HOW

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Editorial*

In the beginning of November, 2018, Edgar Lucero and Clara Valderrama assumed the responsibility of being the Editor and Editor's Assistant, respectively, of this prestigious Colombian journal about English language teaching (ELT). The prestige of the HOW journal has been mainly the results of the tremendous work done by Dr. Melba Libia Cárdenas and Edwin Martínez Pulido for more than a decade. Many ELT scholars and professionals have written and published their research, reflections, and theoretical works with the formidable assistance of the Editorial Advisory Board, reviewers, and the leadership of Melba Libia, as the Editor, and Edwin, as the Editor's Assistant. Now that Melba Libia and Edwin are leaving, everyone who is part of the HOW journal community gives them a well-deserved and enormous thank you for all their commitment.

Now as the new Editor and Editor's assistant of the HOW journal, we, Edgar and Clara, will continue promoting the sharing of local and global ELT scholars' insights of educational and research experiences intended to add understanding to English language teaching practices. As HOW journal's purpose states, the mission is to maintain communication among English language teachers both in Colombia and abroad by offering opportunities for the dissemination of knowledge resulting from educational and research practices that concern English language teaching issues.

Local and global English language teachers, educators, scholars, and professionals, being experienced authors or just starting out, have remarkable knowledges and experiences capable of being used for the creation and construction of thought applicable to each particular ELT context. Specialized journals, as HOW is in the field of ELT in Colombia, present opportunities for all these

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authors, being local or global, to recount and expertly talk about what really happens with ELT in their contexts. This sharing has the aim of enhancing the creation of lines of thought and constructing foundations that can have the power of boosting strong and core considerations for the evolution of ELT in each context. Let us let HOW journal be a means to make it happen.

In this first issue of 2019, as research reports, María Fernanda Jaime Osorio, Mabel Catalina Caicedo Muñoz and Iván Camilo Trujillo Bohórquez present an action-research study which examined the impact of a radio program as a strategy to develop the speaking skills of a mixed course at a private institution in Colombia. Additionally, Frank Giraldo reports the contextual Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) of five Colombian English language teachers. The findings of this study show that the teachers used varied traditional and alternative assessment instruments to improve teaching and learning,

From the global context of EFL, we present three research articles. In the first, Elahe Saedpanah and Adel Dastgoshadeh investigate the comparative effect of teaching collocations through practicing them in literary and non-literary contents. In the second article, Özlem Özen Tosun and Emrah Cinkara investigate the validity and reliability of a 'Coursebook Dependency Questionnaire' developed in the current study. In the third article, Negar Moslemi and Parya Habibi aim to explore the relationship among Iranian EFL teachers' professional identity, their self-efficacy, and their critical thinking skills in their teaching process.

In the section of Reports on Pedagogical Experiences, Anna Carolina Peñaloza and Jhonatan Vásquez Guarnizo seek to understand what types of reflections Modern Languages students reveal about educational issues when analyzing artwork within their context, at a public university in Colombia.

In the final section of this issue, Reflections and Revision of Themes, we present two articles. In the first, Julio César Torres-Rocha presents an article of reflection, which considers socio-political issues such as linguistic imperialism, native speakerism, English as an International language, and appropriate teaching methodologies, which are currently contentious issues in the ELT community. In the second article, Ana Clara Sánchez Solarte describes the importance of classroom management for language teachers, particularly for novice L2 teachers since it can affect their permanence in the teaching profession.

A Radio Program: a Strategy to Develop Students' Speaking and Citizenship Skills*

El programa radial: una estrategia para desarrollar las habilidades de habla y ciudadanía de los estudiantes

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Abstract

This article reports on an action-research study which examined the impact of a radio program as a strategy to develop the speaking skills of a mixed course at a private institution in Colombia. Hence, data were collected from 18 students through tests, surveys, field notes, and interviews. The results indicate that there is an important relationship between the recording, broadcast, and reflection on a radio program and the development of students' oral competence, their motivation for learning, the improvement of dialogue, and the coexistence of students.

Keywords: ELT, innovative practices, radio program, speaking, citizenship skills.

Resumen

Este artículo es el reporte de un estudio de investigación acción con el que se examinó el impacto de un programa radial como estrategia para el desarrollo de la competencia oral de estudiantes de aceleración de una fundación público-privada en Colombia. Se recolectaron datos de 18 estudiantes por medio de tests, encuestas, observaciones y entrevistas. Los resultados indican que existe una importante relación entre el proceso de grabación, emisión y reflexión de un programa radial y el desarrollo de la competencia oral, la motivación hacia el aprendizaje, el mejoramiento del diálogo y la convivencia de los estudiantes.

Palabras claves: ELT, habilidad oral, competencia ciudadana, prácticas innovadoras, programa radial.

Introduction

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For several years, the Colombian Ministry of Education has been implementing a mixed course as a strategy to do two grades in one year. This educational model intends to help students who pass the average ages for fourth and fifth grades (Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN), 2014) to complete their primary school education. One of the issues that most of those children face when they are in a mixed course is that they skip many topics or aspects

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related to their educational training. Regarding the acquisition of a foreign language, several children learning under this model find it difficult to develop their oral skills. Despite the difficulties they may face, the National Ministry of Education (MEN) demands that students get an A2 level of English (based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Evaluation) when they complete the last year of their primary education (Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés).

After applying a diagnostic test to students who participated in this research study, it was found that most of them did not reach the expected A2 English level, not even an A1. A first approach to the context also allowed researchers to detect problems with the coexistence of students. Aggression and behavior issues were identified in the student-teacher and student-student relationships. As an alternative to solve these problems, the research group suggested the implementation of a radio program in English. A radio program would allow students to learn the language, practice their oral ability, and develop their capacity for tolerance and respect towards others' opinions. In fact, this alternative was considered after a deep analysis of the participants' context, the institution's resources, and successful civic and citizenship skills development experiences reported by countries such as Ghana, England, Canada, Sri Lanka, Solomon Islands, among others (McCowan & Gomez, 2012; UNESCO, 2014). Since the outcomes of education where the radio program is used had been proven to be effective, this research study aimed at the enhancement of students' oral skills and at providing opportunities to develop their citizenship skills while participating in the process.

Theoretical Framework

In this section, a general concept of radio and its value as an educational strategy will be presented first. Then, since our main objective was to identify the impact of a radio program on the development of the students' English language speaking skills and citizenship skills, a definition of the communicative competence and the oral ability in this language, as well as the citizenship competence, will be discussed.

The radio and its value as an educational strategy. The radio has remained a viable medium that proves educational worth in terms of pedagogical

importance. According to Das (n.d.) on the website of All India Association for Educational Research, "[through the radio] information is transmitted to a larger population group saving time, energy, money and effective workforce." Thereby, radio is seen as a way of broadcasting education with information and entertainment for people who cannot easily get to formal education institutions. In a like manner, Bedjou (2006, p. 28) remarks that "radio can bring authentic content to the classroom, especially in the EFL environment" which is useful in rural areas where the only source that helps students to communicate is a radio.

Throughout time, the radio has been used in different formats for educational purposes around the world; it was created with the aim to connect people and create communication. Educational radios were developed during the late nineteenth century and came into popularity as an educational medium during the early twentieth century. Although it has not had the same importance as other technologies such as television and the Internet, radio remains a viable medium that has proven its educational worth in terms of pedagogical importance. Couch (2013) states that a radio is capable of delivering high-quality educational programming to highly diversified audiences located across broad geographical expansion.

Kaplún (2002) says that a school radio procures broadcasts of value, integral development of a person and a community. Moreover, a radio program is a place of integration and inclusion for students of different ages. Additionally, school radio programs are intended to raise the level of awareness and stimulate reflection in each person. It is also a strategy that helps in the students' English learning process. Therefore, it is a communicative space where students can expose their ideas and thoughts in a real context.

As a matter of fact, Pardo-Segura (2014) conducted a study at Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia, where she showed that radio broadcasting is an alternative that supports the enhancement of writing and reading skills in the foreign language. Moreover, she states that this strategy improves cooperative work and participants' responsibility. In effect, school radio programs are an innovative space of socialization and knowledge construction in which the appropriation of language skills such as speaking and listening are achieved. Students can create a link between a radio program and their knowledge because radio programs are excellent stimuli to learn English while having fun.

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There are different formats to present a radio program. The most common ones, according to Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004, p. 52) are a lecture or straight talk, interviews/discussions, drama, music, jingle/slogans, feature, magazine, and infotainment. They also mention that some basic elements should be taken into account for radio production as: technical, content, and presenters. Regarding the technical elements, they are the sound quality, special sound effects, and accent factors that can make a radio program an interesting and involving experience for the listener. The content elements are factors such as opening/closing, slogans-themes-logos, jingles, humor, simplicity, accuracy, repetitions and summaries, pacing, and interactive capability that provide the radio program with a sense of organization and program to the listener. These factors can cause the audience to have a good impression of the topics that are being presented. The last type of element is the presenters and their style of delivery. Presenters should be role models and sources of credibility as well as have clarity of speech (Ibid, p. 54).

The oral ability development. Speaking is one of the four language skills and the means by which people can communicate with others to express their intentions, opinions, and viewpoints (Burns & Joyce, 1997). According to these authors, it is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving, and processing information. Its form and meaning depend on the context in which it occurs, including characteristics of the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes of the message. Additionally, it is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving.

Likewise, Aamer (n.d.) from Alama Iqbal Open University compares language as a tool for communication. Furthermore, she says that individuals cannot communicate without speech; otherwise, the language would be a simple script. As can be seen, speaking is important to express ideas and to know others' opinions as well; it means that it is necessary to develop the oral ability permanently because any gap in communication creates misunderstandings and problems.

Nevertheless, for English language learners, oral ability is one of the most difficult language skills to develop. In fact, Segura-Alonso (2013) has found that in EFL contexts, a difficulty emerges when students can be structurally

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competent but cannot develop authentic communication. Moreover, the author claims that interaction is the most difficult aspect at the moment of speaking in a second language.

> Spoken English cannot usually be planned or organized, unless is preparing a speech or a presentation, there is not much time for reflection so, it is frequently full of repetitions, pauses, incomplete sentences, hesitations or fillers. It needs the response of another speaker or listener, it usually comes into the form of turns and when speakers are talking, they must also pay attention to gestures, intonation, stress or even pauses that other speakers are doing because are clues to understanding the meaning of what they are trying to say. (Ibid, p. 23)

The context wherein students learn and practice English is the classroom. In EFL contexts, there is not much practical use of English in the real world because citizens may constantly communicate with each other in their mother tongue: Spanish in the case of this current study. For students, then, it is easier to go straight to the practice of Spanish to communicate with their peers and teachers. All the same, since there is not enough time in the curriculum for teachers to develop the speaking skills in the classroom — especially with a group that has discipline and behavior issues — they focus their efforts on teaching grammar and vocabulary.

One effective approach toward developing the oral ability is the task-based approach (Peña & Onatra, 2009; García Cardona, 2016; Córdoba Zúñiga, 2016). Abd El Fattah Torky (2006) states that there are three stages for task-based instruction: The pre-task stage, the during-the-task stage, and the post-task stage (See Figure 1):

> Pre-task activities can include inductive learning activities; consciousness raising activities; and pre-task planning. During the task stage implies speaking spontaneously focusing on fluenc y and using whatever language is available. Post task activities include reflection, consciousness-raising activities, as well as public performance and post-task analysis-orient-ed activities. These activities enable learners to allocate their attention differently between form and meaning while they are completing an earlier task. (Ibid, p. 104)

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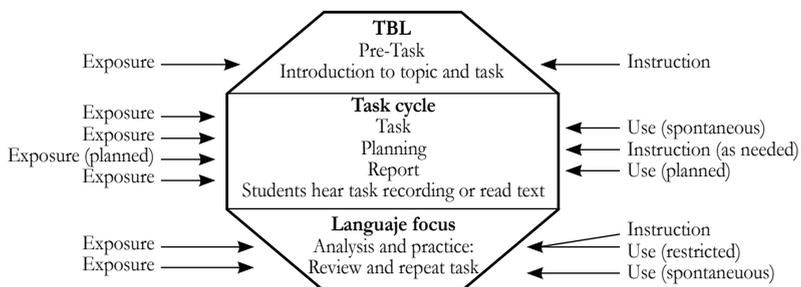
Figure 1. Abd El Fattah Torky's task based instruction model. Taken from Abd El Fattah Torky (2006, p. 101)

Then, taking into account that speaking is one of the hardest language skills to be strengthened due to its intrinsic characteristic of communication, this research study aimed to develop the oral skills by teaching students how to plan a radio program recording and emission through interviews, talks, section presentations, and discussions while acting as reporters.

The citizenship skills development. So far we have covered two key constructs which were the basis for the development of our research project: the radio and speaking ability. Nevertheless, one of the concepts that might have been left aside is the development of citizenship competences and skills. The use of the radio as a pedagogical strategy and the use of workshops to teach children how to record a radio emission or program allowed us to go beyond foreign language teaching *per se*.

The citizenship competences are described as the "cognitive, emotional, and communicative knowledge and skills that are articulated, [and that] make a citizen act in a constructive manner in a democratic society" (Ministerio de Educación, 2004, p. 8). This means that by creating opportunities for students to reconcile their differences, and peacefully and creatively solve their problems, teachers are giving them the chance to develop knowledge and skills for them to participate in the creation of a fair and democratic society.

The Colombian Ministry of Education has classified the citizenship competences into three groups: Coexistence and Peace (appraising the existence

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of other human beings), Participation and Democratic responsibility (making decisions based on respect towards others' rights), and Plurality, Identity and Appraisement of differences (acknowledging and enjoying human diversity).

The use of a radio program as a strategy to enhance students' citizenship competences works if teachers understand it as the building of horizontal communication mechanisms in which they can favor a dynamic and clear organization, which allows a democratic scholar environment. This is highly recommended by the Colombian Ministry of Education (2011, p. 32), along with communication with respect for the dignity of all the members as a base, as well as the guarantee of the promotion of a pacific coexistence, participation, and the valuing of differences. We consider these types of proposals as a balm in the times of post-conflict and education for peace; indeed, these two are the promoted pillars in Colombia nowadays. As a matter of fact, when addressing the conflict situation of Northern Uganda, which emerged in 1986, Cunningham (as cited in McCowan & Gomez, 2012) stated that:

> While NGOs responded to the urgencies of the conflict and post-conflict situation, and have been successful in sensitizing people to the idea of rights, this approach is not sustainable in the long term. Indeed there is evidence that the pressure on time and resources has resulted in a superficial approach that is in danger of creating a backlash... It is necessary for comprehensive human rights knowledge to be firmly built into the taught curriculum. (Ibid, p. 11)

This indicates that if the Colombian government is to provide guidelines to empower students' development of citizenship skills, these should be embedded to the national curriculum. Thus, English language teachers around the country would be called upon to offer students opportunities for deep reflection and practice of these skills; otherwise, it would result in students talking about doing what they think is right, but acting differently when facing troublesome situations.

There are documented case studies in which the introduction of civic education and citizenship skills in the curriculum, or the formal education of the Commonwealth countries' students proved to be effective because education was seen as the ideal process for social cohesion to start taking place (McCowan

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& Gomez, 2012). In countries like Mexico, for example, the development of civic competences to construct civic praxis on children has been relevant in recent years (Escorza-Heredia et al., 2014). They state that "The social media, groups of friends, and other socialization groups provide permanent areas, in which the contents of civic education, ethics, and politics are confronted in a continuous, dialectic, and permanent process" (p. 2). Therefore, we believe that formal education settings and the institutions where our students coexist are the core places for them to learn values that help them understand and live in harmony with others who have different lifestyles, thoughts, ideas, etc.

Methodology

Action research is well known for providing teachers with the identification of areas of concern so as to deal with them by developing or testing alternatives or experimenting with new approaches (Kumar, 2011). This action research study was initiated to solve an identified immediate problem (students' poor oral communication in the English language) through a reflective process which involved workshops, recording, reflecting and assessing a radio program created by children in the English language. Three cycles of action research were carried out and they involved the basic steps by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988): Plan, act, observe, reflect.

Instruments for data collection. Action research studies allow researchers to collect qualitative information by means of numerous instruments. For the purpose of knowing students' interests, opinions, likes and dislikes, and their learning preferences, a survey was applied at the beginning of the study. Then, in order to learn students' perception of the pedagogical interventions to create the radio program, three semi-structured interviews were implemented at the end of each action research cycle for a focus group of students. We also interviewed the cooperating teacher to collect her views about the students' performances and progress in the English language at the end of the intervention process.

Another instrument to collect qualitative data from the participants was comprised of observations. Field notes taken from observing students' behavior during each one of the interventions helped us to understand students' social construction and negotiation of meaning. According to Kumar (2011), by

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analyzing the information obtained through observations, researchers can find emerging categories that help them understand the phenomenon. In addition, it provides the opportunity to study participants' behaviors.

