 63 More than 15 years: 120
Type of Institution where they teach	Elementary School: 25 High School: 9 Higher Education: 213 ; Normal Superior (Teaching Training College) (11), and University (202) Others: 10; Freelance (5), and Language Institutes (5)
States	Aguascalientes (1), Baja California Norte (5), Baja California Sur (1), Campeche (2), CDMX (22), Chiapas (8), Chihuahua (4), Coahuila (1), Durango (4), Estado de México (21), Guanajuato (2), Guerrero (1), Hidalgo (3), Jalisco (6), Michoacán (1), Morelos (1), Nayarit (1), Nuevo León (5), Oaxaca (7), Puebla (5), Querétaro (16), Quintana Roo (2), Sinaloa (1), SLP (7), Sonora (68) , Tabasco (2), Tamaulipas (18), Tlaxcala (4), Veracruz (13), Yucatán (23), Zacatecas (2)
Language taught	English (239) , French (7), German (4), Italian (2), Japanese (2), Spanish (3)

Note. Information in bold represents the majority of answers in each aspect.

ing, challenges and advantages of online teaching, student participation, teachers perceived needs, and their recommendations. Finally, the last item asked participants to provide their email in case they were interested in being contacted to answer the interview questions (see Appendix A). The survey included detailed consent information, and participants were asked to proceed only if they agreed to participate. No compensation was offered. Participants were invited to provide their email address if they were willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview to share additional insights into their experiences.

A total of 257 teachers answered the survey and 86 of them provided their emails and were subsequently contacted by email to schedule their interview. They were informed that the interviews were going to be in groups of 10 participants as maximum and were asked to select a preferred date from nine options and to register via a Google Form created for this purpose. In the registration form, participants received further informa-

tion on the confidentiality measures and were informed that each interview session would be limited to a maximum duration of 40 minutes. Of those invited, 26 teachers were able to attend and participated in the focus group interviews, which were conducted via Zoom. These sessions followed a semi-structured interview format, covering the same core topics from the survey. However, participants were encouraged to freely discuss their approaches to online language teaching, their struggles given the emergency and the characteristics of the experience, as well as their efforts to set a positive example for their students during those challenging times. Interviews were transcribed using the ms Word Dictate tool and revised by the researchers. Data from the interviews was categorized and codified considering the main themes of interest in this research. Information about the instructors was recorded by following the characteristics given in their general description; i.e. I1-M4-M15-HE (I1 = Instructor 1, M4= More than 40 years old, M15=More than 15 years of experience, HE=Higher Education Institution).

Discussion of Results

In this section, results from the survey and semi-structured interview will be shared. A total of 257 teachers answered the survey, and 26 participated in the interviews. Data from the survey pertinent to answering the research questions will be presented along with the data obtained from the interviews to support the quantitative results. The research questions that guided this study were the following:

1. What was the language teachers' experience of in the ERT during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Mexico?
2. After having this experience, what are some recommendations to have a more effective online language teaching experience in online or hybrid courses in the near future?

Language Teachers' Experience of Online Teaching during the Pandemic in Mexico

In order to answer the first research question, we will present the data gathered from the items that helped us respond it. It is important to point out that many of the questions had the option of selecting more than one answer and had the option for teachers to include their own opinions.

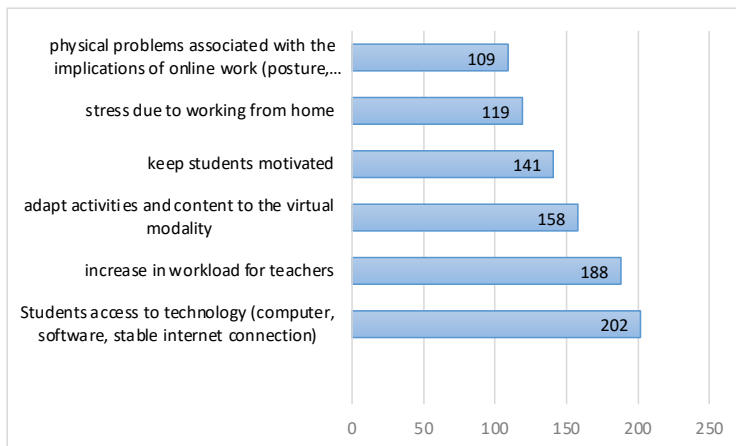
The majority of the teachers mentioned that they used a combination of laptop (n = 232, 90%) and smartphone (n=154, 60%) to teach their online classes, and only some answered they used a tablet (n = 40, 15%) and or desktop computer (n = 47, 18%). 53% (n = 135) mentioned that they were already familiar with LSM platforms such as moodle, Schoology, and/or EdModo as an additional resource to their face-to-face courses, 92 teachers (36%) were already using resources such as Kahoot, Socrative, and Quizziz, and only 41(16%) mentioned that their previous experience was almost null. An interesting data was that only 53 teachers (21%) mentioned that they had already used Zoom or Skype for online interaction before the pandemic. This indicated that the majority of the teachers were not familiar with these resources and had to learn how to use them.

