

Pre-service Teachers' Knowledge Base at La Salle University

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This paper reports on the outcomes of a recent study carried out at Universidad de La Salle, which intended to describe and reflect upon what five (5) pre-service teachers from last semesters pointed out as the most important elements of knowledge base that teachers should know in order to become English language teachers. The instruments utilized in this qualitative research to gather information from the participants were students' journals, a phenomenological interview and a survey. Results indicate that elements such as the language (English) command, students' preferences and realities, and the control of a class, among others, come to be essential areas teachers should be knowledgeable in.

Key words: pre-service, teaching, teacher, education, knowledge, base

El presente artículo presenta los resultados de una investigación realizada en la Universidad de La Salle en la ciudad de Bogotá. El objetivo de este estudio fue describir y analizar los componentes más importantes que hacen parte del conocimiento profesional de un docente de Inglés en una población de cinco (5) estudiantes de últimos semestres en el programa de pregrado de lenguas extranjeras. Los instrumentos de recolección de información en este estudio cualitativo fueron: diarios de los estudiantes, una entrevista fenomenológica y una encuesta. El dominio del idioma (Inglés), el conocimiento de las realidades educativas y las preferencias de los estudiantes así como el control de grupo, entre otros, constituyen áreas fundamentales las cuales los docentes deben conocer y dominar ampliamente, según evidencian los resultados.

Palabras clave: conocimiento base, formación docente, práctica docente.

Introduction

In the 70s, researchers and educators started wondering about different knowledge domains in regard to teaching, which had a final destination and objective: “successful English learning”. At the beginning, effective teaching behaviors, positive learner outcomes, and teacher-student interaction were believed to be the components that led towards effectiveness (Freeman, 1998), but an essential feature of teachers, as thoughtful people who made rational decisions about what to do in the classroom, was not being taken into account. Thus, by the mid 1980s there was an emergent view of teaching, seeing teachers as the ones who “think about their work as being shaped by their prior experiences as students” (Lortie, 1975, as cited by Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 31). It is precisely here where the social constructions of teaching that are built based on previous experiences as learners come to be an important matter to consider, having a big impact on the implementation and understanding of teaching itself. Then, there are two questions that come to be essential in the understanding of this matter: who language teachers are, and how language teachers learn to teach.

In order to inquire about pre-service teachers’ knowledge base and have a better understanding of its construction and its elements, one main question emerged in this research: What are the components of the knowledge base that five pre-service teachers of last semesters (8th, 9th, and 10th) of the languages program at a private university in Bogotá point out as the main elements of the teachers’ profession in the EFL field? This chief question led to the following sub questions: 1) What has been the process that five pre-service teachers have gone through in order to build their Knowledge Base? 2) What is the origin of the Knowledge Base construction of five pre-service teachers? 3) What is the relation between pre-service teachers’ teaching practice (practicum) and their Knowledge Base construction? 4) What are the chief components of the knowledge that pre-service teachers strongly consider as the most significant for their profession?

Literature Review

Along this journey throughout “knowledge” and more specifically knowledge in the field of teaching and learning in regard to teacher formation, it is clear that due to the evolution of concepts and thoughts about this matter, there are two (2) cornerstones within teacher education: pre-service teaching and in-service teaching.

We focused on the first cornerstone (pre-service teaching), which compiles components capable to enlighten us towards the reasoning of possible answers to different questions in the direction of this topic. We inquired into and referred to teacher education and its components or main areas as the layers of a pie, being teacher education the first and thickest layer and the following layers its subcomponent or main characteristics. The second layer comes to be the pre-service teaching, the third comes to be the teaching practice (practicum), and finally the heart of the pie comes to be knowledge base.

Teacher education. Teacher education is an integral process of professional formation that deals with pre-service and in-service processes that seek to build an efficient and fruitful educator who has to undergo academic and field practice experiences that provide enough tools for her/him to become a competent teacher. Since professionalism has become a must in teacher education, there are some professional qualities that make up part of it: a basis of scientific knowledge; a period of rigorous study which is formally assessed; a sense of public service; high standards of professional conduct; and the ability to perform some specified demanding and socially useful tasks in a demonstrably competent manner Wallace (1991).