All the same, to collect quantitative data on students' oral ability development, three tests were applied. Tests are described by Brown (2004) "as a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain." The first test (pre-test) took place before the interventions and it had a double purpose: to learn students' speaking level and to acquaint them with the test mechanics. A mid-term test was applied after the first intervention and a final test after the last intervention. The number and nature of questions were similar for the three tests so that the number of correct answers could be quantified and compared so as to measure students' oral ability progress.

Participants' background and context. The study was conducted in a lay, private-public, open-door and non-profit institution. It is concerned about children's rights and it is linked to the National System of Family Wellbeing (Sistema Nacional de Bienestar Familiar). This institution welcomes children between the ages of 7 and 15 from marginal sectors of the city of Neiva (Colombia). These children may be at high social risk due to displacement, mistreatment, abuse, neglect, or orphanhood. The participants of the radio program in English consisted of 32 students whose average age oscillated from 10 to 14, from social stratum 1 and 2. Some of the children live with their parents, others live with their grandparents, aunts, a surrogate mother, and 3 students are interns in the institution. During the study, we worked with the whole group (32 students), but at the end only 18 remained part of the research. One of the reasons why this happened was that the remaining 14 students missed some classes when the interventions and methods took place.

The study collected the information for data analysis from a focus group of 18 students since not all the participants attended the classes regularly. Some students' absences prevented them from taking one of the tests, or providing answers for our interviews; therefore, despite their being part of the groups in some of the sessions and their participation in the radio recording and emission, their data were discarded.

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Procedure. Participants were selected by simple random sampling where students from a mixed class (4th and 5th grades) were assigned to four different groups. Each group, guided by one researcher, was composed of eight students. After three weeks and having finished the first radio emission, groups were randomly selected again for the next two cycles of action-research.

A survey, a diagnostic test, and four lesson observations were carried out to establish a diagnosis of the problem and the possible course of action (planning). During the second stage of the project, the researchers began the intervention process. This process started with the researchers teaching each of the groups the basic elements of a radio program and providing an example of the expected outcome. Each group was in charge of one section of the radio program. Once the sections were joined, the initial recording and emission of the program took place. After finishing this process, researchers and students broadcasted the program during the recess period at the institution, and then evaluated the process.

As part of the action research process, we as the researchers reflected on the process and implemented the same research instruments for a second time. Results were then analyzed and modifications to the intervention process planned. The second cycle of action research took place after the second radio program broadcast.

Pedagogical proposal. This pedagogical proposal aimed to raise methodological ideas that support the use of a radio program in the English language to enhance students' oral and citizenship skills. Before starting the radio program, we explained to the participating students the history of radio, how a radio program is created, and what types of broadcasts exist. Each one of the four groups decided not only on the content of the section (music, movies, news), but they were also enabled to disseminate information and ideas while focusing their oral production on different issues such as conflict, cultural identity, education, music, movies, etc. Students also decided on the content and dialogues to be presented on the radio program. We as the researchers acted as facilitators and teachers in the process.

Table 1. Pedagogical Intervention Plan

Interventions/ (Broadcasts)	Process	Objective
Cycle 1 (Three weeks)		
Students were divided into four groups and were guided by one researcher. There were three weeks of interventions. Every week there were five interventions, one per day.	In every cycle, students chose the topic they were going to talk about. Every group was in charge of one section. They chose from different topics such as music, movies, news, sports, and so on. Then, students learned vocabulary and practiced pronunciation. They recorded the broadcast by the end of the cycle.	To develop students' speaking skills.
Week 1: Students were randomly divided into four groups.	Students chose the topic they were going to talk about. They found, brought, and shared information with their classmates to organize together the content of the section.	To decide the radio sections content.
Week 2: Students created their dialogues and practiced and learned from the section content.	Students had already decided the content of their radio sections. Then, they created their dialogues. They wrote what they were going to speak about and with the help of the researcher, students practiced vocabulary and pronunciation.	To practice pronunciation and vocabulary.

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Interventions/ (Broadcasts)	Process	Objective
Week 3: Students started to practice what they were going to record.	Students practiced and started recording their dialogues. Students and the researchers recorded the first radio emission by the end of the week. At the end of the recording time, they reflected briefly upon the students' perception towards the radio program process.	To record the first radio broadcast.
Cycle 2 (Three weeks)		
Groups were randomly assigned again. Every group decided on a different section from the first ones (culture, food, opinions, and jokes). Five interventions per week.	In this cycle, students decided the topic they were going to talk about, different from the first sections. Then, students learned vocabulary and practiced pronunciation. They recorded the broadcast by the end of the cycle.	To produce a second radio broadcast following the first steps.
Week 4: Students were randomly divided into five groups again. And they met in the groups. They introduced themselves to the researchers and to the rest of the group members.	On the fourth week, students decided the topic they were going to talk about (different from the first one). They brought and shared information with their classmates to decide together the content of the section. They chose the presenters of each section.	To discuss the content of the sections.

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Interventions/ (Broadcasts)	Process	Objective
Week 5: Students created their own dialogues and practiced pronunciation. Also, they learned new vocabulary so that they could speak in a more natural way.	Students had already decided on the content of their radio sections. Then, they created their dialogues. They wrote what they were going to speak about and with the help of the researchers, students practiced vocabulary and pronunciation.	To prepare students' dialogues and section content.
Week 6: Students started to practice what they were going to record.	Students practiced and started recording their dialogues. Students and the researchers recorded the second radio broadcast by the end of the week. At the end of the recording time, they reflected briefly upon the students' perception towards the whole radio program.	To compare students' speaking skills between the first broadcast and the second one.

Data Analysis and Findings

To analyze the data, the six steps proposed by Creswell (2012, pp. 236-238) were followed: Prepare and organize the data for analysis; read through the data and code them; build general interpretations of them; represent findings through narratives and visuals; make a personal interpretation of the results; and validate the accuracy of the findings. Also, the data were triangulated with the instruments that we implemented to give validity and reliability to our study. We have organized the findings according to our research objectives in the following three sections:

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The impact of the radio program on students' speaking skills. Three oral tests were applied in order to identify students' improvement of the speaking skills. Each test consisted of a series of ten questions (See Appendix A) that were provided to students at three different moments: before, in the middle, and after the intervention process. Eighteen students participated. Table 2 shows a comparison between the median results of students' correct and incorrect answers on the oral pre-test and post-test.

Table 2. Pre -Test and Post-Test Results

	Comparison of the median results of the pre and post tests			
Question	Pre-test	Mid-test	Post-test	Difference pre-test and post-test
	% Correct	% Correct	% Correct	%
1	72	83	94	+22
2	33	67	78	+45
3	22	39	44	+22
4	56	44	72	+16
5	67	67	83	+16
6	72	72	89	+17
7	28	67	61	+33
8	22	17	33	+11
9	22	50	44	+22
10	22	17	28	+6

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Table 2 shows that before the intervention process, students performed poorly in the pre-test due to aspects such as vocabulary, grammar and poor knowledge of the English language, in general. Despite their understanding some of the questions, they were not able to answer them in English. As a result, it was necessary to work on those difficulties through the interventions that took place on the different cycles. At the end of the first cycle, the second test took place and the test results showed a slight improvement in students'

oral ability. By the end of the second cycle, the final test showed a notorious improvement in comparison with the previous tests. The levels of correct answers varied from 4 to 6, which showed that the number of children who answered correctly increased. This means that children learned some basic things in the English language such as to introduce themselves, to describe events, and to identify colors, among others.

Another instrument we used to measure the impact of the radio program strategy on students' oral skills was the interview. Three interviews in Spanish were applied before, in the middle, and at the end of the intervention process. The first interview inquired about students' intention to participate in a radio program as part of their learning process for the English language lessons. The second and the third interviews, on the other hand, required students to assess their own oral skills progress while they took part in the radio program recording and broadcasting.
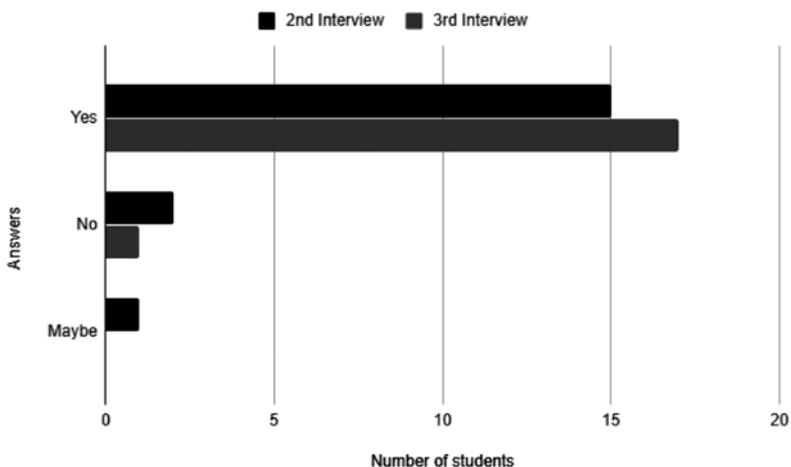
Figure 2. Learners' perceptions about the improvement of their English language.

Figure 2 illustrates students' answers to the question: Do you believe that your participation in the radio program has helped you to improve your

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oral skills? We can notice that in the middle of the process, there were three students whose perception was negative. They believed their oral skills did not improve after their participation in the radio program recording. Nevertheless, at the end of the process, just one out of the eighteen students from the focus group believed that his/her oral skills did not improve. Through subsequent questions, most students made it clear that they had practiced the language a lot, and that they had learned new vocabulary. A significant minority thought that even though they lacked "love" for the English language, they had learned and practiced some new structures and vocabulary through the radio program.

One of the drawbacks found through the interviews was that the learners who disliked the radio program creation process felt concerned about their classmates' behavior because they thought that it turned hostile and aggressive when they were making decisions or discussing the topics and dialogues to be presented and recorded. Those findings led us to pay more attention to provide students with democratic and controlled environments in which they would experience freedom of speech; in other words, an environment in which they could develop their citizenship competence.

The impact of the radio program in the development of students' citizenship skills. Our field notes were used in order to find out the development of students' citizenship skills. Classes were observed before and during the intervention process. The participants of the project reflected on the effect of having neither qualified education at home nor enough economical resources; these students belong to a vulnerable population protected by the ICBF (Colombian Institute of Family Wellbeing). It was easy to find students whose aggressiveness caused disruptions in the English language classroom. In fact, we may have sometimes found the environment a bit intimidating and demanding at first, but this environment evolved with the passage of days and by the time the first cycle had ended, measures had been taken to achieve a transformation of students' behavior through the development of their citizenship competence.

At the beginning, most of the students were reluctant to cooperate; they kept being rude, and provoked some other classmates into annoyance; but after some days, the students started to be interested in the different themes worked in every group and they changed their behavior to motivate themselves

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and their classmates to keep on; as a consequence, students' will to learn the language was increasing.

Moreover, we noticed that students liked to work in a cooperative way, as each section of the radio program was made in groups. Actually, when the children listened to the first radio broadcast, they were glad to listen to what they were able to do. They wanted to go back to the recording process because it was funny and interesting for them. We believe that a key to provide students with a safe environment to give their opinions without the fear of being mocked or attacked by their classmates was what we called *a reflective roundtable*.

This exercise started with students listening to the radio program and assessing their performance in a critical and friendly manner. Students were encouraged to speak in English while participating in the reflective roundtable; nevertheless, most of them made use of their mother tongue when struggling to communicate the intended message to their peers and teachers. Students gave their opinion respectfully and everyone agreed to listen without causing interruptions. Taking turns when talking allowed them to practice their democratic right to talk, being aware of the fact that others can have different opinions, and that it is also their right to express them.

After the second radio broadcast, the students listened to it and the reflective roundtable took place again. This time, we as the researchers, facilitators, and teachers, had to intervene less. Students were more aware of the process and the respect they should exercise during their participation. Something that caught our attention was that during the assessment of the process, they recognized that they could provide a solution to the situations on which they did not agree; for instance, when making decisions about the content of the section or the creation of the dialogues, students asked one of the researchers to intervene, or they found the way to negotiate their demands so as to reach agreements and solve the problematic situation instead of making use of violence, as was previously practiced by them during our observation and planning period. We believe that students developed knowledge, attitudes, and skills during their participation in the project with these practices. We observed changes towards a more respectful attitude towards other classmates and the teachers; their conflict management and resolution, as well as their tolerance, responsibility, and respect for diversity was then developed to some extent.

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Perceptions about the radio program and the project itself. Throughout the project, three interviews were done in order to find out the students' perception of the radio program in the English language. The first was done at the beginning of the project in order to find out if students were interested in the creation of the radio program. Then, the second was carried out after the first cycle to account for students' opinions. Consequently, the third interview took place at the end of the project, which helped to find out if the radio program was received as a positive strategy. Their answers were categorized as follows: students' opinions about the radio program, and their desire to continue working on the recording and broadcasting of subsequent radio programs.

Table 3. *Categories of the Interviews*

Category 1	Students' opinions about the radio program
Category 2	Students' desire to maintain the radio program.

We found that, in general, students' impression of the radio program was positive. Those responses support what is shown in Figure 2, where the bar graph shows that the creation of the radio programs in the English language was welcomed by the participants in the first stage of the project. It can be seen that 16 out of 18 students liked the idea of recording a radio program from the beginning of the project. Fortunately, at the end of the project, all students had a positive viewpoint of the new learning strategy. Additionally, we noticed that students believed that the radio program helped them to learn English in a non-traditional style. The next excerpts[1] were taken from the students' interviews, in which the positive effects of their participation are highlighted:

Extract 1: "I like it because I can learn English, and then I would go to other countries to teach English."

Extract 2: "I think it is good because you teach us English, at least for some hours."

Extract 3: "It's good because we have learned things in English."

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1   The quotes or excerpts taken from the interviews were originally in Spanish and translated by the authors of this article.

Extract 4: "It was a good experience, you taught us good lessons and we didn't waste our time."

Extract 5: "I like English now, because of the radio program."

Extract 6: "The best part of all this process was the joy, I think it was fun."
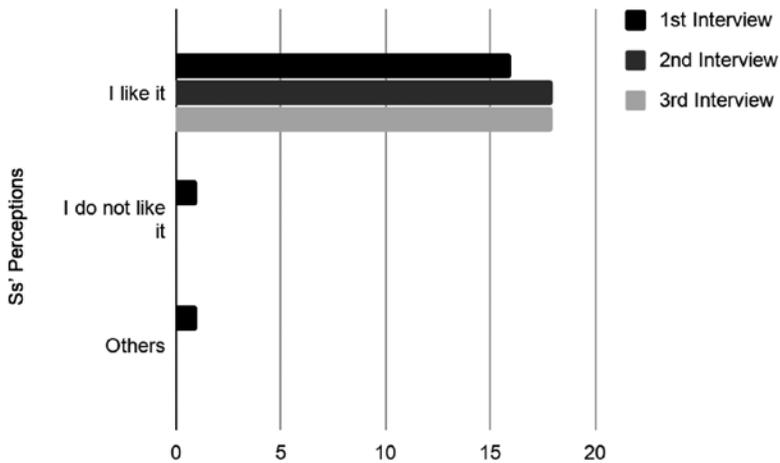
Figure 2. Students' opinions about the radio program.

The second category emerged in the second and third interviews after the first cycle had finished. Students were asked if they would like to continue working with the radio program, and all the participants wanted to keep on with the project. Throughout the project it was found that students became aware of the importance of the English language, claiming that even if they did not receive help, they would enjoy working on the project on their own since they believed they had the elements to do so, and because they wanted to learn and practice their English. Here are some of the answers given by two participants of the project:

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Extract 1: "Yes, because I want to learn English, it does not matter if you are not working here, I will keep practicing my English speaking skills."

Extract 2: "Yes because I want to be someone important, and when I travel, speaking English will be helpful."

Extract 3: "I think the best part of the radio program was to share [time] with others. I would continue because when one speaks English, one learns many things that one did not know."

Extract 4: "The best part of the process was making the radio [program], I would not change anything and I would continue making radio."

We also interviewed the cooperating teacher at the institution to learn of her perception about the impact of the project on her students. She believed it was a useful project, especially because those students were about to start their secondary education. She believed the project conducted researchers to an almost personalized work with students which somehow increased their wish to know new things and pay attention.

She said: "This is a very difficult group, they are thirty-two students from different background and social strata, different families, families in which there is no union, or where there is no family; it is the reason why the only space they have to enjoy their childhood and adolescence is the Albergue." She highlighted the importance of the project mechanics, especially the reflective roundtable strategy since it allowed students to be heard and valued. In her own words:

> I would like the research group to come back again with the radio program. I would like it to be… to be like a projection to the future; that everything was managed in English because, in that way students stop being afraid, they stop being shy, they listen to themselves more easily, they feel heard, they feel more prepared for a future.