Students access to technology was the main challenge perceived by teachers during this period; 79%, that is, 202 teachers selected this option. In the interviews, teachers mentioned that students struggled to be in class on time and in many cases it was due to unstable or slow internet connection. A teacher said that in some households, students were sharing the computer with their siblings and it was not always possible for them to use their cellphone to attend class either. All 26 teachers interviewed mentioned how their workload had been increased and 73% (n = 188) selected this option in the survey. According to 55% (n = 141) of the teachers, it was also frustrating to keep students motivated. One of the interviewed teachers stated “knowing that my students are not doing the work that I spent hours preparing (which, in fact, they also do in face-to-face classes!)” has been the most difficult part of teaching online. We could notice here that unmotivated students were not helping the teachers to be motivated and it was discouraging for some. The adaptation of activities and content to the virtual environment was a challenge for some teachers

(n = 158, 61%) since as it was explained in the interviews sessions, it represented learning to use a new tool or resource in many cases and that also was time-consuming. All interviewed teachers mentioned they were stressed; they stated different reasons: “having to work while taking care of my own children”, “handling my own space and time”, “the extra time I’m spending in evaluation and learning about new resources”; in the survey 46% (n = 119) chose that working from home generated them stress. Physical problems associated with the implications of working online such as posture and eyestrain was another challenge faced by the teachers: all the teachers interviewed agreed, and 42%(n = 109) selected this option from the list in the survey. These results are similar to the ones found by Akram *et al.*, (2021) and Isaee and Barjesteh (2022): lack of student engagement, poor time management, difficulty delivering content, and lack of training. The following chart (see figure 2) shows the challenges discussed by the teachers when they had to opt for online language teaching.

Beside challenges, teachers also found that that teaching online had pleasantly surprised them. In this item, the teachers were asked to select from a list, they also had the option to include their own reason and could select more than one reason. Their answers to this question can be observed in the following chart (see figure 3). The possibility of experiment-

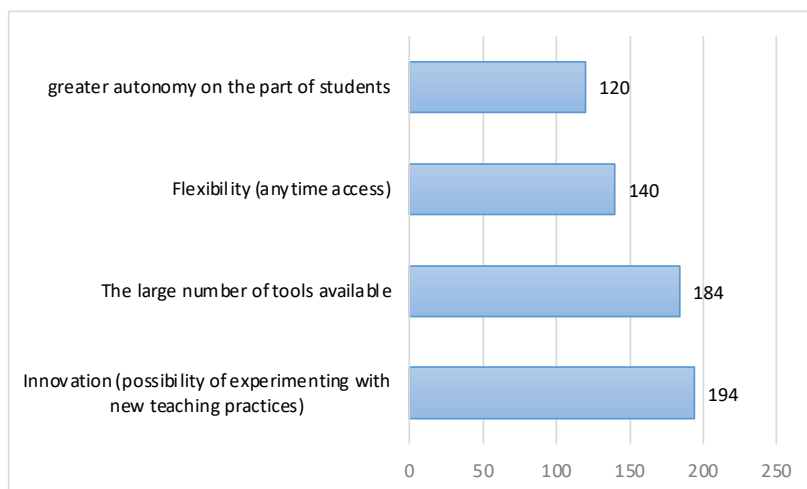
Figure 2. Challenges faced when moving to Emergency Remote Teaching during the Pandemic



Note. These answers represent frequencies. The teachers could select more than one option. This graph represents the answers that had 40% or more selections. N=257.

ing with new practices was something that the majority of teachers liked ($n = 194$, 75%). They also mentioned that there were many tools they were not aware of before going online and that they had found that refreshing ($n = 184$, 72%). 54% ($n = 140$) of the teachers were pleased about the flexibility that the modality allowed and also, 47% ($n = 120$) mentioned that students had to learn to be more independent and that was an advantage.