Starting with the principal layer of teacher education, we can say at first that due to the globalization phenomena and communications revolution, people around the world are in need to use other languages in order to communicate and enlarge their professional competences, for which “in language teaching there has been an increased demand for language teachers and the consequent need to train these teachers” (Wallace, 1991, p. 3).

Pre-service teaching. Digging into the second layer of the pie, we find pre-service teaching which is understood as the “stage where beginning teachers obtain substantial on-campus course work that they expect to transfer directly to the in-school practical setting, where they begin to act as a teacher” (Schon, 1983, as cited by Wallace, 1991, p. 13). In Wallace’s words, this refers to the “received knowledge” as pre-service teachers receive it rather than experience it; they receive what faculties of education believe beginning teachers need in order to become teachers. “According to the traditional conception, schooling is organized on the ‘learn first – practice later’ perspective for which pre-service teaching comes to be the first stage where pre-service teachers obtain all the on-campus course work” (Russell, 1988, as cited by Calderhead, 1988, p. 13).

Pre-service teaching constitutes one dimension of teacher education which completes the teacher training or teacher education that helps to determine the quality of professional teachers; however, if we dig deeper in the pie of teacher education, we will find a third layer called teaching practice.

Teaching practice. The third layer, teaching practice, is seen as the place in which theory and practice come together (Mann, 2003; Gervais & Correa, 2004; Ayala, 2005), thus the construction process of an identity as a teacher is carried out discovering the fact of being teacher (Vélez-Rendón, 2003). Referring to these similar aspects, Richards and Crookes (1988) state that during the practicum, pre-service teachers gain practical classroom teaching experiences and they also gain skills in selecting, adapting, and developing original course materials.

The teaching practice provides important opportunities for beginners to perform the actions of teaching and to receive feedback from an experienced teacher (Calderhead, 1988). The purpose of the teaching practice is to develop and improve pre-service teachers' abilities and understanding in regard to how the learning processes take place, the variety of contexts they possibly face, and the techniques and procedures of a class environment. This way, the pre-service teachers experience learning teaching situations under supervision, and get the chance to find possibilities of implementing teaching methodologies and enrichment, from the feedback given by the supervisor and the teaching practice partners as well.

Knowledge base. The core of this pie, the knowledge base concept, was initially described by Shulman (2005) as the amalgam of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that underlie the capacity to teach effectively. These first attempts about knowledge base by Shulman would become the scaffolding concepts that would lead other authors' thoughts towards the construction of a solid understanding of what the teachers' knowledge base is, the way it is constructed, and its importance. Consequently, there are other definitions that have been provided to answer the question of what knowledge base is.

For example, Michael Eraut (1985, as cited by Calderhead, 1988), based on his reflection on the nature and development of knowledge, understands knowledge base as a set of interdependent categories of knowledge which may have sub-divisions and that might be developed by teachers in a simultaneous way or in totally different moments. Additionally, Calderhead (1988) refers to knowledge base as a group of knowledge bases that make up part of all the aspects student-teachers

should develop throughout the interaction between knowledge and action, action that is acquired through the experience in the classroom itself.

Now, regarding the elements of knowledge base, Shulman (2005) proposes the following seven components model: content knowledge, general pedagogic knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge, knowledge of the learners, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values.

The first component is the content knowledge which has to do with the subject knowledge, itself referring to things that are taught in English. It includes not only factual and conceptual subject matter information but also knowledge of “the structures of subject matter, the principles of conceptual organization, and the principles of inquiry” (Shulman, 2005, p. 9) that guide the ways of establishing truth and validity in a discipline; the second component, general pedagogic knowledge, refers to the strategies, methodologies and principles about class handling that go beyond the subject; it encompasses “those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to transcend subject matter” (p. 8). The third element is curriculum knowledge. This element focuses on the connections and comprehension of the curricular materials and the way they relate to the specific subject and discipline. It is the “particular grasp of the materials that serves as ‘tools of the trade’ for teachers” (p. 8); on the other hand, the pedagogical content knowledge aims to analyze the way pedagogy and the subject connect with each other in order to develop the learning and teaching of the content. It is “the capacity of a teacher to transform the content knowledge he or she possesses into forms that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to the variations in ability and background presented by the students” (p. 15). The knowledge of the learners refers to the teacher’s responsibility in regard to inquiry into the physical, psychological, and cognitive characteristics of the student; the knowledge of educational contexts goes from the class and group performance to the community and culture’s qualities; and the last type of knowledge, the knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values, involves the teacher with the educational system policies and principles as well as the social expectations the teacher must fulfill.