Conclusion

The creation of a radio program in the English language is a meaningful alternative for teaching a foreign language. Throughout the process, the improvement of students' speaking skills level was evident. For instance, learners showed a remarkable advance on the speaking tests, in spite of the absence of English language teachers before the project started. However, as stated above, this absence did not affect the impact of the radio program in students' English language speaking skills.

Additionally, on account of the teacher's and students' perception about the radio program, we conclude that both parties were in favor of the creation and continuity of the radio program in the English language. Both parties expressed that applying techniques like the creation of a radio program was a highly motivating and meaningful learning method. Then, we can say that the oral proficiency was not the only positive aspect enhanced through the process.

An additional point to consider is the fact that, at the beginning, some students were reluctant to participate, but at the end, those participants were the most pro-active members of the group. Of course, despite the obvious lack of good oral ability of the participants of the program they almost always showed their desire of continuing the process. This is a valuable result we want to highlight.

Finally, students could develop their citizenship skills to some extent through their participation in the project. At the beginning of the process some students' behavior was aggressive and they were reluctant to follow rules and agreements. They showed not much respect to partners or teachers, but they progressively improved this behavior as long as the reflective roundtable spaces were provided. This was a strategy which proved to be effective so they could develop problem solving skills and appreciation towards difference.

Recommendations

Taking into account the process of creating and implementing the radio program, we observed the need for some recommendations. First of all, projects that include the use of media such as the radio are welcome to foster communication among students in both English and Spanish. This fact provides English language learners with opportunities to share views, experiences, opinions, and expectations that provoke language and general learning, and a democratic use of people's rights. Students' oral skills, in English and even in Spanish and their citizenship competence can be highly benefited by these types of alternatives. Second, we believe that for the project to be more successful, more time is needed for its implementation, so as to prepare a group of infants to record the radio broadcasts. It is necessary to provide pro-active students with extra activities which, at the same time, should be managed with extra care

to keep their engagement and agency. Finally, further study on these matters are recommended for the purpose of exploring different alternatives of peace practices in the post-conflict times that Colombian society requires nowadays.

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Appendix. Tests Questions

Pre-test	Mid-test	Post-test
What is your name?	How are you?	Can you spell your name, please?
What is your last name?	Can you spell your last name, please?	Do you like reading?
How are you?	What is your name?	How are you?
How old are you?	How old are you?	Who is your favorite teacher?
What is your favorite color?	Do you like writing?	How old are you?
What is your favorite fruit?	What is your favorite color?	What is your favorite fruit?
What do you like doing?	What is your favorite animal?	What are you going to do after the break?
Do you like reading?	What are you going to do after class?	What do you like doing with your family?
What are you going to do after class?	What do you like doing in your free time?	What is your favorite color?
What is your favorite animal?	What is your favorite color?	What is your last name?

Note: Questions from the mid and post-test were reorganized for comparison purposes

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HOW

Language Assessment Practices and Beliefs: Implications for Language Assessment Literacy*

Creencias y prácticas en la evaluación de lenguas: implicaciones para la literacidad en evaluación de lenguas

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Abstract

This study reports the contextual Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) of five Colombian English language teachers. Two semi-structured interviews and reflective journals were used for data collection. The findings show that the teachers used varied traditional and alternative assessment instruments, assessed language and non-language constructs, used assessment information to improve teaching and learning, evaluated assessment results,

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and engaged students in quantitative peer assessment. As for beliefs, data show that students' success and failure in assessment were connected to past experiences, and that assessment was appropriate given a number of features. Participants' answers about LAL show a complex and multi-faceted construct. Taken together, the findings serve as baseline data to further professional development in language assessment.

Keywords: evaluation, language assessment, literacy, language teaching, teacher knowledge.

Resumen

Este estudio reporta la Literacidad en Evaluación de Lenguas (LEL) en contexto de cinco docentes de inglés. Se usaron dos entrevistas semiestructuradas y diarios de

reflexión como instrumentos de recolección de datos. Los hallazgos muestran que los docentes usan instrumentos tradicionales y alternativos de evaluación, evalúan constructos de lengua y otros constructos e incluyen a sus estudiantes en evaluación par cuantitativa. En cuanto a creencias, los datos muestran que el éxito de los estudiantes, o falta de él, en la evaluación se conecta a experiencias pasadas, y que la evaluación es apropiada según un número de condiciones. Las respuestas de los participantes sobre LEL dan cuenta de un constructo complejo y multifacético. En conjunto, los hallazgos proveen información para el desarrollo profesional docente en evaluación de lenguas.

Palabras clave: enseñanza de lenguas, evaluación, literacidad en evaluación de lenguas, conocimiento docente.

Introduction

Language Assessment Literacy (henceforth LAL) is a major area in language testing; as such, scholars highlight that the construct needs more research to understand it as it relates to different stakeholders. For example, several authors argue that not only should language teachers be assessment literate but that those who make decisions based on assessment data (i.e. school administrators and even politicians) should have some knowledge of language assessment (Stiggins, 1991; Taylor, 2009). Because of the power tests have on teachers, students, institutions, and society at large (Fulcher, 2012), language teachers

and other stakeholders are expected to be skillful in interpreting, designing, implementing, and evaluating language assessment, as well as to be critical towards the implications of their assessment-based actions (Scarino, 2013). Consequently, language teachers and teachers in general have been central in assessment literacy discussions (Giraldo, 2018; Popham, 2011). As Taylor (2009) comments, language teachers should have knowledge and skills in test design, development, and evaluation for large-scale and classroom-based assessments.

Inherent in Taylor's argument is the scope of LAL for language teachers. The author highlights LAL to be related to both large-scale and classroom-based assessment. Additionally, other authors contend that assessment literacy requires knowledge of statistics (Brookhart, 2011; Davies, 2008), skills in test and item construction (Fulcher, 2012; Giraldo, 2018), knowledge of language and language education issues such as second language learning theories, approaches to communicative language testing, and even the relation between culture and language in assessment (Davies, 2008; Inbar-Lourie, 2008; Scarino, 2013).

In the case of language teachers, Scarino (2013) has made the call that the field needs to embrace the local realities of teachers and how they come to shape their assessment literacy. This author argues that teacher beliefs, practices, attitudes, and experiences –what she calls their interpretive frameworks– should be part of LAL as a construct. Thus, while core knowledge of assessment and skills for assessment are indeed necessary, understanding teachers' contexts is likewise pertinent. Given the complexity of the concept and its ongoing discussions, Inbar-Lourie (2017) encourages more research of local realities in LAL to understand the intricacies of the matter and ignite discussions that can feed the field of language assessment.

Based on this background, this article reports the findings of a qualitative case study which looked into the language assessment practices and beliefs of five Colombian English language teachers. This exploratory study elicited information about a group of teachers' LAL so that it could serve as baseline data for professional development opportunities. This was, then, a needs analysis exercise for LAL.

As opposed to most studies in LAL, which have used large populations and questionnaires predetermined by experts (see Fulcher, 2012, for example),

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this study took an interpretive approach with a small group to see what five English language teachers do and think about language assessment in a particular context. As the findings below suggest, the information from this study may provide a fine-grained meaning of LAL and the richness of case studies as a diagnostic stage for professional development programs in language assessment.

Theoretical Framework

In language assessment, there seems to be a consensus as to three core components of LAL. Based on a study of language testing textbooks, Davies (2008) explained that LAL entails knowledge, skills, and principles. Knowledge refers to a background in educational measurement, knowledge of language and linguistic description, language teaching approaches, as well as knowledge of socio-cultural aspects related to assessment. Skills include item construction and analysis, use of statistics, and technology for language testing. Lastly, Davies stated that principles include the validity of assessment, the consequences of testing on stakeholders (e.g. teachers and students), and a sense of ethics and professionalism in the field.

Now found in a common definition, Davies' (2008) components have been used in other lists and taxonomies for LAL. For example, Inbar-Lourie (2008) argued that LAL should also include knowledge of the influence a first language and its culture can have on language learning; norms of English as an international language; the linguistic profile of multilingual learners; and current approaches to language teaching and testing, namely task-based assessment.

Specifically, for teachers, LAL also includes knowledge, skills, and principles that should be part of their assessment repertoire, as Fulcher (2012) argued. This author (2012, p. 125) offered the following ongoing definition of LAL for language teachers, in which the depth and scope of the concept can be elucidated:

> The knowledge, skills and abilities required to design, develop, maintain or evaluate, large-scale standardized and/or classroom based tests, familiarity with test processes, and awareness of principles and concepts that guide and underpin practice, including ethics and codes of practice. The ability to place knowledge, skills, processes, principles and concepts within wider historical, social, political and philosophical frameworks in order understand

why practices have arisen as they have, and to evaluate the role and impact of testing on society, institutions, and individuals.

As can be observed, the LAL proposed for language teachers is a complex multi-layered enterprise (Inbar-Lourie, 2013). It places teachers at the forefront of sound theoretical, practical, and pedagogical practices for language assessment. To add to the layers of LAL, Giraldo (2018) proposed a list of sixty-six descriptors for nine categories subsumed under the three core components of LAL, as follows:

- *Knowledge*: Of applied linguistics; theory and concepts; own language assessment context.

- *Skills*: Instructional skills; design skills for language assessments; skills in educational measurement; technological skills.

- *Principles*: Awareness of and actions towards critical issues in language assessment.

While the core components from Davies (2008) are constantly cited in the literature, Scarino (2013) claimed that this core knowledge base is not sufficient to account for language teachers' LAL. Thus, she contended that the field needs to understand teachers' beliefs, practices, and experiences to articulate the meaning of LAL for this particular group. Consequently, LAL for language teachers includes knowledge, skills, principles, *and* "the assessment life-worlds of teachers" (Scarino, 2013, p. 30). These life-worlds include their practices, beliefs, and their own knowledge.

Given this conceptual discussion, Taylor (2013) discussed four stakeholder profiles and corresponding components in LAL. The profiles are of test writers, classroom teachers, university administrators, and professional language testers. For each of these groups, Taylor delineates the core contents they are supposed to have in increasing levels of depth. As regards language teachers, Taylor (2013) explained that language pedagogy is highest in the priorities for teachers, while sociocultural values, local practices, personal beliefs/attitudes, and technical skills are second in the profile. Lastly, scores and decision making, knowledge of theory, and principles and concepts rank at an intermediary level of LAL. Not surprisingly, Taylor (2013) invited the field to scrutinize these profiles through reflection and research.

Related Research

This section overviews research conducted around the particular LAL of language teachers. The review is based on practices, beliefs, LAL as a construct, LAL needs, and experiences of professional development in LAL.

A trend in practices by language teachers is the overuse of traditional assessment methods and assessment of micro-skills. This trend is evident in the studies by Frodden, Restrepo, and Maturana (2009), which reported that teachers tend to use quizzes as these were practical assessment instruments. Similar findings were reported in López and Bernal (2009), Cheng, Rogers, and Hu (2004), and Diaz, Alarcon, and Ortiz (2012). Overall, these studies indicate that while teachers express that they use a communicative approach to language testing, their actual practices are rather limited in that they emphasize micro-skills, namely vocabulary and grammar, and tend to disregard speaking and writing in their assessment.

The research by Rea-Dickins (2001) and McNamara and Hill (2011) identified four stages for assessment practices. The first stage involves planning, where teachers get students ready for assessment. In the second stage, teachers present the rationale, instruction, and means to conduct assessments; this stage also includes the actual development of assessment as it engages teachers in scaffolding and students in providing feedback. Stage three refers to teachers going over the results of assessment on an individual or group basis (i.e. with peers). Lastly, the final stage includes providing formal feedback and reporting and documenting assessment results.

Additionally, other research studies have focused on beliefs about language assessment. The results from these studies highlight the belief that assessment should provide feedback to improve teaching and learning (Brown, 2004; Muñoz, Palacio, & Escobar, 2012), and that language assessment should be communicative and based on both summative and formative methods (Arias & Maturana, 2005; Muñoz et al., 2012). Interestingly, these studies highlight that while teachers have these strongly-held beliefs, their practices indicate otherwise; for example, in López and Bernal (2009) and Muñoz et al. (2012), teachers used a summative approach to assessment, even though they think assessment should serve a formative purpose.

Another research focus of LAL has been the perceived needs of language teachers. The studies with this focus point to the fact that teachers need mostly a practical approach to language assessment, but they also expect a blend of practice with theory and principles. Thus, findings of these studies show that, overall, language teachers express needs in all areas of language assessment. To illustrate this, Fulcher (2012), for instance, used a questionnaire to find out the language assessment needs of language teachers from several countries. According to the findings in this study, teachers needed a comprehensive treatment of theory, techniques, principles and statistics for language assessment. In a similar study, Vogt and Tsagari (2014) used questionnaires and interviews to ask language teachers in Europe about their knowledge as well as their training needs in language assessment. Findings in this study indicated that the language teachers were, in general, not well trained in language assessment. Hence, they reported they needed training in test construction for both traditional instruments as well as alternative ones (e.g. portfolios).

Particularly in Colombia, there is scarce research explicitly targeting LAL for language teachers. Giraldo and Murcia (2018) conducted a study with pre-service teachers in a Colombian language teaching program. Through questionnaires and interviews, the authors asked participants (pre-service teachers, professors, and an education expert) what they would expect to have in a language assessment course for pre-service teachers. The answers reiterated what has appeared elsewhere: The need to have a course that combines theory and practice, with a strong emphasis on the latter. Additionally, language assessment within general frameworks such as Task-Based Instruction and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) also emerged as prominent in the data. Interestingly, the participants in this study also made it clear that they would like to have a course that addresses Colombian policies for *general* assessment, i.e. the Decreto 1290 (Decree 1290).

Lastly, research studies have observed the impact of professional development programs on language teachers' LAL. The impact of these studies occurs at a practical, theoretical, or critical level. For example, in Arias, Maturana, and Restrepo (2012), the researchers engaged English language teachers in collaborative action research geared towards improving assessment practices. As the authors report, the teachers' assessment became more valid in light of models

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of communicative ability, and keener towards democratic and fair assessment practices. Whereas Arias et al.'s study had an impact on assessment practices, Nier, Donovan, and Malone's (2009) blended-learning assessment course helped instructors of less commonly taught languages increase their understanding of assessment and generate discussions of their practice. Lastly, the research by Walters (2010) highlighted how a group of ESL teachers became critical towards standards for language learning. As the author argued, this criticality should be part of teachers' LAL.

The Problem

As a need to cater to teachers' professional development, authors such as González (2007) have argued for a context-sensitive approach. In this regard, the institute where the current study took place started a process to examine the language assessment practices of its language teachers. To gather contextual data on language assessment, this current study focused on the life-worlds (Scarino, 2013) of five Colombian English language teachers and analyzed their practices and beliefs to elucidate some shape of LAL for these particular teachers. Thus, the present case study sought to collect baseline data on LAL for proposing professional development opportunities, as well as to analyze such data in light of LAL theory. The study was then informed by these three questions:

What language assessment practices do the five Colombian English teachers have?

What beliefs about language assessment do these teachers have?

What implications for language assessment literacy can be derived from these teachers' practices and beliefs?

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Context and participants. I conducted this study in a language institute of a public Colombian university. The institute teaches English to undergraduate students (teenagers, young adults, and other or older adults) enrolled in different university programs. The English courses are based on general interest themes (e.g. *sports and recreation*, *university life*, among others), language functions, and listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Language assessment at the institute is divided into 60% of skills development, whereby teachers assess the four language skills through the means they consider pertinent. The remaining 40%

of language ability is assessed through an achievement test the teachers design and administer at the end of each course.

The five teachers (one female and four male) in the study have worked for several years at this language institute. Tita was the pseudonym that the female participant chose for the study, while Mooncat, Vincent, Professor X, and Kant were the pseudonyms that the four males selected. The participants' ages ranged from 25 to 50 years old, and their experience teaching at the institute ranged from four to 29 years. All the teachers, except Vincent, had had some training in language assessment. Table 1 provides details about each participant.

Table 1. Relevant characteristics of the five English teachers in the study.

Theme	Tita	Kant	Mooncat	Vincent	Professor X
Experience in years (teaching EFL)	8	7	29	6	4
Has taught	Kindergarten Adolescents Adults	Children Adolescents Adults	Adolescents Adults	Adolescents Adults	Children Adolescents Adults
Training in (language) assessment	Online course: Modules Formative Summative assessment	Workshop for assessing writing and speaking Admin. of TOEFL iBT Psychometrics course	Module in a specialization course	None	Workshop: "testing as you teach"

Research Methodology

This research was a qualitative case study as it examined the contextual language assessment practices and beliefs of the five teachers. The approach I used was naturalistic (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 1998) as I inquired into teacher thinking and action in order to understand LAL from the participants' worldviews.