Figure 3. *Advantages perceived in online language teaching during the Pandemic*

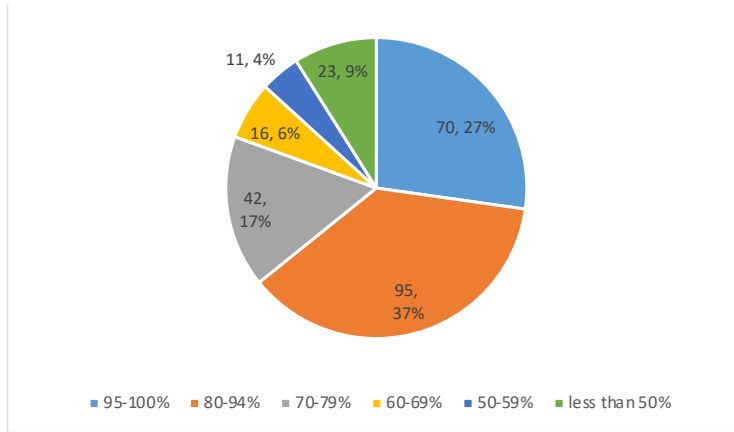


Note. The reasons presented here are the ones that were chosen 40% of the time or more. $N=275$.

One of the disadvantages perceived in online learning is that students seem to be less attentive since it is difficult to know if they are paying attention. Interviewed teachers shared that their students' cameras could be off during the class and it was not possible in many cases for the teachers to "make" them turn it on since they had to respect their students' reasons for not doing it. Despite the fact that the working conditions were inadequate, 165 teachers (64%) reported that they had more than 80% of the students participating in and attending their classes (see figure 4).

Among the reasons why there was lack of participation from the students were the unstable internet connection ($n = 195$, 76%) or lack of computer equipment to work with (i.e. laptop, tablet, smartphone) ($n = 159$, 62%). These results were similar to the ones found by Gipal, Carrillo

Figure 4 . Students' participation in online classes



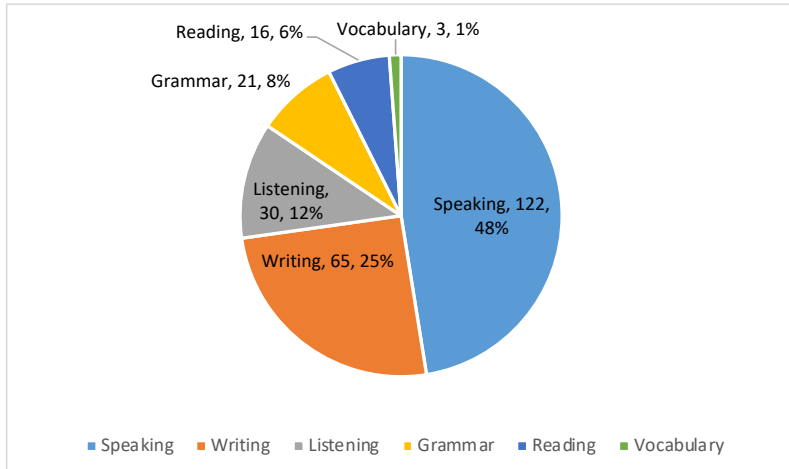
Note. N=275.

& Mallonga (2022) who also mentioned internet connection difficulties and lack of participation from students. Some other reasons related to this issue mentioned by the interviewed teachers in our research were that students had to work to help their parents, had health issues in the family, or presented anxiety and depression.

Teachers were also asked about the most difficult and the easiest skill to practice online and the majority responded that the most difficult skill was speaking (see figure 5) and the easiest was listening (see figure 6). In the results for the easiest skill we can observe that that even though listening was selected as the easiest (23%), the speaking skill was very close to it (21%), and when they were asked about the most difficult skill, speaking is the skill that got selected the most. It is also interesting to notice that these results like the ones found by Schaffner & Stefanutti (2021) and Rakhmanina *et al.*, (2021)(n = 224, 87%), got as a result the skills of listening and speaking. It is important to point out that the results obtained in this research are teachers' perspectives and Rakhmanina *et al.*, (2021) study considered students' perspectives.

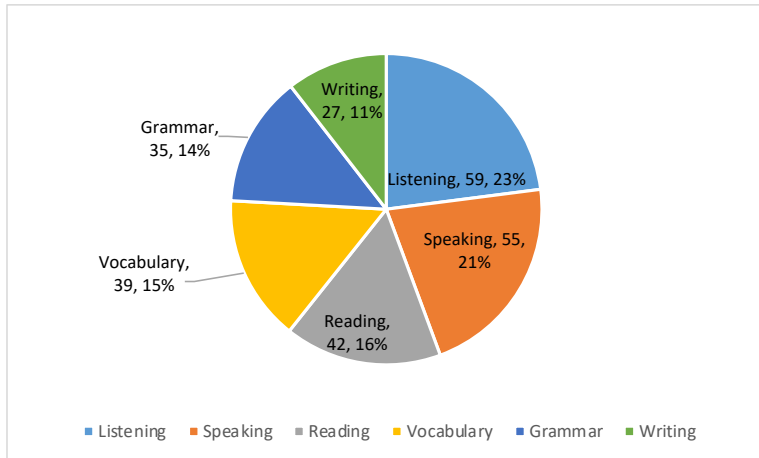
In regards to the relationship of the cognitive, social and teaching presence in the CoI framework and the ERT experienced, we can observe that instructors often had to hurry to adapt face-to-face curricula to on-