Methodology

This was a study that corresponded to qualitative research in the field of one type of qualitative research called phenomenological studies (Johnson & Christensen,

2004) in which we, as researchers, analyzed and interpreted pre-service teachers' own voices and experiences, as learners and teachers, towards the construction of their own knowledge base in order to become English teachers.

Participants

The participants were five (5) pre-service teachers from twenty (20) to twenty- six (26) years old who were in the last stages of their major in foreign languages at a private university in Bogotá (they were working on the degree of 'Licenciatura'). They developed their practicum at Academia La Salle San Benildo school, from the second semester of 2007 (seventh semester at La Salle) to the first and second semesters of 2008 (eighth and ninth semesters at La Salle). The participants worked with first to fifth graders.

Data Collection

As researchers, we did not have the chance to visit the participants regularly in their teaching practice school and this is why we counted on a medium (the teaching practice supervisor) in order to collect the journals the participants were writing. These were based on their classes and were one of the instruments we used for the analysis. Thus, along the first and second semesters of the participants' teaching practice (2008) we collected this first instrument. During the second and third semesters (second semester of 2008 and the first semester of 2009) of their teaching practice we scheduled different dates for carrying out phenomenological interviews (Seidman, 1991; one big interview divided into three chronological stages: the first one called *focused life history interview*; the second stage called *the details of experience interview*; and the third stage of the interview called *reflection on the meaning*) with each participant according to their availability; additionally, a survey was given to the participants two weeks before carrying out the third interview.

Data Analysis

Having analyzed the data based on the research questions we found different categories: in order to recognize the process the participants went through to construct their knowledge, one category called **pedagogical experiences** came to light along with a sub category named **as students**; the category **theory** and sub category **readings** appeared to address the origin of knowledge base with the purpose of identifying the

relation between teaching practice and knowledge base. The category **teaching practice** came into view with two sub categories entitled **peers and teachers** and **teaching practice contribution to knowledge base growth: awareness of students and classroom management**; finally, we found four different knowledge components as the most significant for the participants: **language knowledge, knowledge of students, knowledge of pedagogy and teacher personality.**

Knowledge Base Construction Process

Pedagogical Experiences

This category refers to all the experiences the participants had had throughout their lives in academic contexts. That is to say, the experiences they lived during kindergarten, elementary school, secondary school or university.

As students. Throughout the analysis of the data gathered, we discovered that the participants referred very often to their experiences as students when they were in elementary school and secondary school (first stage phenomenological interview) as well as their experiences in the university, highlighting experiences that shaped and settled the process of their knowledge base construction:

“My experiences as a student might be helpful for me to understand future students of mine”
(Mabel, survey; April 2009).

“In the US (school) I had a teacher who used to use catching images a lot so I have implemented the same strategy even in my thesis project” (Mabel, 1st stage interview).

From the previous samples we can see that for Mabel, her school experiences were important to start creating the idea that it was necessary to understand and know about the students she works with, and since she remembers her own attitudes, her behaviors, and the way she was normally like when she was a student back in school, this can contribute now to her understanding of her own students.

In a similar way, the participants also referred to some experiences they had as students during the completion of their major at the university (another stage when being students) that may have contributed to building the knowledge of specific elements that they considered necessary:

“I have learnt a lot from the university and the teaching practice: I know how to apply a methodology, I know how to assess my students” (Yurani, 2nd stage interview).