McKay and Gass (2005) describe qualitative research as providing rich and detailed descriptions; describing participants and their contexts as naturally as possible, without intervening in any way; including few participants given the depth of description; building research from an *emic* perspective, which means categories arise and are not pre-determined by the researcher; narrowing data patterns in a cyclical manner; permitting certain research ideologies (such as *a priori* categories for data analysis); and framing itself on open research questions.

Case studies provide data that explain participants' context and yield rich explanations for its complexities. In essence, case studies are qualitative and interpretive. On the other hand, given their specific nature, one disadvantage of case studies is that the findings will not necessarily generalize to other contexts; therefore, rather than generalizing, I focused on the usefulness of the findings in my study.

Data collection and analysis. Because I was not living in Colombia during the time of the study, I collected data online. I used *Google's YouTube Live* to conduct two online interviews. This technology allows participants to have video-recorded evidence of their talk and store it safely so only interested parties can have access. The first interview was about the five teachers' general assessment practices and beliefs, and the second interview was based on their practices and beliefs towards the design and implementation of the aforementioned achievement test.

The participants completed an online reflective journal through *Google Docs*. This allowed me to study participants' answers and ask further questions for clarification and illustration (e.g. How did this happen? What topics did the test include?). The journal (with a total of eight entries) asked the five teachers to describe a weekly assessment of their choice and reflect upon it. Appendix A includes the questions for the interviews and Appendix B has the prompts for the journal entries.

For data analysis, a grounded approach was used (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). I scrutinized the teachers' answers on both instruments and identified patterns across questions, across instruments, and across teachers. For example, the teachers reported they included assessment of the four skills in their practices in both the interview and journal; this became a code in data analysis. Additionally, they

also reported they assessed non-language ability factors such as eye contact, design of PowerPoint slides, and confidence. These factors became a second code. Lastly, these two codes were grouped so as to arrive at a finding; in this case, the finding was the practice of assessing language and non-language constructs, under the major category *Practices*. Thus, the major categories that emerged from the data were Practices, Beliefs, Knowledge, Skills, and Principles.

Findings

Findings from this study are grouped in the aforementioned five major categories. Each category embraces related findings, and each finding includes evidence coming from both data collection instruments. Below, the first two sections include findings related to the five teachers' practices and beliefs in language assessment. The last three sections report findings that provide implications for LAL, as seen from the language assessment realities of the participants. Taken together, the findings identify areas for improvement in language assessment.

Practices in language assessment. This category includes what teachers did for assessing the English language during normal classroom sessions and at determined moments, whether through a quiz, an oral presentation, or a final achievement test. The data come from sample interview answers and journal entries that reflect group consensus. A common practice among all five teachers was the use of both traditional and alternative methods for assessment. Quizzes and the final achievement test are part of the traditional methods; integrated-skills tasks, debates, and others are part of the alternative methods. Below are a journal entry and an answer from an interview.

Professor X: Journal entry 3, question 1

This week I worked with getkahoot.com. I designed 10 multiple choice questions related to the grammar topic (past perfect); then I created a quiz on getkahoot.com with those questions.

Vincent: Interview 1, question 2

Mostly, I do, I assess them orally. We do a lot of role-plays, presentations, things like that… we do debates.

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The data suggest that teachers were resourceful in collecting information about language ability, rather than relying entirely on tests for doing so. The use of these instruments made their practices more substantiated as more evidence on student learning was collected.

In terms of constructs, data show that the participants assessed the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), two micro-skills (vocabulary and grammar) as well as non-language constructs such as confidence, physical performance, and the design of slides in PowerPoint presentations. When asked about the reasons why they included non-language constructs in their assessment, the teachers reported that these were part of communicative competence, and they helped convey messages clearly.

Mooncat: Journal entry 8, question 4

In oral presentations, I include physical performance because I consider it to be part of the communicative competence of the students. Something like their illocutionary abilities. The design is assessed since it is important to consider the student's ability to elaborate good presentations that make comprehension of the message easier.

As the sample shows, other aspects beyond language were assessed. This practice shows that teachers were interested in providing students with opportunities to display general skills that go beyond language ability, e.g. design of presentations.

Another clearly articulated practice among the five teachers was the interface between teaching and assessment. The five teachers described their assessment practices as they were connected to teaching. For instance, Professor X (Journal entry 2, question 1) commented that:

The last assessment activity I implemented was a role-play. First, we studied modals verbs (should, have to, must, etc.) and we did some controlled exercises; then, learners formed small groups and each group received a problematic situation. They needed to create a drama based on the problem and include at least one modal verb to give a piece of advice or a possible solution. They had some time to prepare the role-play and then they presented it to the whole class. The rest of the groups had to listen and write down what the problem was.

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The sample shows that assessment was considered as a means to language learning. Classroom activities revolved around assessment and they sought to help learners to succeed in assessment performance, as Professor X did when he gave students time to prepare.

Data analysis also provides evidence to ascertain that these five teachers gave students feedback on their language progress; this was done orally or in written form. Notice that the sample below also reflects assessment as connected to teaching.

Kant: Journal entry 5, question 1

Ls were grouped based on their preferences and were then given time to come up with as many crazy, funny, strange, and interesting ideas as possible. Afterwards, Ls were given feedback on their creative drafts and each group handed in a definitive proposal. Throughout the process, each group was provided with feedback on length, grammar mistakes, and sociocultural aspects (For instance: use of idioms or slang words).

That teachers gave feedback provides more support to reveal that they used assessment for improving language ability rather than just measuring it. Kant, for example, made sure he provided feedback on several occasions so that the writing assessment showed students' best performance.

The five teachers reported that they evaluated assessment practices (i.e. checked their quality) in cases where the results were unexpected. Specifically, teachers conducted an instrument evaluation differently, from analyzing grades to providing washback on teaching.

Mooncat: Interview 1, question 2

When the results for example of a test are dramatic. In the course I had this semester I applied a test to 22 students and about 16 failed the test. In those cases, you think, well, something is wrong here, with the test or with the way I have been teaching or explaining the topics.

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Mooncat's answer supports the idea that assessment did more than just measure. It impacted teachers and led them to reflect on the quality of instruments and even their teaching.

One last practice that emerged as consistent in these five teachers' approaches to language assessment was the use of quantitative peer-assessment. The teachers reported they did this by engaging students in giving each other grades on their performance.

Tita: Interview 1, question 4

At the end of each task, I interchange the worksheets so they can grade one of their partners.

Interestingly, with peer assessment, the teachers used assessment for measurement rather than for formative purposes; however, this did not happen in other practices shown above. Thus, responsibility for providing grades was partially bestowed upon students, and this represented the teachers' approach to engaging students in assessment.

Beliefs in language assessment. The next category of findings pertains to the prominent beliefs about language assessment that these five teachers held. This section specifically highlights two beliefs among the participants in this study. The first commonly held belief was that success or failure in an assessment occur because of previous teaching or learning experiences.

Tita: Journal entry 7, question 3

Learners previously had the possibility not only to read this type of text and get familiar with this style of writing throughout the semester, but also to write one register of experience with the help of their partners, by doing collaborative writing.

Mooncat: Journal entry 2, question 3

The main difficulty arose because some students did not attend the previous classes when the topic of the structure of a paragraph had been studied.

Additionally, the samples above confirm that language assessment and teaching had a symbiotic nature. They fed each other and contributed to success, as Tita's entry describes. Conversely, external factors, such as lack of attendance, negatively impacted this relationship.

Additionally, these five teachers believed assessment was good when it provided washback on learning and teaching; was authentic, valid, and practical; and appealed to students' interests and affect.

Professor X: Interview 1, question 5

For learners to know how they are doing and to know what they can improve; we [teachers] receive some insight about what we do and how we do it affects them a lot.

Tita: Interview 1–question 6

I think the tasks need to be aligned to real-life situations; it is demonstrated that if it not connected to real life situations, it is not a good assessment.

Kant: Interview 1, question 6

An assessment is good if what you're assessing is valid in the sense of having a direct relation with what was covered or studied throughout, along the course.

Vincent: Interview 1, question 6

It needs to be interesting for them. The more fun they have, the better because they're enjoying and it will be memorable, I believe.

Together, the sample data above suggest that these teachers' beliefs towards language assessment were not negative but rather empowering for teaching and learning. Furthermore, the beliefs positioned assessment as a core element in the language classroom.

The last section of findings in this research report integrates with the core components of LAL, as the literature and research have discussed them. Thus, the findings are categorized according to knowledge, skills, and principles in language assessment. As with practices and beliefs, the data below reflect the group's views.

Knowledge of language assessment. The five teachers seemed to be aware of the meaning of validity as applied to classroom assessment. This meaning related to the connection between an assessment instrument and what had happened before in the course.

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Kant–Interview 1–Question 2

I think: Did I actually go through the whole process of thinking what we have done in class, whether they have actually been exposed to the sort of input, the sort of instructions. Is it really valid?

Another finding related to these teachers' knowledge in language assessment reflected how they had learned test design. The teachers reported that such knowledge came from studying sample tests and their own experience.

Vincent: Interview 2, question 5

They [advisors] send examples so I look at those. I have learned from advice given by advisors: how to make a good multiple-choice task.

This sample suggests that language assessment knowledge of the technical kind (e.g. how to design a test) came from analyzing others' instruments. Knowledge, then, came from emerging opportunities rather than formal training.

In the last journal entry, all teachers were asked what they thought they knew about language assessment. Their answers varied in the scope of knowledge (or lack thereof) they say they had. Table 2 summarizes the five teachers' answers, which were taken from journal entry 8–question 1, and were not modified in any way.

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Table 2. Reported Knowledge of Language Assessment

Tita	I want to mention that during this time (while writing the journal entries) I have realized there are many theoretical gaps I have about language assessment. I am not theoretically well documented.
Mooncat	Ideas such as practicality, reliability and validity Assessing is not only testing, but helping the students through their complete process of learning
Professor X	Some types of assessment such as formative, summative, achievement and self-assessment, although not very deeply Terms such as validity, reliability, practicality and washback which should be principles for any type of assessment I ju st know basic things that I have learned during the process of designing tests about the design or types of questions, but in an informal way
Vincent	*No answer provided*
Kant	Difference between testing, assessment, and evaluation. Constructs such as validity, reliability, practicality, authenticity and washback. The possibilities of assessment within the scope of summative, formative, diagnostic, performance-based.

Perhaps, not surprisingly, the answers in Table 2 attest the differential profiles that these language teachers had for language assessment. Recall, for example, that Vincent had had no training in language assessment, while Mooncat and Kant had been engaged in LAL initiatives. Also, as Professor X claimed, learning about language assessment happened on the go.

Skills for language assessment. Among the skills the teachers report, Mooncat and Tita highlighted their approach to dealing with students' affective dimensions. Professor X and Vincent commented on their assessment approach, and Kant notes validity in classroom assessment as his skill.

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Mooncat: Journal entry 8, question 2

I think the most important skill is the good T-S relationship I establish with the students.

Tita: Journal entry 8, question 3

When assessing learners, I always take into account the emotional component of assessing and I try to make them feel confident.

Vincent: Journal entry 8, question 2

I think my language assessment is diverse, I tend to use a variety of ways to assess language proficiency and development of students.

Professor X: Journal entry 8, question 2

I don't think I have any skills in language assessment. However, I do try to incorporate formative assessment during my courses.

Kant: Journal entry 8, question 2

I make sure that the questions I propose have a direct relation with the content covered during our classes.

These five data samples further indicate how different language assessment was, given every teacher's life-world and interpretive framework. The skills reported included interpersonal, psychological, methodological, and technical dimensions. Truly, the data display a wide variation in the skills these teachers explained they had.

Principles in language assessment. Finally, in relation to principles for language assessment, the teachers mentioned concepts such as validity, reliability, and washback in the form of feedback. The data provide evidence of some of the principles the teachers reported in their LAL.

Vincent: Journal entry 8, question 3

I think my assessment practices measure what they need to measure, they are relevant to what students learn during the course and have a clear purpose. They are also reliable as students' results are often very consistent.

Vincent remarked on something that underlay the five teachers' practices; that is, language assessment needed to be valid and relevant for students, which made assessment useful. Principles, the data show, illuminated these teachers' practices and reflected beliefs of what good language assessment implied.

Needs in language assessment literacy. The last category for findings in this study entails the specific needs for training in language assessment that these teachers had. Table 3, which summarizes their needs, includes answers from interview one, question nine.

Table 3. Training Needs in Language Assessment

Tita	I am very kind and I give them thousands of opportunities. I don't know if I need to improve it. Probably I need to be stricter with students. I want to be able to design more instruments for assessment. To have the ability to use all of them, using different types of tasks.
Mooncat	The difficulty in designing tests. I think sometimes it's difficult. That's the main thing I would like to improve: The design.
Professor X	I would like to be more process-oriented. Probably I would like to learn more about assessment, more about the theory.
Vincent	Maybe giving instructions, of the activity, the task, as I talk to them about them.
Kant	Listening assessment would be one; more personalized and specific training in terms of language assessment. A more advanced course that would allow me to be an expert in assessment.

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As Table 3 shows, all five teachers wished to improve different aspects in language assessment. Specifically, design of instruments was apparent in Tita and Mooncat; general approaches for assessment can be inferred from the answers given by Professor X and Kant; and specific details about the teaching-assessment relationship emerge in Vincent's answer. In conclusion, the answers imply the need for general, differentiated training for language assessment among these teachers.

Discussion and Implications

As Mckay and Gass (2005) state, qualitative research provides rich detailed data, and this study has not been an exception. In fact, because of space constraints, only the most apparent findings emerging from the data have been presented. Notwithstanding the wealth of information, the findings can be analyzed against research and conceptual discussions in LAL.

Firstly, the practices these five teachers had contrast with those presented in Arias and Maturana (2005), Cheng et al. (2004), Frodden et al. (2004), and López and Bernal (2009) in that the teachers of the present study use both summative and formative assessment instruments and include all four skills in their repertoire. The inclusion of non-language constructs such as confidence and voice projection, strictly speaking, may be considered sources of construct-irrelevant variance (Messick, 1989), something that is perceived as a threat to validity in language testing. However, the assessment ecology of these five teachers provides room and rationales for these constructs to be included in their approach to assessment. As Brookhart (2003) highlights, context for classroom assessment is construct relevant.

Second of all, the knowledge that the five teachers reported aligns with what the literature has discussed in terms of concepts such as validity and assessment methods (Inbar-Lourie, 2008; Stiggins et al., 2004). However, there is no evidence to ascertain that the teachers were knowledgeable of measurement and language description (Davies, 2008) or language teaching methodologies (Inbar-Lourie, 2008), among others. Therefore, this can be considered a limitation of conducting qualitative case studies. However, I must state that the data collection instruments did not seek to measure knowledge of language assessment (through, for example, pre-determined categories as most studies do) but rather to elicit knowledge as the teachers themselves conceived it. Thus, reported knowledge of language assessment from teachers' perspectives, in the case of these five teachers, did not necessarily reflect discussions of LAL. It reflected, rather, what they cherished as important knowledge in their particular assessment life-worlds.

Additionally, the teachers reported that their knowledge of test construction came from their own experiences. This finding confirms the importance

that Scarino (2013) adheres to teachers' contexts and their impact on LAL. Test construction, as reported in the literature (Brown & Bailey, 2008; Davies, 2008) comes from language testing textbooks and experts. However, it should not be argued that these teachers somehow lacked assessment literacy or that they were fully literate. As Inbar-Lourie (2013) and Taylor (2013) suggest, there is no solidified content knowledge to describe and evaluate the depth and width of LAL among various stakeholders.

Third, this study reports on skills that have not been documented in the general literature for LAL. The fact that teachers stated that they had affective skills for assessment (Tita, for example) further highlights the strong influence of teachers' contexts, as Scarino (2013) elaborated. Davies (2008) explained that skills include item construction and use of statistics, which the teachers in this study did not comment on. In fact, as Tita and Mooncat commented, test construction was a perceived need in their language assessment. Recall that Taylor's proposal includes technical skills for teachers (see literature review above). However, her proposal does not state anything about other types of skills. In closing, language teachers' specific skills may add to the discussions of what LAL has come to mean, a growing discussion in the field (Inbar-Lourie, 2013). In Giraldo's (2018) review, there is no allusion to affective skills for language assessment, yet they were meaningful in these teachers' LAL.