Figure 5. *Most difficult language skill to practice/develop online*



Note. N=275.

Figure 6. *Easiest language skill to practice/develop online*



Note. N=275.

line platforms, affecting their ability to structure activities and manage the class effectively. They had to find new ways to guide students' learning while balancing technological constraints, which made the instructional design more challenging resulting in lack of student engagement, poor

time management, difficulty delivering content, and lack of training conflicting with their teaching presence. Social presence was difficult to establish in some cases due to limited interaction and sometimes poor internet connection or video/audio quality. Teachers had to find different ways (i.e. synchronous activities, games), to promote a sense of connection; this was more difficult for some who were also struggling with their own emergencies at home. Additionally, related to cognitive presence, many students struggled to engage with content, as the sense of focus and continuity was often compromised, and instructors had to rethink assignments and activities to facilitate deeper engagement within these constraints.

Recommendations to have a more Effective Online Language Teaching Experience in Virtual or Hybrid Courses

Table 2 presents the activities that the teachers considered were the most important to include in an online language course. All the activities were mostly rated in the “very important” and “important” options. We can also note that the ones that got higher rates (85% or more), in ascendant order, were the following: *audios with communicative situations and exercise, videos with communicative situations and exercises, real time interaction with teacher, Interactive reading with comprehension questions, Individual projects (i.e. presentations, writings, etc.), live sessions, and writing practice*. As we can see, those activities cover the practice of receptive and productive skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All these activities are implied in the pedagogical abilities that online language teachers should have as recommended by Compton’s (2009) framework.

About the recommended resources to include in online language courses, for all of the resources the selected rates were “very important” or “important”. Table 3 shows the resources that had rates of 90% or more by adding up the “very important” and the “important” selections. Thus, considering that, the resources that were selected as “most important” or “important” are the following in ascendant order: *audios with communicative situations, videos with communicative situations, forums to ask questions to*

Table 2. *Perception about the level of importance of different activities for an online course*

<i>According to your professional experience, rate the level of importance of the following activities from the perspective of an online course.</i>					
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Of some importance</i>	<i>Less important</i>	<i>Not important</i>
Live sessions	147	72	30	7	1
Recorded sessions to review later	77	129	37	10	4
Videos with communicative situations and exercises	113	115	19	8	2
Audios with communicative situations and exercises	114	117	22	3	1
Option to print grammar explanations	64	88	62	34	9
Interactive reading with comprehension questions	113	113	20	11	0
Writing practice	106	113	34	4	0
Navigation manual course (i.e. upload assignments, calendar, etc.)	108	104	33	9	3
Real time interaction with classmates	109	96	46	4	2
Real time interaction with teacher	130	97	25	4	1
Teamwork	97	96	50	12	2
Role play	63	107	65	17	5
Individual projects (i.e. presentations, writings, etc.)	112	108	34	3	0
Team projects (i.e. presentations, videos, etc)	87	104	48	13	5

Note. N = 257. The highest numbers in each row are the ones marked in bold. Also, the activities marked in bold are the ones which selection adds up to 85% or more, considering the "very important" and "important" columns.

the teachers, and presentations about grammatical aspects. Here it is important to notice the importance of establishing resources to foster social presence (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2001) such as the forums to ask questions to the teachers.