From the previous excerpt we can appreciate that the knowledge that Yurani constructed during her university stay (taking into consideration her teaching practice as one of its stages), about implementing a methodology in a class, and the different ways to assess her own students, constitutes a beneficial aspect in relation to her pre-service practice performance. The previous reflection suggests that pre-service teachers are involved in an exercise in which they find meaning in their past experiences, as Dotger and Smith (2009) mention, when they talk about teachers and their teacher identity: “This identity work occurs at their intersection of their professional training, their own experiences as students, the teachers whom they hope to model, and their tacit images of the classroom teacher”.

Knowledge Base Origins

Theory

This category refers to the theoretical information the participants acquired throughout readings they completed. This is the kind of knowledge that “consists of facts, data and theories, often related to some kind of research” (Wallace, 1991, p. 12). This knowledge is addressed by Wallace as the knowledge one receives: “I would prefer to call it ‘received knowledge’, on the grounds that, (a) the trainee has ‘received’ it rather than ‘experienced’ it in professional action” (Wallace, 1991, p. 13).

Readings. This sub-category refers to the different academic readings the participants completed during their educational experiences, which came to represent a means in order to acquire ideas, concepts, theories, and practical tips to be used or taken into account at the time of teaching:

“I thought Paulo Freire was an excellent educator. He made the class not only his but the students’ class” (Mabel, 3rd stage interview).

“De La Salle changed punishment for love and I think this is the best way to teach because our students have feelings too” (Mabel, 3rd stage interview).

We can see the influence of reading and how a person's understanding can be fomented through it. According to Olson (1975, as cited by Scribner & Cole, 1978), literate individuals come to regard meaning as living the text. Thus, based on Mabel's quotes, we can infer that after reading about Paulo Freire, she constructed a specific idea or vision as to how to understand a class and, more importantly, how to understand and see the students in that class. The fact that Mabel read about Paulo Freire also represented for her the initiation of the idea of the importance of the relation and interaction students and teachers should have among themselves. This perception of how teachers should relate to their students is also illustrated by the conclusions she made after reading about De La Salle in saying that he turned "punishment into love... this is the best way to teach... students have feelings too".

Teaching Practice Relation to Knowledge Base

Teaching Practice

This category refers to the experiences in which pre-service teachers had real classroom setting situations with students and institutions. Here, they had to face real teaching experiences, most of them for the first time.

Peers and teachers. This first sub-category refers to the peers or other pre-service teachers who did the practicum in the same setting and that somehow contributed to their formation and knowledge base construction as teachers by sharing different experiences they had throughout their teaching practice; in addition, this sub-category refers to teachers such as the teaching practice tutor they had and teachers who somehow played a significant role in this stage of their formation:

"With my peers we shared things and ideas to help each other, for example in terms of strategies"
(Laura, 2nd stage interview).

"My teacher has taught me to be disciplined, to be consistent and lots of knowledge in general"
(Yurani, 2nd stage, interview).

For Laura the different moments she shared with her peers represented a great opportunity to gather and learn different information and get ideas that came to be meaningful when applying them in her own classes. The fact that she shared different experiences with her peers turned out to be a very fruitful moment that helped her

construct her knowledge in different aspects of teaching “... for example in terms of strategies”. Additionally, Yurani’s teaching practice supervisor influenced her directly by teaching her different aspects that are necessary for teaching such as discipline, consistency, and different tips that helped her in the right development of her teaching action during her practicum. This is supported by a study done by Álvarez (2009) when mentioning the influence of some people on the participants’ professional growth: “Teachers were identified as the first source of the participants’ knowledge base construction. The participants commented that they were attracted by three aspects: *their teacher’s personality, knowledge, and methodology*” (p. 88).

Teaching practice contribution to knowledge base growth: awareness of students and classroom management. This sub-category alludes to some specific areas pre-service teachers benefited from in their teaching practice setting, given that these aspects (getting to know students and classroom management) are a must-have experience at this stage of the major.

Awareness of students. It is in the exercise of being aware of what students need and prefer, in the day-to-day interaction and work relation with them, that specific areas of knowledge emerge and consequently come to be important for teachers to be acquainted with; thus, teachers know what students indirectly demand from them to know. The following are some excerpts which exemplify the abovementioned points:

“You have to see that there are different learning styles, different personalities so you have to help them respect what they are” (Mabel, 2nd stage interview).