Fourth, the way the five teachers conceptualized their principles for assessment differed from general discussions in LAL. In the literature, two prominent principles are ethics and fairness (Davies, 2008; Fulcher, 2012). However, in the present study the teachers viewed concepts such as validity, reliability and washback as principles. This is not surprising, considering that language testing textbooks treat these as principles. Accordingly, the concepts may seem slippery in the literature. Most importantly, the teachers viewed feedback as an integral principle for their practice. Thus, while providing feedback may be considered a practice in language assessment (McNamara & Hill, 2011; Rea-Dickins, 2001), these teachers envisioned it as a principle that undergirds their unique approach to assessment.

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In closing, the information from this study can indeed serve as a needs analysis to recommend professional development experiences. Based on the findings in this research, a course that focuses on theoretical and practical

aspects of testing, including both summative and formative assessment types, should prove useful for the five teachers in this study. To substantiate the course, it should consider contextual factors as elements that can foster, or given the case, impede the development of LAL. These ideas correlate with what Fulcher (2012), Scarino (2013), and Vogt and Tsagari (2014) report: In essence, the five teachers would benefit from a language testing and assessment course that combines knowledge, skills, and principles within their particular contexts. Such a combination may help the teachers to consolidate their strengths and empower them to increase their LAL.

Conclusions

The present study described the practices and beliefs that five Colombian English language teachers held in their language assessment approach. The practices included a multi-method, multi-construct view of language assessment, a close relationship between assessment and teaching, the use of assessment data to improve teaching and learning, evaluation of assessment after specific results, and the use of quantitative peer assessment. As for beliefs, the findings yielded a coordination between assessment success and failure on the one hand, and previous teaching and learning experiences on the other; what is more, the five teachers believed that good language assessment is valid, reliable, sensitive to students' affect, and that it provides feedback to improve learning. An analysis of data showed that the classical components of language assessment literacy –that is knowledge, skills, and principles– are praxized and conceptualized in what could be complementary ways to those highlighted in the field.

How teachers reported their assessment literacy arises from their assessment life-worlds. Then, this research provides support for Scarino's (2013) call to understand teachers' interpretive frameworks in the hope to better articulate the meaning of LAL for this population. Finally, the research highlights the complexity of the knowledge base in LAL as viewed from language teachers' perspectives, a complexity that gives insight into professional development opportunities in language assessment. Based on the findings in this study, a program to foster LAL among these teachers should draw them nearer to the knowledge dimension as reported in the literature, while contrasting it with their own knowledge base. Most importantly, these five teachers might benefit

from having an LAL course where design of assessments is a priority. Finally, the teachers might be interested in learning about the way the field conceives principles for language assessment. In synthesis, such a program could provide wholesome learning through LAL.

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Appendix A.
Questions from Semi-Structured Interview

Interview One

1. Have you taken any language testing courses? What can you tell me about it/them?

2. Now please tell me about your language assessment practices; please describe how you assess your students' English language.

3. Are there any other assessment instruments that you design? If so, which ones and how do you design them?

4. Do you involve your students in your language assessment, for example through self-assessment? If so, how?

5. In your opinion, do you think assessing students is necessary? Why (not)?

6. Please tell me what you think are the characteristics of good language assessment.

7. In your opinion, do you think English teachers should have any principles in their language assessment?

8. Overall, how do you feel about your assessment practices?

9. Is there anything you'd like to improve?

Interview Two

1. What was the purpose of this achievement test?

2. What did you assess with this test?

3. How did you design this achievement test? What steps did you take?

How do you feel about the design of this test?

How did you learn how to design the items and tasks in this test?

4. How did you administer it? How did it go (the administration)?

5. How did you score/grade this test?

6. Did you do anything with the results of this test?

Appendix B.
Online Teacher Journal

Dear teacher,

Recalling the last week you taught, think about an assessment activity you used and reflect upon it. You may use the guiding questions below and include as many other comments as you think are necessary.

In terms of language assessment:

1. What did you do?

2. What went well and what did not go so well?

3. What do you think about what happened? For example:

- If something went well, what do you think about it (what went well)? Why do you think it went well?

- If something did not go well, what do you think about it (what did not go well)? Why do you think it did not go well?

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HOW

The Comparative Effect of Teaching Collocations through Literary vs. Non-Literary Content on EFL Learners*

El efecto comparativo de la enseñanza de colocaciones mediante contenido literario y no literario en estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera

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Abstract

This study investigates the comparative effect of teaching collocations through practicing them in literary and non-literary contents. The participants were composed

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of 30 EFL students selected from a cohort of 52 intermediate students in an English language institute in Sanandaj City, Iran. They were selected based on their scores on the Preliminary English Test (PET) and a collocation test, developed and piloted in advance. The selected participants were randomly divided into two experimental groups. Collocations were taught through literary content in one group; the others were instructed via non-literary content. At the end of the period of treatment with both groups, a collocation test was administered to both groups as a posttest. The analysis of collected data, using One-way ANCOVA and Descriptive Statistics, reveals that teaching the new collocations through literary contents proved significantly more effective than teaching them through non-literary contents.

Keywords: literary content, non-literary content, collocation learning, EFL learners.

Resumen

Este estudio investiga el efecto comparativo de la enseñanza de colocaciones por medio de su práctica con contenidos literarios y no literarios. Los participantes fueron 30 estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) seleccionados de una cohorte de 52 estudiantes de nivel intermedio en un instituto de inglés en la ciudad de Sanandaj (Irán). Estos participantes se seleccionaron con base en sus puntajes de un test preliminar de inglés (PET) y otro de colocaciones, los cuales fueron desarrollados y piloteados por adelantado. Los participantes seleccionados fueron divididos al azar en dos grupos. A un grupo se le enseñó con contenido literario y al otro con contenido no literario. Al final del periodo de enseñanza con ambos grupos, el test de colocaciones se administró en ambos grupos. El análisis de datos, realizado por medio de One-way ANCOVA y estadística descriptiva, muestra que la enseñanza de nuevas colocaciones con contenidos literarios es significativamente más efectiva que su enseñanza con contenidos no literarios.

Palabras clave: contenido literario, contenido no literario, aprendizaje de colocaciones, estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera.

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Introduction

The knowledge of vocabulary is one of the most challenging issues for both teachers and researchers (Coady & Huckin, 1997; Khoii & Sharififar, 2013). It is true that learning a sufficient repertoire of vocabulary is as important as learning grammar (Krashen, 1988). No one can communicate without knowledge of vocabulary; the expression of different meanings is possible only through memorizing a range of words by L2 learners (McCarthy, 1990). But, words are sometimes more than single lexical items. That is, two-to-three-word combinations are as frequent as single words in a language. These combinations of words are called collocations in the literature (e.g., Melcuk, 1998; Shehata, 2008).

Collocation is a subcategory of vocabulary. As Melcuk (1998, p.14) maintained, "Word combinations involve two lexical items, one of which is selected arbitrarily by the other lexical item to convey a particular meaning." "The combination is not a fixed expression but there is a greater-than-chance likelihood that the words will co-occur" (Jackson, 1988, p. 96). Learners in an EFL/ESL setting have different kinds of problems including the accurate use of collocations in their daily communication, which has not been addressed appropriately by the teachers or researchers in the field, that is, researchers or teachers can only measure learners' productive skills (writing and speaking), though they often have different problems in both skills.

Some lexical errors that happen in co-occurrence of words like "heavy tea", "long person" arise from learners' insufficient knowledge about how words are used together. Learners' collocational knowledge is crucial for producing language which is both more natural and also closer to native speakers' language (Ellis, 1996; Nation, 2001; Produromou, 2003). Lewis (1997) declared that "learners can have more effective communication only through collocations, and they have the ability of saying whatever they want with restricted language resources" (p. 33).

Previous research findings suggest that second language learners have difficulties dealing with collocations (Ellis, 1996; Lewis, 1997; Miyakoshi, 2009; Pei, 2008; Produromou, 2003; Shehata, 2008; Vural, 2010). For instance, Vural (2010) claimed that learners have problems with how to find out the meaning of words without the knowledge of collocations. Whenever one non-native

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speaker wants to produce language, it clearly sounds unnatural. Lack of enough exposure to the natural patterns causes difficulties for learners to produce sufficient collocations as fluently as possible.

The use of literature and literary texts, however, goes back to the grammar translation era, during which literature was considered as the main source of material to be used in the classroom, founded on the assumption that studying the literary texts of the target language was the best way to learn both the new language and the culture. But, later there was a slow movement toward discarding literature as a source to be used in the classroom, and finally, during the period from the 1940s to the 1960s, it disappeared from the language curriculum entirely, possibly because "literary texts were thought to embody archaic language which had no place in the world of audio-lingualism, where linguists believed in the primacy of speech, thus considering the written form somewhat static", as De Riverol (1991, p.65) states. One of the most influential figures in the field of literature, Maley (as cited in Khatib & Rahimi, 2012, p.32) mentions that the lack of empirical research in support of the facilitative role of literature can be the main reason for this negative view.

Nevertheless, in the 1970s and 1980s, the growth of communicative language teaching methods led to a reconsideration of the place of literature in the language classroom. This, as Carter (2007, p.6) noted, was mainly due to the "recognition of the primary authenticity of literary texts and the fact that more imaginative and representational uses of language could be embedded alongside more referentially utilitarian output". Furthermore, many scholars have endorsed the benefits of using literature in the language classroom (Collie & Slater, 1990; Ghosn, 2002; Hirvela, 2001; Ur, 1996; Maley, 1989; Tasneen, 2010).

Reading literature is promising in several ways. It provides authentic and varied language material; it creates contextualized communicative situations, real patterns of social interaction, and use of language (Collie & Slater, 1994). Despite theoretical recognition of the possibly important role of literature and literary content in teaching a second language, the field of second language teaching still suffers a paucity of research in this domain. Therefore, the present study aims at bridging this gap by including literary content as a design feature in teaching collocations to EFL learners, who are often deprived of being exposed to authentic linguistic input. To this end, this study has aimed at comparing the

effects of literary versus non-literary contents on EFL learners' collocation learning. The impetus for such an empirical attempt has been that the recent theoretical arguments in favor of the potential of literary contents cannot be relied upon unless its utility is put to experimental scrutiny and verification.

Review of the Related Literature

Wilkins (1972, pp.111-112) argued that "Without grammar little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". Carter and McCarthy (1988, cited in Higuchi, 1999, p. 46) believe that "Three key groups in the area of language learning and teaching neglect vocabulary study: linguists, applied linguists, and language teachers". As McCarthy (1990, cited in Higuchi, 1999, p. 12) noted, "Vocabulary should be taught through collocations…. The relationship of collocation is fundamental in the study of vocabulary, and collocation is an important organizing principle in the vocabulary of any language".

Maley (1989, as cited in Bagherkazemi & Alemi, 2010, p.4) emphasizes 'the use of literature as a resource for language learning", and Higuchi (1999) argued that authors of stories rarely use unusual collocations in their works, so typical collocations should be taught through stories. As a result, he believes that EFL learners can take advantage of short stories as proper resources to get familiar with apt collocations. He also states that reading activities can really be fruitful in terms of raising learners' consciousness about collocations.

Studies on collocation have addressed it from different angles. Waller (1993) explored the characteristics of near-native proficiency in using collocations in writing. Källkvist (1998) analyzed the types of collocational errors made by advanced Swedish learners of English. Channell (1981) investigated advanced EFL students' use of collocations and the errors they made in using them compared with Standard English. Arnaud and Savignon (1997) compared the knowledge of rare words and complex lexical units in advanced ESL learners of French L1, and found that the learners performed better on the use of rare words than complex phrases. Bahns and Eldaw (1993) compared the collocational knowledge and general vocabulary knowledge and found that the knowledge of collocations lags behind the knowledge of general vocabulary.

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EFL students find reading texts in English as complicated when they come across a new word in a text. However, it is extremely important that EFL teachers employ new strategies to help these students make those words part of their lexicon. EFL teachers use various strategies to catch students' attention so they can become aware of unknown words and store them in their long-term memory. As mentioned above, the role of literature and literary content in foreign language teaching is under-researched so far and awaits proper investigation. Ebrahimi-Bazzaz, AbdSamad, Arif Bin Ismail, and Noordin (2014), who reviewed the studies conducted on collocations in Iran, acknowledged the scarcity of studies carried out in this regard. Ghonsooli, Pishghadam, and Mohaghegh Mahjoobi (2008) carried out a study on the effect of teaching collocations on Iranian EFL learners' English writing and found out that it contributed to writing performance. However, no study has compared the impact of using collocations in literary and non-literary contents in the Iranian context. Therefore, this study addresses this issue. More specifically, it has aimed at answering the following question:

1. Does teaching collocations through literary and non-literary contents differentially influence EFL learners' learning of those collocations?

Method

Participants. The participants of this study were composed of 30 EFL students selected from a larger group of 52 students (24 male and 28 female) learning English at an English language institute in Sanandaj City, Iran. The age range was from 15 to 19 years old. They were all at the intermediate level based on the criteria set by the institute. In other words, the level of the participants had already been assigned by the institute based on the procedure they had been taught, the scores they had obtained from different tests as well as the books they had studied earlier.

Instruments and materials. The instruments used in this study included the assessment materials, the songs of American English File series (Starter and Volumes 1-3), and the tasks and activities employed for each group. The assessment materials were a test of general English proficiency, i.e. the PET test and collocation tests developed by the researchers. The Preliminary English

Test (PET) was piloted followed by checking the reliability of the pilot data using Cronbach's alpha, which indicated that it had a reliability coefficient of .93. Then, the test was administered to the 52 students. The PET included four parts which comprised listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The researchers used only three parts: listening, reading, and speaking. The listening, reading, and writing subsections included 25, 35, and 7 questions, respectively. The listening subsection had 25 points, and the reading and writing subsections each had 50 points. Thus, the total score one could obtain was 75.

The collocation test, which was developed by the researchers as a pre-test to assess the collocation knowledge of the participants, was the second instrument used in this study. It was a 60 item multiple-choice collocation test to ensure their homogeneity regarding collocation knowledge. The newly developed collocation test was piloted prior to the real administration and its items were analyzed by the researchers after the pilot study in terms of item facility, item difficulty, and choice distribution. The items with a discrimination index near 1 were chosen, but the item facility of more items was less than ideal. In the pilot study, the reliability of .96 was obtained. The results of this test indicated that the participants were homogeneous in terms of their collocation knowledge prior to the treatment.

A second test was developed by the researchers to measure the participants' collocation knowledge after the treatment as the posttest. It was a 60-item multiple-choice test which was entirely based on the collocations that were taught during the treatment. However, five items were omitted after item analysis following the pilot study, after which the test demonstrated a reliability index of .96. The content validity of both collocation tests was insured by submitting them to the judgment of a panel of experts until complete agreement was reached on the items to be kept in the test. The Starter and Volumes 1-3 of the American English File Series as well as three short stories were utilized as the sources of collocations used in the study. The participants were provided with both MP3 songs as well as their photocopied lyrics of the songs in the American English File series. Also, other exercises such as matching and fill-in-the-blank exercises were used.

Procedure. First, the PET test was administered to the 52 students and each one was given a score based on their performance on the test. Out of

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the 52 students, 37 students whose scores were between one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected as the participants of the study. Next, based on the piloted collocation test, those who answered 20 or less than 20 percent of the 60 items (N=6) were excluded from the study. Besides, one more student was also randomly omitted from the study to form 2 equal experimental groups. Then, the remaining participants (N=30) were randomly divided into two equal groups of 15.

The researchers followed Rieder's (2002) model which includes three processes helping students to make understanding possible when they encounter a new word in a text. The first process is defined as Enrichment/Focus; in this process, the student identifies the context in which the word was found, helping him/her to classify the word into a category that will facilitate its acquisition. The second process is Abstraction/Integration, in which the identified word is taken out of the context where it was found in order to look for its literary meaning. Then, students elaborate the range of the denotative concept, followed by the integration of the word into the knowledge structures already acquired. This helps one understand and assimilate the complete meaning of the word. Finally, Consolidation/Association, the traditional procedure in which students reassure the word by making connections between the written word and its definition using memorization or practice through different activities.

The study lasted for 12 sessions. The classes were held three times a week, half an hour for each session for teaching the collocations under study. Every session, around 5 collocations were taught. At the beginning of the treatment, the concept of collocation was defined for the students, and the rationale for learning collocations was explained. The learners in both groups were required to guess the meaning of the collocations being taught; if they could not do so, the Farsi equivalents of collocations were given to them.

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Next, in the literary group, the participants were asked to use the collocations they had learned in songs and stories and produce sentences containing the collocations in five groups of three students. First, they were given some time to come up with their own example sentences and paragraphs. Meanwhile, the groups were supervised by the teacher to correct errors made by the groups, only in terms of using collocations in the context. While commenting on the examples, the teacher tried to provide the learners with proper examples to

help the learners better understand the use of collocations taught through literary contents.