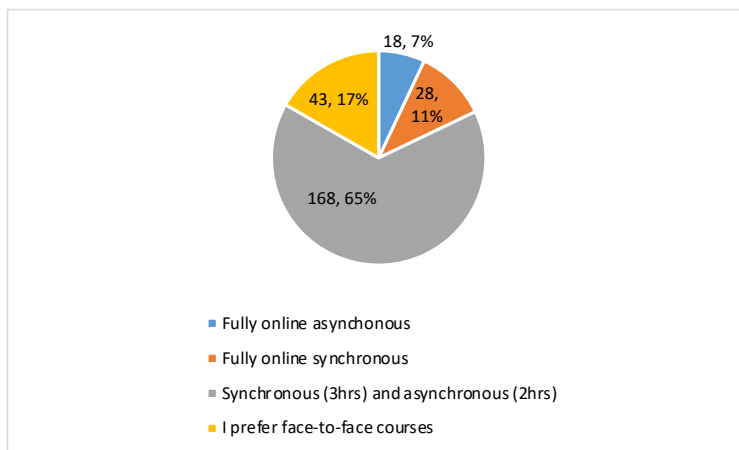
When asked about the ideal balance in an online language course, the great majority of the teachers chose a combination of synchronous and asynchronous interaction. The question asked participants to consider a 5-hour a week class and the majority agreed on a combination of 3 hours synchronous and 2 hours asynchronous (see figure 7). The teachers interviewed mentioned that they perceived that it was necessary to provide space for students to use the resources and do the activities, thus, asyn-

Table 3. Perception about the level of importance of different resources for an online course

According to your professional experience, rate the level of importance of the following from resources you can include in an online course.					
Resource	Very important	Important	Of some importance	Less important	Not important
Audios with communicative situations	174	73	7	2	1
Audios with transcriptions	85	109	52	10	1
Vocabulary with audio	128	97	26	3	3
Videos with communicative situations	173	73	10	1	0
Videos with subtitles	69	102	59	20	7
Space to repeat phrases (vocabulary) and record voice	113	99	35	8	2
Pronunciation exercises that require students to record themselves	126	90	34	5	2
Presentations about grammatical aspects	124	109	21	3	0
Interactive reading with hyperlinks to meaning of vocabulary	103	114	36	4	0
Quiz-type exercises (graded automatically)	134	97	20	6	0
Grammar games	117	102	38	0	0
Vocabulary games	126	99	31	0	1
Platform space for teamwork	120	94	34	7	2
Forums to discuss a topic	115	101	29	10	2
Forum to ask questions to the teacher	154	82	19	1	1

Note. N = 257. The highest numbers in each row are the ones marked in bold. Also, the activities marked in bold are the ones which selection adds up to 90% or more, considering the “very important” and “important” columns.

chronous time was a good option. They also stated that they could work better if they did not have the pressure to have a synchronous class for every class since they needed time to prepare better exercises and activities, and evaluate and give feedback to students. As we notice here, these results can be connected with the recommendations by Lee (2021) about providing prompt feedback and improve tasks to make them meaningful. Additionally, as found in Liang *et al.*, (2021) the activities mentioned are related to the use of authentic tasks.

Figure 7. *Ideal option for teaching an online language course*

Note. N = 257.

Other recommendations reported in the interview phase were related to the use of a platform to have the information organized and resources such as *Quizziz* and *Canva* to keep the interaction between students and teacher as recommended by Shieh and Hsieh (2021). Some teachers mentioned that it seemed time-consuming to create exams, activities and exercises, however, once created, it was a “great help” to have them and even more if they were set up to give students immediate feedback. A teacher mentioned that even if the courses were not online he was going to “continue using the platform to let students know about activities, exercises and exams in order to avoid the use of paper”. About the available resources that they discovered during the Pandemic, a teacher stated that she was going to be able to give her students a more individual feedback and also, students could become more “autonomous” by selecting from the activities which ones to do or deciding the order to follow. According to an instructor of undergraduate students, the online environment provided space for a “closer contact with the students (individually) through virtual sessions: advice and tutoring”.

Conclusion

The Emergency Remote Teaching experience of language teachers has stimulated a reevaluation of pedagogical practices, professional development needs, and technological considerations in language education. The previous idea that face-to-face courses were better than online courses has definitely changed. The combination proposed by Fiock (2020) of the *CoI* presences and *the seven principles* adapted by Sorensen and Baylen (2009), can be a great blueprint for the development and evaluation of online courses in general. The aspects to consider for online language courses mentioned by Compton (2009) are also important to keep in mind if we want to have a well-designed fully online or hybrid language course. The combination of synchronous and asynchronous sessions for a more effective online course is one that should be researched to be able to recommend it with more support.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

As with most research about or related to the use of technology, there is the need to update the tools or resources mentioned here. Additionally, some authors have criticized the *CoI* framework and have mentioned the need for more presences. Thus, this is also something to consider as there is constant change in instructional strategies and instructional design in general.

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We are experiencing rapid globalization and technological advancement, and the field of English language teacher education is as a result, undergoing transformative changes. This book explores contemporary challenges and innovations in English Language Teaching research and practice that reflect the complexities of modern language teacher education and professional development.



Dimensions



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