“I have to research about students’ likes, because this can represent the success of an activity” (Mabel, journal; August 26, 2008).

“For me it was important to consider what my students like at the moment to plan my classes” (Julieth, 2nd stage interview).

It is relevant for Mabel that teachers know how to deal with the different learning styles that students bring with them in a natural manner because this way teachers and students themselves “...respect what they are”. Trainees (teachers) should be aware that there is a variety of ways of learning (Wallace, 1991); additionally, it is throughout the interaction teachers develop with their students that other necessities come to light such as knowing what students like and prefer in terms of activities, topics, etc.

and the level of importance of the previous needs is shown by Mabel when asserting that "...this can represent the success of an activity".

Classroom management. The difficulties for the participants to keep control of their classes constituted a common pattern that naturally forced them to inquire about this in order to respond to the demands their students were posing:

"It was useful to understand in teaching practice that you are the one who needs to have control. The teaching practice gave me tools and confidence in regard to class control" (Natalia, 2nd stage interview).

"The thesis project was a contribution in terms of knowledge of classroom management and strategies" (Yurani, 3rd stage interview).

As stated by Natalia and Yurani, the teaching practice demands teachers to understand they must represent the authority in the class and consequently exert control over students and the class in general. Taylor (2009, p. 3) declares that "teachers are faced with classroom issues such as excessive talking during instruction, getting out of one's seat without permission, throwing objects across the room, sleeping during classroom instruction and disrespect towards the teacher. It is important that teachers find creative ways to deal with the issues as well as provide quality instruction in the classroom".

Knowledge Base Components Pointed out by the Participants

In order to answer the last question of this study, four (4) components of knowledge base were identified according to what the participants stated: language knowledge, knowledge of students, pedagogic knowledge and teacher's personality.

Language Knowledge

One component of knowledge base that participants considered as one of the most significant for their profession was the knowledge teachers have of their given subject matter and, in this case, it means the knowledge of the language they teach, which is English, naturally. We can see the importance given to the language knowledge represented in the survey results in Figure 1:

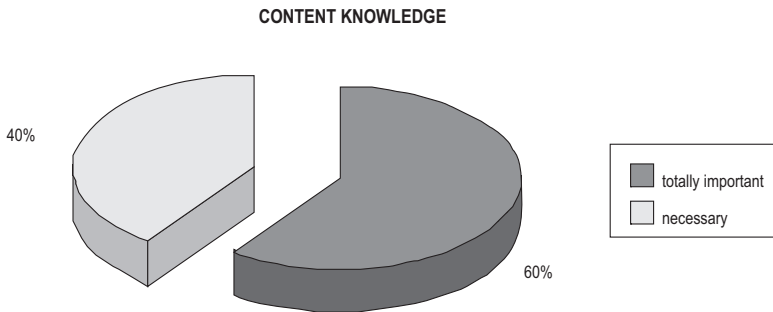


Figure 1. Survey results

We see that sixty percent (60 %) of the participants pointed out that content knowledge is totally important and in the survey they further commented as follows:

“It is necessary to know the content knowledge in order to become an outstanding professional in the field” (Laura).

Forty percent (40 %) indicated that content knowledge is necessary and they added:

“If you don’t have language mastery, it will be more difficult to have a good performance” (Natalia).

In order to teach something in a proper and effective way one must have absolute command of the content being taught. The importance of language command in language teaching has also been tackled in a study done in the city of Medellín (Colombia) by González and Quinchía (2003, as cited by Álvarez, 2009) in which they demonstrated that the language proficiency of the teacher educator is an important issue. They further concluded that graduate teacher education programs should emphasize the language training so that teachers can have the best language level possible (González & Quinchía, 2003, as cited by Álvarez, 2009).