For the non-literary content group, however, the students, in five groups of three members, were supposed to do various exercises such as matching collocations with their definitions, completing sentences with collocations (the list of collocations was not provided), true/false exercises, and filling in the blanks using collocations given in a list. Meanwhile, the teacher, supervising the learners on possible problems, corrected their errors in using collocations. Then, all the exercises with their correct answers were checked by the whole class to make sure that all the students had noted the correct use and format. Finally, both groups took the collocation posttest the day after the treatment had been finished.

The design of the study. As the selection of the participants was based on convenient non-random sampling, the design of the study was quasi-experimental. The instructional treatment with two levels, i.e., collocation teaching contextualized in literary content and non-literary content, constituted the independent variable, and the dependent variable was the participants' collocation learning as measured by the collocation posttest.

Data analysis. First, the assumptions underlying ANCOVA were checked, including the *linearity* for each group, the *homogeneity of regression slopes* between the covariate and the dependent variable for each group, and the assumption of *equality of variances*. Then, data of both groups on the collocation pretest and posttest were fed into the SPSS, while the pretest scores were defined as the covariate. Next, the descriptive statistics of the groups were computed and a One-way ANCOVA was run to compare the groups' scores and check any possible differences between the groups' performance on the posttest.

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Results

The analysis for the linearity between the covariate and the dependent variable is displayed in Figure 1, below.

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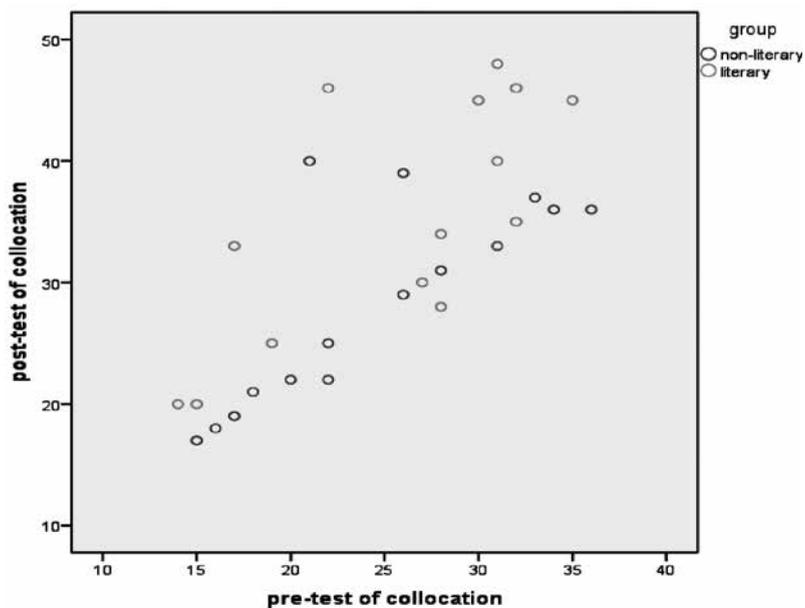
Figure 1. The linearity for each group for the collocation test.

The output generated in Figure 1 provided a number of useful pieces of information. First, the general distribution of scores for each of the groups was checked. As the figure shows, there appeared to be a linear (straight-line) relationship for each group. Indeed, there was no indication of a curvilinear relationship. The relationship was clearly linear, so there was no violation of the assumption of the linear relationship. Table 1 below shows the analysis for checking the homogeneity of regression slopes.

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Table 1. Tests of between-subjects Effects for Collocation

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1553.85[a]	3	517.95	13.37	.000
Intercept	115.80	1	115.80	2.99	.10
Group	8.86	1	8.86	.23	.64
Pre	1199.65	1	1199.65	30.96	.000
Group * Pre	**.40**	**1**	**.40**	**.01**	**.92**
Error	1007.52	26	38.75		
Total	32835.00	30			
Corrected Total	2561.37	29			

a. R Squared = .61 (Adjusted R Squared = .56)

As Table 1 shows, the Sig. level for the Group * Pre interaction was greater than .05, well above the cut-off point (p = .92), which shows that the interaction was not statistically significant and indicates that the assumption of the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes was not violated. Below, the assumption of *equality of variances* will be checked, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for Collocation

F	df1	df2	Sig.
3.21	1	28	**.08**

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + pre + group

The results in Table 2 above indicate that the assumption of equality of variances has been met (p = .08 > .05). After the assumptions of ANCOVA had been satisfied, the One-Way ANCOVA was run to check the inter-group

differences in terms of collocation learning. The related analyses are presented in Tables 3 and 4, below.

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics of the Collocation Posttest*

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Non-literary	**28.33**	**8.19**	15
Literary	**35.20**	**9.52**	15
Total	31.77	9.40	30

As shown in Table 3, the means score of the non-literary group was 28.33 with the standard deviation of 8.19, and the mean score of the literary group was 35.20 with the standard deviation of 9.52. The number of participants in each group was 15.Further analyses are presented in Table 4and these specifically answer the research question in this study.

Table 4. Test of Between-Subjects Effects for the Collocation Posttest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1553.45	2	776.72	20.81	.000	.61
Intercept	116.34	1	116.34	3.12	.09	.10
pre	1199.81	1	1199.81	32.14	.000	.54
group	**195.53**	**1**	**195.53**	**5.24**	.03	.16
Error	1007.92	27	37.33			
Total	32835.000	30				
Corrected Total	2561.37	29				

a. R Squared = .606 (Adjusted R Squared = .577) }

The results presented in Table 4 show that there was a significant difference between the two experimental groups in their performances on the collocation posttest ($p = .03 \square .05$), indicating that the literary group outperformed the non-literary group on the post-test of collocations. Furthermore, the partial eta

squared value turned out to be .16, which signals a large effect size. Hadaway, Vardell, and Young (2002) report three advantages of incorporating literature into EFL classes. The first one is the contextualization of language. EFL learners get familiarized with the use of language in various situations when they read a piece of literature. As students have also to deal with language intended for native speakers, they become familiar with many different linguistic forms, communicative functions, and meanings.

Discussion

With respect to the results obtained from this study, it can be concluded that teaching English language collocations through literary contents in English turned out to be significantly more effective than teaching them through non-literary content. One possible reason for this finding could be the use of authentic materials for contextualizing collocation instruction. Mazzeo, Rab, and Alssid (2003) refer to context as a wide range of instructional strategies designed to link the learning of basic skills and academic or occupational contents by focusing English language teaching and learning on tangible applications in a specific context that is appealing to the students. This is also in line with Bachman's (1990) argument for the use of authentic texts which enhance better interaction between the learner's mind and the text. Nevertheless, the other group which practiced English language collocations primarily through fill-in-the-blank exercises is likely to have suffered the shortcoming of being detached from appropriate context.

The results of this study are in line with those in McCarthy (1990), who found that contextualizing collocation instruction facilitated L2 learners' learning collocations. Furthermore, language input can be not only internalized and comprehensible but also memorable when the language is contextualized by using relevant topics for learners (Bourke, 2008).Moreover, this study corroborates the studies carried out by Shahbaiki and Yousefi (2013) and Pahlavani, Bateni, and Shams Hosseini (2014) who concluded that learning English language collocations positively influenced the ability to understand and translate literary texts in English. However, the findings can challenge the results of studies done by Nation (1994) and Hulstijn and Laufer (2001), who questioned the contextualized method of teaching English language vocabulary for all

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learners. They argued that learning words out of context through wordlists, doing vocabulary exercises, or even by reading through a dictionary are more useful, specifically for beginners and intermediate levels.

Tosun (2008) believes that the employment of stories in English, particularly authentic animated ones for children, might create not only rich, varied, and contextualized language but might also develop opportunities for the EFL teacher to present and practice this target language through tasks and activities derived from story themes which enable teachers to contextualize the whole lesson. All in all, the findings of this study can be interpreted as implying that the provision of a meaningful context for embedding linguistic elements does not make a difference when only learning grammatical structures in English. Rather, such contextualization seems to foster the acquisition of semantically-oriented linguistic elements such as lexical items and collocations in English. If this is the case, EFL teachers would better look for appropriate contexts for rendering the task of English language learning elements more and more interesting and practical.

Conclusion

Resorting to literature and literary texts can be both facilitating and fascinating to English language teachers and learners alike in that they bridge the gap between contrived instructional materials and activities which might not always attract students' attention and curiosity. As teaching vocabularies and collocations in English in isolation is not as effective as they are learned in context, teaching typical collocations in English through real and authentic contexts such as literary contents is expected to be more beneficial.

Mere memorization of word lists is both impractical and ineffective. Therefore, this study and the like can open the doors to a new horizon of incorporating the rich repertoire of literature into the confined limits of the EFL classroom. It would possibly enhance students' motivation to engage in contents which seem to be closer to the reality of their lives outside of the classroom. And this, in turn, will reconcile them with the English language learning activities by removing the pessimism prevalent among EFL learners about the ultimate uses of learning English in an EFL setting.

This study will provide EFL teachers and materials writers with the insight that the use of literary texts in English could be considered a suitable means of contextualization and a feasible alternative to the de-contextualized discrete-point activities often relied on in EFL classrooms.

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HOW

Coursebook Dependency in Secondary and Tertiary-Level EFL Teachers*

Dependencia del libro de texto en profesores de inglés, de segundo y tercer nivel, como lengua extranjera

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Abstract

Coursebooks are among the most significant components of EFL classes. The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the validity and reliability of a 'Coursebook Dependency Questionnaire' developed in the current study. It further aims to study how dependent English language teachers are on coursebooks and whether there are any relationships between teachers' coursebook dependency levels and their genders, experiences, and academic backgrounds. Data collected from 324 language teachers working in

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secondary and tertiary-level EFL programs revealed that the scale is a valid and reliable instrument with five sub-scales to measure the dependency construct; the majority of the participants were medium dependent while high and low dependent teachers comprised less than half of the participants in total.

Keywords: coursebook dependency, dogme ELT, dogme teaching.

Resumen

Los libros de texto se encuentran entre los componentes importantes de la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL). El propósito principal de este estudio es investigar la validez y fiabilidad de un «cuestionario de dependencia del libro de texto». Además, quiere estudiar cómo los profesores de inglés son dependientes de los libros y las relaciones entre los niveles de dependencia y sus géneros, experiencias y antecedentes académicos. Los datos recopilados de 324 maestros de EFL revelaron que la escala es válida y confiable con cinco subescalas para medir la estructura de dependencia; la mayoría de los participantes eran medio dependientes, mientras que los profesores que eran alto y bajo dependientes constituían menos de la mitad de los participantes en total.

Palabras clave: dependencia del libro de texto, dogma en ELT, enfoque dogma.

Introduction

Coursebooks are popular teaching and learning materials in almost all language learning environments and this claim seems to be based on the notion that coursebooks are the end products of years of cumulative experience and expertise which help to provide beneficiaries with foolproof lessons as a corollary of this experience (Harmer, 2012). Along with this cogent reason why coursebooks are such popular teaching and learning materials among language teachers, an indisputable fact about coursebooks is the positive contributions they make in the instructional practices, as suggested by Hutchinson and Torres (1994). One of the most important advantages of coursebooks is that these provide a framework for the course as well as a syllabus when followed systematically. Coursebooks also provide ready-made texts and tasks suitable to learners' levels, along with a clear teacher's guide which increases the practicality in use (Cunningsworth, 1995; Grant, 1987; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Kayapinar, 2009; McGrath,

2013; Ur, 1996)for use in pre-service or early experience settings. It can be used by groups of teachers working with a trainer, or as a self-study resource. It consists of modules on key topics, arranged into sections covering: The Teaching Process, Teaching the Language, Course Content, Lessons, and Learner Differences. Modules can be used in sequence, or selectively. Each module presents practical and theoretical aspects of the topic, with tasks. Suggestions for classroom observation and practice, action research projects and further reading are included. Acknowledgements — To the (trainee).

These advantages lead language teachers to be tied to coursebooks to some extent (Ur, 1996)for use in pre-service or early experience settings. It can be used by groups of teachers working with a trainer, or as a self-study resource. It consists of modules on key topics, arranged into sections covering: The Teaching Process, Teaching the Language, Course Content, Lessons, and Learner Differences. Modules can be used in sequence, or selectively. Each module presents practical and theoretical aspects of the topic, with tasks. Suggestions for classroom observation and practice, action research projects and further reading are included. Acknowledgements — To the (trainee, which necessarily turns into a dependence on coursebooks in most cases i.e. when incorporated into teaching practices without making any critical analysis. When language teachers depend on coursebooks heavily, variety in the learning process decreases. This lack of diversity, as a result of over-reliance on the prescribed activities in coursebooks, becomes detrimental to students' learning sooner or later; and just because language teachers cannot bring themselves to venture away from coursebooks for some of the aforementioned benefits, students should not have unfavorable learning experiences. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate language teachers' coursebook dependency levels to have an understanding of the possible effects of this reliance on learning outcomes.

Coursebook dependency, as a notion, was first put forward by Allwright (1981) when he questioned the need for teaching materials in his seminal study by asking the question what we need teaching materials for. He suggested that coursebooks should be complementary in learning and teaching processes for an interaction to take place for learners' enhanced learning opportunities.

O'Neill (1982), inspired by Allwright's study (1981), explained how language teachers want to become independent of coursebooks by adapting the activities and exercises in a way which will suit the learners' needs. This ultimately ends up with preparing or writing their own materials instead of using the coursebooks available for the course. However, one thing that language teachers should be aware of is that the process in which they write their own materials results in forming new coursebooks somehow, though these may not look very professional. For all these reasons, O'Neill supported using coursebooks in teaching practices unlike Allwright's (1981) suggestion.

Grant (1987) stated that language teachers actually move away from using coursebooks more often as opposed to their belief of how strictly they follow them during their teaching practices. Although they think that they depend on coursebooks heavily, this does not represent their real teaching habits. He discussed that the goals of curriculum as well as reasons why students learn English affect the way language teachers teach and their methods of coursebook use.

Swan (1992) made a simile for coursebooks as building bridges or walls among the elements of the learning environment such as teachers and learners, learners and learners, and learners and language. According to Swan, coursebooks take over easily if language teachers are not careful about the focus of the lesson. Thus, he endorses the idea of being critical about the way coursebooks are used due to the unfavorable misconception by some that any coursebook is an end in itself.

As Cunningsworth (1995) suggests, there are several situations in which a coursebook is strictly followed without making any adaptations to the exercises or activities because of the need to feel secure with the help of a prepared syllabus that coursebooks provide for teachers. The purpose of this close examination of coursebooks, especially by novice teachers, might be to provide learners with a well-devised, perfectly planned course with clear stages. When the road to the goals of the course is only paved with what is in the scope of the book, the drawbacks of this situation are inevitable, as outlined below by Cunningsworth (1995):

- A lack of diversity in teaching practices
- A lesser possibility of meeting students' learning needs
- The absence of being impromptu
- Lessened creativity in teaching techniques

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Cunningsworth (1995) claims that these disadvantages can be avoided with the help of a balanced interaction between language teachers and coursebooks, especially when the books are selected by language teachers themselves. He also notes that it is possible to prevent unfavorable outcomes of coursebook dependency with this well-balanced relationship. Cunningsworth (1995, p. 10) supports this notion by stating that "heavy dependence is far from ideal as it reduces the importance of individual contributions that good teachers make at all levels in the learning process. It can stifle innovation and it severely limits flexibility".

Tomlinson (2013) suggested that a coursebook-free course could be even more useful for learners as long as language teachers are confident and creative enough (and have the respect of their learners) to design the language course together for a more stimulating and relevant learning experience. Holguín and Morales (2014) also proposed designing materials to meet learners' multiple needs, learners who come from various backgrounds in Colombia, instead of using regular coursebooks. Moncada (2006) carried out a case study to indicate the limitations experienced in the use of both technical and non-technical materials. She emphasized the need for materials use training to help teachers make proper decisions in their classroom practices because most teachers mainly associate efficient teaching with sticking to materials.

Training teachers to make them autonomous in their educational practices has been one of the main objectives of many educational institutions (Benson, 2006). Benson (2006) defines teacher autonomy as 'taking charge of' or 'taking responsibility for' their teaching practices. Hoyle and John (1995) explain autonomy as the degree of freedom teachers have in teaching practices. The studies on teacher autonomy carried out by Pearson and Hall (1993) and Sampson (2009) investigated the relationships between teacher autonomy and some demographic factors such as gender, teaching experience and academic backgrounds. These studies on teacher autonomy and coursebook-use training are among the underlying factors to examine language teachers' coursebook dependency.