Knowledge of Students

Another component of knowledge base highlighted as a very fundamental element that should be taken into consideration when teaching is the one related to

students which, according to Shulman's proposal (2005), would correspond to the *knowledge of the learners* (see literature review). The pre-service teachers of this study understood that the success of their lessons depended, in great part, on the information they could find out about their own students because this way they were able to arrange appropriate activities that could establish a connection and relation to the students' preferences, ways of learning, language proficiency, contexts, and personal experiences as a whole. Dörnyei (2001, p. 63) summarizes in one of his books that educational literature advises "find[ing] out what your students' goals are and what topics they want to learn about, then build these into your curriculum as much as possible". This is what the percentages show in Figure 2:

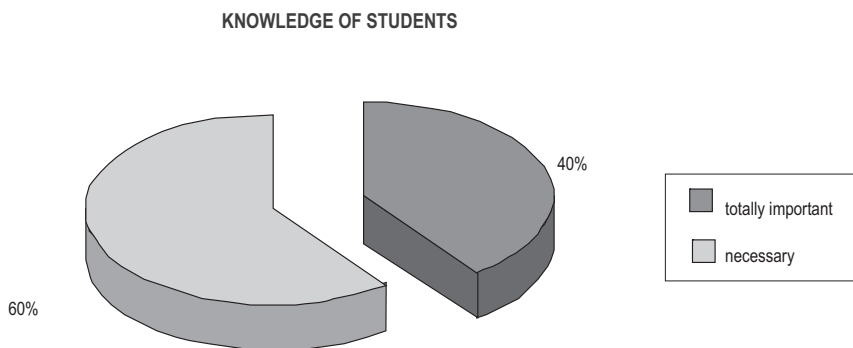


Figure 2. Knowledge of students

Sixty percent (60%) of the participants pointed out that knowledge of their students is necessary. They expressed:

"It is important to know what students like and dislike in order to take right decisions when teaching" (Julieth).

Meanwhile forty percent (40 %) of the participants said that knowledge of the students is totally important:

"The teacher and the students are the main characters in the teaching action and there must always be a close connection for which it is necessary to know the students... both the teacher and the students are equally important" (Laura).

Students constitute the target of education and, consequently, teachers' decisions regarding their professional and pedagogical practice must be made thinking exclusively about them. The samples above imply the relevance of the relationship and communication that teachers build with their own students in order to get to know and be informed of different aspects they need to be fully aware of so that teachers can directly meet students' needs. We can find additional support for the importance of the knowledge of students in Giroux's words (1999 as cited by Becerra, 2005) when he points out that teachers should construct curricula that draw upon cultural resources that students bring with them to school. This suggests not only taking the languages, histories, experiences, and voices of the students seriously, but also integrating what is taught in schools to the dynamics of everyday life.

Pedagogic Knowledge

Along with the knowledge of subject matter and of students, there are some strategies, methodologies and principles (Shulman, 2005) teachers need to know to be able to apply them in the development of their own classes. We can foresee the need of being knowledgeable in pedagogy in the following statement expressed by Benejam (1993, as cited by Estepa, 2000, p. 1): "Novice teachers know a lot of general theoretical principles, however, they ignore how to put them into practice when dealing with students' specific needs and unique situations so they adopt the old traditional teaching methods because these bring confidence for them to survive". In Figure 3, we can see the survey results in connection to what the authors state above:

Sixty percent (60 %) of the participants stated that pedagogical knowledge is totally important as follows:

"Because it's not enough to have content knowledge, you need to know how, to whom, and in which context to teach" (Yurani).

On the other hand, forty percent (40%) of them expressed that pedagogical knowledge was necessary:

"The teacher does not only have to teach a class but he [or she] must also bear in mind [she or] he is shaping people's critical thinking towards life" (Julieth).