At the turn of the 21st century, Scott Thornbury drew attention to the issue of heavy reliance on coursebooks very strikingly by taking a vow of EFL chastity (Thornbury, 2000). Inspired by a group of Danish film-makers who

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manifested *Dogme 95*[1] rules with the intention of cleansing the movies from the excessive use of technical wizardry as well as fantasy, and turning back to the roots of film-making to rescue mainstream film-making from superficiality in 1995, Thornbury discussed the applicability of *Dogme 95* instructions to EFL teaching. He believes in the need to purify EFL teaching resources since language learners have been lost and their actual needs have been forgotten among the abundance of coursebooks and many other supplementary materials. He claimed that the precipitance of using these materials without relating them to the learners and their needs mainly results in unsuccessful learning outcomes, so he suggested freeing learning environments from coursebooks.

Soon after Thornbury's article in 2000, the discussion initiated by Thornbury and a group of language practitioners subsequently turned into a movement which is known as *Dogme teaching*. This movement suggests a materials light teaching approach to prevent negative effects of heavy dependence on coursebooks. Thornbury and his colleagues emphasized language teachers' need to liberate themselves from dependency on materials and create more conversation-driven learning opportunities that focused on the language that emerges through interaction. Meddings and Thornbury supported the idea to challenge the heavy use of coursebooks and other teaching aids for the sake of empowering students' knowledge through a dialogic process by establishing relevance to their localized learning needs (Meddings & Thornbury, 2009).

Dogme ELT, as a term, refers to foreign language teaching in a dialogic way in which language emerges from learners' conversations, empowered by liberating both learners and teachers from heavy dependence on pre-emptive coursebooks with materials-light teaching principle (Meddings & Thornbury, 2009). Meddings and Thornbury (2009, p. 21) define *Dogme teaching* as "another way of teaching" and "another way of being a teacher" not as a new approach *per se* with new prescriptions. Thornbury (Meddings & Thornbury, 2009, p. 3) clarifies the aim of this "rescue action" of teaching from over-reliance on coursebooks and all the superficiality of teaching materials to renovate teaching practices in such a way that "no methodological structures should interfere with,

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1   Dogme 95 is a movie movement set up by a group of Danish filmmakers to refine filmmaking with the purpose of making it more relevant to the audience and rescue cinema from dependency on special effects, technical wizardry, and fantasy.

nor inhibit, the free flow of participant-driven input, output, and feedback". (Thornbury, 2000, p. 2)

Xerri (2012) examined the benefits of *Dogme teaching* through an action research project and the results showed that it is possible to integrate a Dogme approach into a course in which the students are required to take an exam. He prepared at least one Dogme lesson every month for two different classes throughout an academic year and kept a record of strengths and weaknesses of these lessons. He concluded that Dogme lessons empower both teachers and learners in that the materials light teaching approach leaves more room for student interaction in class. He claimed that this brings about more engaging lessons due to emergent language and this indicated that learners can highly benefit from Dogme lessons.

Bryndal (2014) carried out an experimental research project by designing a Dogme lesson to find out the face validity of the Dogme approach, to see if the approach works well with lower level students and to realize if she can deal with the language emerging and make use of it in line with the Dogme principles. Having analyzed the data collected through questionnaires and observations, she found that almost all the learners were content with the lessons developed according to Dogme principles. Nevertheless, she does not find the approach feasible with lower level students due to the deficiency in their speaking skills. The final point about the results is that she felt the freedom over the hegemony of coursebooks by adopting Dogme principles successfully.

Rebuffet-Broadus (2014) also carried out another experimental study aiming to indicate the students' reactions to Dogme teaching. Rebuffet-Broadus applied the Dogme approach to two groups of monolingual French learners who comprised the same age and shared the same nationality but differed in terms of their language levels and departments. It was found that learners were quite positive about the Dogme lessons. They expressed that the lessons were interactive, lively, and convivial although some drawbacks about the speed of pacing and planning together were stated.

These studies are usually small-scale and experimental, mainly with a focus on language learners' and teachers' perceptions; the results are not generalizable due to the nature of the studies. As Akca (2012) suggested in a descriptive

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research study on the theoretical foundations of *Dogme ELT*, more academic research is needed to inform about Dogme philosophy to help consolidate the applicability of Dogme principles. It is also important to get rid of the drawbacks of coursebook dependency and, as such, get more effective language learning outcomes.

Having examined the literature, we identified the lack of a specific tool to measure the construct in question, so our current study primarily aims to construct a scale to measure language teachers' dependency levels on coursebooks and validate the study as significant to raise awareness about the way language teachers use these materials. It is also aimed to determine how dependent language teachers are on coursebooks and if there is a significant difference between language teachers' genders, their teaching experience, academic backgrounds and their coursebook dependency levels. In order to investigate the levels of language teachers' coursebook dependency, the following questions were posed:

1. Is Coursebook Dependency Questionnaire a valid and reliable scale to measure coursebook dependency in language teachers?

2. How dependent are language teachers on coursebooks?

3. Is there a relationship between language teachers' coursebook dependency levels and

   a) Their genders?

   b) Their years of teaching experience?

   c) Their academic backgrounds?

Research Design

This study was conducted with a quantitative and descriptive research design to find out the relationships between teachers' demographic factors and their coursebook dependency levels. The study can be divided into two parts in terms of statistical analysis. First, the Coursebook Dependency Questionnaire (CDQ) was developed and the data collected to develop the CDQ were analyzed to prove its validity and reliability. After proving that it was a valid and reliable scale, it was given to a new group of participants and the data collected

through this questionnaire were analyzed to present the relationship between teachers' factual data including their gender, experience, and majors, and their coursebook dependency levels in the second part of the study.

Context and sampling. This study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages at both a state and a private university, also in private elementary and secondary schools in Gaziantep, Turkey. Necessary permissions and consents were obtained in each setting. Participants, at the researchers' convenience, were requested to respond to the questionnaire. Language teachers with a wide range of teaching experience and academic background participated in the study, which contributed to a representativeness of the whole population. English language teachers working both in secondary and tertiary levels in different educational settings throughout Turkey were delivered online questionnaires or were sent the questionnaire by mail to obtain better psychometric values.

Participants. This study included a total of 324 respondents, 201 females (62.03%) and 123 males (37.96%) in the validation process of the question-naire. Fifty-eight of these participants took part in the study by filling in the questionnaire which was delivered to them by e-mail while 18 participants filled out an online questionnaire. The remaining 248 participants was requested to fill in the questionnaire at schools in which the study was conducted at the researchers' convenience. One hundred thirty-three of the participants work at universities in different parts of Turkey while the remaining 191 respondents work in elementary and secondary schools.

All the participants are English language teachers from varied cultural backgrounds and they are mainly graduates of English Language Teaching and English Literature departments while a small percentage of the participants majored in linguistics and other departments related to language teaching. Participants also have a wide range of experience from one month to 37 years, which may provide some valuable data for the analysis of the relationship between language teachers' coursebook dependency level and their experience.

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Data collection instruments. The current study has two dimensions which entail collecting data to develop the scale and to analyze data regarding research questions; therefore, various data collection tools were used in the study. The data to validate the scale were collected through four main instruments, which consist of the CDQ, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and

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expert opinions. The participants involved via these data collection tools are shown in the table below.

Table 1. *Participants in the Data Collection Procedure*

Gender	Semi-structured Interviews	Focus Group Discussion	Expert Opinion	Pilot study		Actual Study
				Initial	Secondary	
M	4	5	1	3	8	123
F	3	1	1	2	27	201

First of all, in the questionnaire development process, semi-structured interviews were carried out with seven participants in the process of composing an item pool. Five of the language teachers who were interviewed have a Ph.D. degree while two of them have a bachelor's degree. Then, focus group discussions were held with six participants, all of whom have a Ph.D. degree as well as the experts who were requested to analyze the questionnaire for item analysis. Later, the CDQ was applied to a new participant group for initial and secondary piloting. Finally, after piloting the CDQ, it was used to obtain data for the analyses of the research questions of the current study.

Developing the Coursebook Dependency Questionnaire[2]. Among the whole battery of studies on coursebooks, coursebook dependency is an area which needs more elaboration. As it has not been given the value it deserves, a scale to measure the construct has not been developed to the best knowledge of the researchers. Thus, one of the bases of this study was to develop an instrument which aims to measure the desired construct. With this purpose in mind, the researchers commenced with reviewing the literature to define the target construct and specify the content explicitly as the first step (Kayapinar, 2009). In addition to the review of literature for items to be formed, seven semi-structured interviews were conducted to contribute to the item pool. After conducting semi-structured interviews and analyzing them in terms of their content to contribute to the item pool, a focus group interview was also carried out to generate more ideas to assure that the construct entails a wide

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2   See Appendix A for the final version of the questionnaire.

spectrum of data. To realize this, six experts were consulted for their opinions on the scale. Taking the data obtained from individual interviews and the focus group interview into account, 42 items, which were generated as the first draft after the review of related literature, decreased to 40 items, which were examined by two experts in detail. After the scale was proofread, the researchers resorted to experts' opinions in the formation of the latest version of the items. In this process, two experts were asked to give their opinions on the items both for content and wording as well as categorizing the subscales of thoroughly conceptualized domain 'coursebook dependency' for a higher inter-item reliability. Careful attention was paid to item formation and to how appropriately they represented each subcategory at this stage.

After the number of items and the format in the scale were finalized, the 35-item questionnaire was administered to a randomly selected group of English language teachers for field testing. Initial piloting was conducted with five language teachers from a state university. The second step of piloting the questionnaire involved more participants for the analyses of reliability and other descriptive statistics to identify if there were any problems with the distribution of data. Thirty-five participants who were considered to be representing the target sample were requested to fill in the questionnaire for the purpose of reliability analysis. The results of the analyses revealed that Cronbach's alpha was .88 which was quite good and proved a reliable scale for the actual study (Streiner, 2003).

Data collection procedure. The data were collected through the CDQ, which was primarily developed for this study. First of all, three instruments including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and interviews for experts' opinions were used to collect data to develop the questionnaire. After the questionnaire was formed and piloted, it was applied at different state and private schools at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Before the questionnaire administration, all the necessary permissions and consents were taken and participants were informed about the importance of being sincere while responding.

Three hundred twenty-four respondents participated in the administration of the scale to collect sufficient data to test the viability of the items. When the initial set of data was collected, the next crucial stage was to carry out a factor

analysis which was compatible with the overall approach adopted in the design of the scale. Depending on the result of factor analysis, necessary changes in the items were made for better psychometric qualities (Moser & Kalton, 1971).

The data collected through CDQ were analyzed on the SPSS 22 program for the analysis of descriptive statistics. Having analyzed the Cronbach's alpha value for the reliability of the scale, a high value of reliability, .902, was obtained. The next step was to carry out a principal component analysis to determine the factors underpinning the coursebook dependency levels of teachers. Having carried out factor analysis, more analyses were conducted to answer research questions. First of all, descriptive values were obtained through frequency statistics to answer the research question which asked how dependent teachers were on coursebooks to categorize their dependency levels. Later, an independent samples t-test was conducted in order to find out if there were any relationships between teachers' genders and their coursebook dependency levels. After that, correlation statistics were carried out to investigate whether there was a relationship between teachers' experience and their coursebook dependency level. Finally, a one-way ANOVA was applied to reveal how teachers' academic backgrounds affected their coursebook dependency levels.

Findings

Descriptive statistics. The analyses revealed that the mean was 158.48 with a standard deviation 28.26. This standard deviation is indicative of a small deviation from the mean (Field, 2013). Minimum and maximum values were 46 and 221 respectively and the range of these values was 175. The questionnaire was organized in a seven-point Likert type scale, so the maximum value the 35-item pilot questionnaire could get would be 245 while the minimum value could be 35. Skewness value was -.565 while kurtosis was 1.099. Morgan, Leech, Gloeckner and Barrett (2004) indicate that data are normally distributed if the skewness value is lower than either +1 or -1.

After three factor analyses were conducted for the reliability and validation of the scale, the number of items in the scale was reduced to 26 and the descriptive statistics were performed again for the items which remained in the questionnaire. The findings regarding data distribution normality included the values for skewness at -.596 and kurtosis at 1.316. The mean was revealed

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to be 116.64 with a standard deviation of 21.72 and the total score of partici-
pants varied between a minimum of 29 and a maximum of 169 with a range
score of 140.

Inferential analyses

***RQ #1: Is Coursebook Dependency Questionnaire a valid and reli-
able scale to measure coursebook dependency in language teachers?***
Cronbach's alpha value was calculated for 35 items and the result showed that
the questionnaire had a very high score with a value of .921. Along with these
reliability statistics, inter-item correlations were calculated for each item to see
the consistency among the items. The item-total statistics revealed that items
#2 and #10 had very low correlations which are .130 and .230. Therefore,
these items were excluded from the questionnaire.

Having tested the reliability of the questionnaire, we (or I) carried out three
factor analyses in sequence to investigate the items which do not function well
as a part of the questionnaire. As an extraction method, principal component
analysis was conducted throughout these factor analyses. Before the first factor
analysis was conducted, great attention was paid to reverse coded items while
entering the data set on SPSS so as not to have misleading findings as a result
of factor analysis. There were nine items which require reverse-coding to get
comparable responses in the analysis process**.** The results of factor analyses
showed that these items load the factors #3 and #4, all of which refer to in-
dependence from coursebooks in two different aspects. Of the 35 items in the
scale, 33 items were included in the first analysis to test the sample adequacy
because two items had been eliminated due to poor inter-item correlations.
Therefore, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test of Sampling Adequacy was
applied and it was found to be .915. Then, Bartlett's test of sphericity was ap-
plied and the significance value was found to be .000, which is a prerequisite
to conducting a factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

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The next step was to find out the factors underlying the variables in the
scale. As a result of the principal component analysis, the table in which the
total variance was explained indicated five factors or components. After the
number of factors was revealed, factor loads were examined to check if they
had high loadings for more than one factor to the same extent. For this reason,

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the rotated component matrix was analyzed in detail to detect any items loading more than one factor. These complex items and the factors they load can be closely examined in the table below.

Table 2. Factor Loads of Complex Items Eliminated after Factor Analyses

Item Numbers	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
V1	.397	.398	.335	-	-
V4	.268	-	-	.278	.352
V12	.266	-	.453	.411	.255
V17	.376	.318	.-271	.242	.159
V20	.415	.331	.388	-	.340
V22	.447	.348	.374	-	.432
V32	-	-	.470	.451	-

Seven items were loading multiple factors, which was a problem for construct validity. Therefore, items #1, #4, #12, #17, #20, #22 and #32 were discarded from the scale. In the third factor analysis, the number of factors stayed the same and 5 factors and 26 variables in the last factor analysis indicated 54.133% of the total variance. Cronbach's alpha value was calculated one more time and the final reliability value was found to be .902 for the 26 items remaining in the questionnaire. One last thing to do in this process was to name the factors. The factors were classified and named in order of the numbers from first to fifth as follows:

1. Practicality-based dependence
2. Skill-based dependence
3. Practicality-based independence
4. Skill-based independence
5. Structure-based dependence

RQ #2: How dependent are language teachers on coursebooks? The range of the mean was decided by the researchers so that teachers could be categorized into three groups labeled as high, medium and low. The figure

below shows the categories teachers fell into and the number of participants
in each group.

Coursebook Dependency Categories
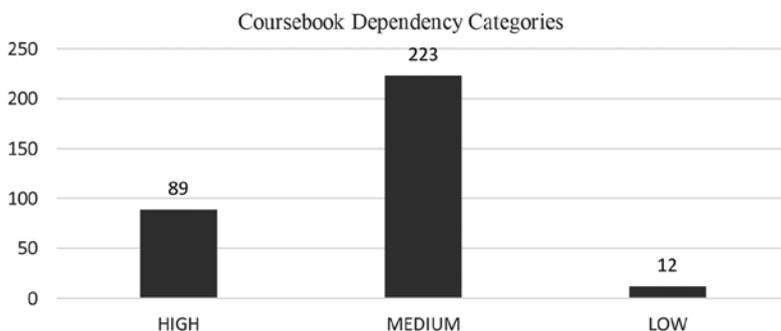
Teachers with scores which were greater than 129 were considered as
highly coursebook dependent while teachers with scores greater than 78 were
regarded as medium coursebook dependent. Teachers who scored 78 and
less were considered as not very dependent on coursebooks. The number of
teachers who are identified as highly dependent on coursebooks is 89 and it
constitutes 27.5% of all the participants. The number of teachers who are
in the medium dependent category is 223 with 68.8% of all. The last group
of teachers who are the least dependent on coursebooks only consists of 12
participants comprising 3.7% of all the teachers in the study.

**RQ #3a: Is there a statistically significant relationship between
teachers' coursebook dependency levels and their genders?** The results
of group statistics showed that males ($N = 123$) had a slightly bigger mean
score ($M = 119.52$, $SD = 20.41$) of coursebook dependency than females'
mean scores ($N = 201$, $M = 114.88$, $SD = 22.35$). Levene's test for equality
of variances was revealed as an F value .092 and significance value of .762,
which means the two groups have nearly the same variance on the dependent
variable and this indicates that the dataset meets the assumption that the two
groups are independent of each other.