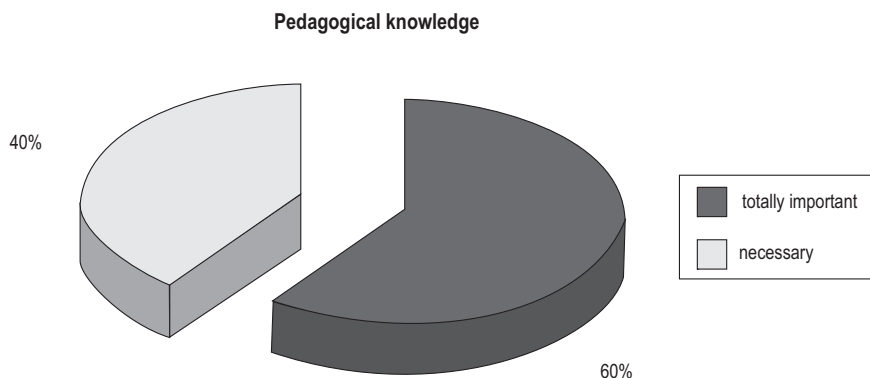


Figure 3. Pedagogical Knowledge

Teachers may have plenty of knowledge about a given area (subject matter) but the how to teach that, as mentioned by the participants above, constitutes another important element worthy of mastering. One needs more than the capability of speaking the language fluently and managing the classroom if one is to be an effective second-language teacher: “one must be able to think analytically [not only] about the structure of the language itself but also about the learning processes of the students [in order] to make decisions on how to meet their needs” (Tedick, 2005).

Teacher's Personality

Another significant aspect that we found in the data does not refer specifically to any of the possible components that comprise part of the knowledge base of a teacher but instead refers to the teacher's personality. In other words, the participants not only talked about what a teacher should know but also made high reference to what they feel a teacher should be like. Teachers' knowledge may be very important, however, there is obviously another part of teachers that also plays an important role when they are doing their job and it is the fact that they are individuals with specific ways of feeling, behaving, and perceiving or conceptualizing the world they live in, and it is according to these patterns that they rule their actions in the classroom. Teaching involves emotions, which cannot be systematically evaluated and employed, and human values, which are quite outside the grasp of science (Highet, 1954).

The following are some samples which suggest the top qualities teachers should be expected to have:

“A teacher needs vocation, disposition, and the ability to transmit it” (Laura, 3rd stage interview).

“The teacher must be respectful with her students” (Laura, survey; April 2009).

“One must be respectful, honest, a model worth following” (Julieth, survey; April 2009).

According to these samples it is clear that the most important qualities and values teachers should have are respect, responsibility, honesty and some others about which we can say would correspond to the most traditional qualities one can naturally think of in a professional person. “There are millions of people doing the same thing every day all over the world. They have a job they hate, they perform it grudgingly and inefficiently, they make it more difficult for themselves and for everybody associated with them” (Hight, 1954, p. 17). It is possible that the participants of this study might have seen cases of honesty along their journey which leads them to think of vocation and passion as two of the most valuable qualities teachers should have and, moreover, it leads them to agree with Hight (1954) when asserting that the second most important aspect of good teaching is that the teacher must like her/his subject.

Conclusions

The process the pre-service teachers have gone through to build their knowledge base is given and constructed by a series of outstanding events and experiences lived in several stages of what has been their academic journey. Stages such as the amount of time in school, university and the teaching practice within their major have been the settings of different potential learning experiences both as students and as teachers. The origin of their knowledge base is found in useful readings they completed at the university which constituted the hook with which they established their first connections with the development and growth of their knowledge base components.

Given that the teaching practice is the scenario and stage where pre-service teachers first establish a realistic connection and interaction with all the elements that

take place here (preparing classes, relating to students, relating to peers or colleagues, etc.), it is in this constant relation to these elements that occur in the act of teaching that pre-service teachers must by necessity be involved in a permanent learning experience and knowledge enrichment. Regarding the most significant knowledge base components, we discovered the following four (4): 1) language knowledge; 2) knowledge of students; 3) pedagogical knowledge; 4) and the teacher's personality, which indicated that teaching does not only involve knowledge but also the understanding of teachers as social beings and individuals contributing to peoples' cognitive development as well as their social development.

As a final point, we find it interestingly humane that students and pre-service teachers understand teachers as characters of knowledge as well as characters of values and qualities, acknowledging how wide their commitment and responsibility towards their community are. Inquiring about teachers' knowledge base implies learning about the origin and justification of how teachers and students' learning processes take place; it represents clarifying the understanding of a general educational perspective and approach; it means to understand the dimension and the complexity of being teachers of English and how teachers and education in a broad way work and meet the world's educational and social demands.

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