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Other values with regard to equality of means include t value which is 1.871 with degrees of freedom at 322. Significance (2-tailed) value is .062 while mean difference between two groups is 4.63475. The t-test (t (322) = 1.9, $p>$.05) demonstrates that the difference between the means of the two groups is not significant. Therefore, gender is not a factor affecting coursebook dependency levels of the participants.

RQ #3b: Is there a statistically significant relationship between teachers' coursebook dependency levels and their years of teaching experience? The answer to this research question was obtained through conducting a Pearson product moment correlation. When the relationship between teachers' coursebook dependency levels and their experience was analyzed, the p value was found to be .069 while the correlation value was found to be .101. As the p value (p = .069) is bigger than .05, the correlation between the two variables is not meaningful and thus not taken into consideration (r = .101). To sum up, the two variables (teachers' coursebook dependency and experience) are not statistically significantly correlated with each other.

RQ #3c: Is there a statistically significant relationship between teachers' coursebook dependency levels and their academic backgrounds? The assumptions to conduct a one-way ANOVA analysis outlined by Field (2013) were tested and met and the results of the analysis do not indicate a significant difference as the F ratio was found to be bigger than p value (F = 1.112). The effect size was also calculated to find .01 (eta squared = .01), which would indicate a small effect if the results of one-way ANOVA were considered to be significant in the first place (Dörnyei, 2007). In short, the study failed to prove the hypothesis that there is a relationship between teachers' coursebook dependency levels and their academic backgrounds.

Discussion

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The majority of the participants, making up the largest group in the study, were identified as medium dependent on coursebooks. They constitute more than half of the participants and this parallels with the findings of a survey conducted by the British Council in 2008 as suggested by Tomlinson (2012). This survey indicated that 65% of the teachers often used coursebooks to

aid their teaching practices while 6% never used a coursebook, which is twice as many as the percentile that accounts for the number of teachers who rarely depend on their coursebooks in this current study. In the present study, teachers who highly depend on coursebooks comprise slightly more than a quarter of the participants. This is supported by the findings of the same survey by the British Council which revealed 26% of the respondents used coursebooks every day (Arkian, 2008). Arkian (2008) gives some further details about the survey such as the number of participants ($N = 310$) and the items of the survey; they are all very similar in terms of characteristics of this study yielding very similar results.

Tomlinson (2010) mentioned the findings of another survey conducted at conferences held in some countries in the Far East and the United Kingdom and the results indicated that 92% of the participants used a coursebook on a regular basis. This is much greater than the percent of teachers who are highly dependent on coursebooks in the current study, which may parallel with the frequency of their coursebook implementation. Further, it was revealed that females' mean score of coursebook dependency was slightly less than males' mean score. The significance (2-tailed) value indicates that there is not a statistically significant difference in the means of the genders. Pearson and Hall (1993) conducted a study on teachers' autonomy in which they examined if there were any differences between genders in terms of the control they have over their teaching practices. The results indicated that there were not any significant differences between genders, which they stated as not surprising. This finding complies with the results of the current study because it failed to reject the original hypothesis and did not point out meaningful statistics.

There is not a statistically significant correlation between the two variables, teachers' coursebook dependency levels and their years of teaching experience. In this respect, Tomlinson (2012) brought up the idea that the more the teachers are experienced the less they depend on coursebooks. He emphasized the need to support this incident about the relationship between teachers' coursebook dependency and their experience with some evidence, which is usually anecdotally expressed. As for the relationship between these variables, Tsui (2003) reviewed some essential studies and provided some valuable evidence as to the relationship between teachers' expertise and their autonomy levels in their teaching practices. The studies indicated that experienced teachers are

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more independent of coursebooks than the novice teachers are. They vary a lot in that experienced teachers depend more on their repertoire of previous plans which have been tried out several times in real classroom settings and therefore they only need to make changes to meet the needs of their present learners, unlike inexperienced teachers, who are unsure of the possible outcomes of their plans and their abilities to deal with the unexpected situations. For these reasons, they feel forced to plan everything in a very detailed way ahead of time (Tsui, 2003). The thing these studies all have in common is that they emphasize the differences in decisions taken by experienced and novice teachers suggesting better and more efficient implications on the side of experienced teachers rather than novice teachers. These findings contradict the findings of the current study as this study indicates no significant correlations exist between teachers' experience and their coursebook dependency levels.

One possible reason for this contradiction in the findings may result from the clash between teachers' perceived autonomy and actual implementations in real classroom settings. Sampson (2009) argued that especially novice teachers' perceptions about their level of autonomy do not reflect their actual classroom implications. That is, the inconsistency between teachers' self-perceived dependency levels and real teaching practices may have led to the result of the current study which did not prove any correlations between the variables in question.

The findings of the this study, which revealed no meaningful correlations between experience and teachers' dependency on coursebooks, are supported by Pearson and Hall (1993) who found no correlations between age and experience and teacher autonomy. It can be concluded that although expertise can be gained through experience, experience does not always guarantee expertise (Sampson, 2009). For this reason, it can be inferred that this study did not reveal results that are in concert with the majority of the findings in the literature.

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Finally, there is not a statistically significant relationship between teachers' academic qualifications and their coursebook dependency levels. Sampson (2009) and Pearson and Hall (1993) also demonstrated no correlations between the degree that teachers hold such as a bachelor's, a master's or even higher degrees and teacher autonomy, which is congruent with the findings of the present study as it revealed no correlations between academic background and teachers' coursebook dependency.

Conclusions

Coursebooks have constituted a major part of the ELT profession for most of us whether we accept it or not. The results in this study showing that most ELT teachers depend on coursebooks are in concert with some other surveys conducted in different parts of the world (Tomlinson, 2010). However, this does not indicate that teachers feel happy about this dependence. Conversely, most of the teachers who reported themselves as being dependent on teaching materials feel negative about the coursebooks which are at their disposal (Tomlinson, 2012). There are many reasons for this massive dissatisfaction with the coursebooks but the main point to focus on is the interaction between teachers and coursebooks as the major components of language teaching.

Teachers are generally inclined to be self-governing and free in their teaching practices regardless of their age and experience or, at least they want to feel autonomous even if they tend to make use of their coursebooks at various dependency levels. In some cases, they may use coursebooks more than they believe they do. This espoused belief on their teaching mainly results from the negative connotation of the word 'dependence.' Being independent of global coursebooks is one of the ways to provide students with more localized, personalized and individualized learning. Language teachers are sometimes so passionate about their profession that they may even want to get rid of coursebooks totally as they go in pursuit of the best materials possible created by themselves and their students in tandem to meet students' specific needs. Although this may sound utopic for most teachers, there are examples of such cases in which teachers are in favor of preparing their own course materials (Meddings & Thornbury, 2009).

Teachers' dependence on course materials leads to a vicious circle in that teachers get used to depending on coursebooks to such an extent that they cannot prevent this dependency even if they wish to do so. As teachers are used to depending on coursebooks from the first years of their profession, they end up sticking to the coursebooks, which mostly results in deskilling of teachers as Littlejohn (1992) suggests. This also explains the finding suggesting there is no relationship between experience and teachers' coursebook dependency levels. The most common misconception about this process is that coursebooks become an end in themselves rather than becoming a means for the learners

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(Swan, 1992). For these reasons, most teachers are dependent on coursebooks, which is supported by the results of the current study.

Implications

Considering the unfavorable outcomes of heavy dependence on coursebooks, we (or I) find it is vital to foster teachers' autonomy since learners will benefit from teachers who know how to take control of their teaching practices. Hence, training teachers on how to make use of their teaching materials can be taken into consideration in order to meet their learners' needs. For this reason, formal or informal training sessions can be organized as a part of in-service programs inviting both novice and experienced teachers into a collaboration (Moncada, 2006; Núñez & Téllez, 2009; Téllez, Pineda, & Núñez, 2004).

One more implication of this study could be based on the Dogme principles adopted and adapted by Meddings and Thornbury (2009). As far as Dogme principles suggest, the demand for learner-centered and therefore more stimulating and engaging language practices is obvious. In this sense, Dogme principles could be embedded in language teaching curricula to allow space for learner interaction to originate out of their own needs and interests.

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Appendix.
Coursebook Dependency Questionnaire

	In my classes:	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Often	Usually	Always
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	I strictly follow the instruction of the course book for reading.							
2	I follow the course book to prepare students for exams.							
3	Instead of using the course book, I prepare my own teaching tasks for reading.							
4	I use the course book to use class time effectively.							
5	I strictly follow the instruction of the course book for writing.							
6	I use the course book as it has a clear teacher's guide.							
7	I use the course book as it gives learners a sense of order, cohesion and progress.							
8	Instead of using the course book, I prepare my own teaching tasks for writing.							
9	Following the course book results in an unnecessarily heavy load of exercises.							
10	I strictly follow the instruction of the course book for listening.							
11	The course book is never the main source.							

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12	I cannot meet all the needs of my students by following only the course book.							
13	Instead of using the course book, I prepare my own teaching tasks for listening.							
14	I strictly follow the instruction of the course book for grammar.							
15	I strictly follow the instruction of the course book for speaking.							
16	The course book can be a distraction from real learning.							
17	Instead of using the course book, I prepare my own teaching tasks for grammar.							
18	The course book serves as a syllabus.							
19	I strictly follow the instruction of the course book for vocabulary teaching.							
20	The course book provides suitable texts and tasks for students.							
21	Strictly following the course book promotes learner participation.							
22	Instead of using the course book, I prepare my own teaching tasks for speaking.							
23	I use the course book to present appropriate and realistic language models.							
24	I use the course book to introduce the content in a systematic order.							
25	I follow the course book to provide authentic materials and tasks.							
26	The course book provides a clear framework for the course.							

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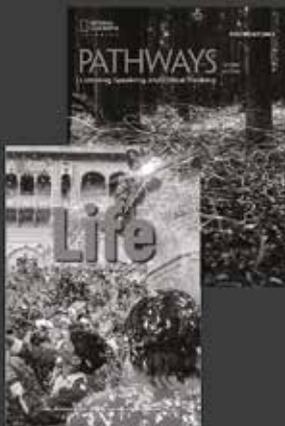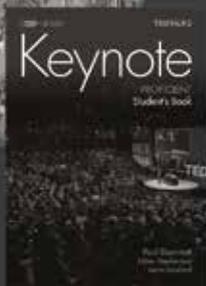
The Relationship among Iranian EFL Teachers' Professional Identity, Self-Efficacy and Critical Thinking Skills*

La relación entre la identidad profesional de los profesores iranís de inglés como lengua extranjera, y sus habilidades de autoeficiencia y pensamiento crítico

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Abstract

Teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and identities have been considered as the main factors in improving their performance to enhance students' learning. The present study aimed to explore the relationship among Iranian EFL teachers' professional identity, their self-efficacy, and their critical thinking skills in their teaching process. To achieve the objective of the study, 75 EFL teachers participated in this study. Three instruments were used to collect the required data including professional identity, TEBS-Self questionnaires, and the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal test. The findings in the present study demonstrate that there was a strong positive relationship of the EFL teachers' professional identity between their self-efficacy and their critical thinking skills. The results of the ANOVA (analysis of variance models) test indicated that the EFL teachers' professional identity could predict their self-efficacy and their critical thinking skills.

Keywords: critical thinking skills, identity, professional identity, teachers' self-efficacy.

Resumen

Las creencias, actitudes e identidades de los profesores se han considerado como los aspectos principales en el mejoramiento de su desempeño al promover el aprendizaje de los estudiantes. El presente estudio busca explorar la relación entre la identidad profesional, la autoeficiencia, y las habilidades de pensamiento crítico en la enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera entre profesores iraníes de inglés. Para alcanzar este objetivo, 75 profesores iraníes de inglés participaron en el estudio. Se usaron tres instrumentos para la recolección de datos que incluyen los cuestionarios TEBS-Self y Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal. Los resultados demuestran que hay una fuerte y positiva relación entre la identidad profesional de los profesores y su autoeficiencia y las habilidades de pensamiento crítico. Los resultados del test ANOVA indican que la identidad profesional de los profesores podría predecir su autoeficiencia y sus habilidades de pensamiento crítico.

Palabras clave: habilidades de pensamiento crítico, identidad, identidad profesional, autoeficiencia de los profesores.

Introduction

Teacher identity has come into view as a principal topic in educational research since the 1990s. Understanding identities is "the central factor in the quest to secure a meaningful education in a culturally diverse society" (Kearney, 2003, p. 1). The role of teachers' perceptions, beliefs, identities, and efficacy in making an effective EFL instruction, in improving their performance to enhance students' learning can be helpful. Little (1995, p. 180) suggests that "language teachers are more likely to succeed in promoting learner autonomy if their own education has encouraged them to be autonomous." Morita (2004) believes that teacher identity tries to capture teachers' interpretation of themselves with relation to their appointment.

In recent years, teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and identities have been viewed as the main factors in their performance in the classroom. Many studies have been conducted in this respect (Borg, 2003; Farrell, 2008; Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Nishino, 2009; Pintrich & Schunk, 1995; Schwitzgebel, 2011; Woods, 1991) by using different techniques of examination and distinctive hypothetical models. The majority of identity studies have been conducted on teachers' professional identity. Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004) believe that research on teachers' professional identity focuses on the ways "teachers relate to other people, and the responsibilities, attitudes, and behaviors they adopt as well as the knowledge they use" (p. 125). In fact, more studies should be conducted in this area for researchers to develop true understanding of the factors which affect teachers' beliefs, identities, and students' achievement.

Teachers' professional identity and their sense of self-efficacy have drawn more attention recently. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as "the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce outcomes" (p. 193). Bandura (1986) refers to four sources of self-efficacy: 1) Mastery experience (individuals' achievements), 2) Vicarious experience (other individuals' achievements), 3) Persuasions (what others say), and 4) Psychological states (anxiety, stress, and fear). Rich, Lev, and Fischer (1996) describe teacher efficacy as "a teacher's general feeling that the education system is capable of fostering satisfactorily student academic achievement despite negative influences external to the teacher" (p. 1016).

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The third personal feature that has drawn more attention in the present study is teachers' critical thinking skills to make reasoned judgments that are logical and well thought out. Williams (2005) believes that "critical thinking is important in all academic disciplines within democratic education, but it is indispensable in the field of teacher education" (p. 164). According to Paul and Elder (2005), critical thinking is "that mode of thinking about any subject, content or problem in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them" (p. 1). According to McPeck (1981), the basic nature of critical thinking is the disposition and skill to become involved in an activity with reflective skepticism. Teachers' critical thinking skills, in the foreign language teaching process, influence learners' learning process.

Teachers' awareness of their identities, and their self-efficacy and critical thinking skills can be considered as important factors in their professional development. Nevertheless, little research exists regarding the relationship between teachers' professional identity and their self-efficacy. The general aim of this study is to explore the relationship among Iranian EFL teachers' professional identities, their efficacy and critical thinking skills in t heir teaching process. This goal is realized through the following research questions:

Q1. Is there any relationship between Iranian English language teachers' professional identity and their self-efficacy?

Q2. Does EFL teachers' professional identity significantly predict their self-efficacy?

Q3. Is there any relationship between Iranian English language teachers' professional identity and their critical thinking skills?

Q4. Does EFL teachers' professional identity significantly predict their critical thinking skills?

Literature Review

Teachers' identities and professional identity. Teaching EFL is influenced by a number of conflicts related to the teachers' personal, social, professional, economic, and political factors. Palmer (1998) asserted that "good teaching

cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher" (p. 10). Teacher identity tries to comprehend teachers' definition of themselves with relation to their profession. Analyzing teacher identity leads to better perception of educational theories and practice (Morita, 2004). Little (1995, p. 179) refers to "genuinely successful teachers" as "autonomous in the sense of having a strong sense of personal responsibility for their teaching, exercising via continuous reflection and analysis the highest possible degree of affective and cognitive control of the teaching process, and exploiting the freedom that this confers." According to Smith, Walker, Fields, Brookins, and Seay (1999), individual identity has an outstanding control on how they perceive others, their self-esteem, self-confidence, aspirations, motivation, and effort lay out in various aspects of their lives.

Analyzing teacher identity leads to a better perception of educational theories and practice (Ghafar Samar, Kiany, Akbari & Azimi, 2011). According to Ghafar Samar et al. (2011, p. 38), "Preference and/or tendency to work with the people in an institution, including colleagues, manager(s), and staff is regarded as an important factor of institutional identity." White and Parham (1990) defined identity as "the adoption of certain personal attitudes, feelings, characteristics, and behaviors and the identification with a larger group of people who share those characteristics" (p. 42). Identity studies then focused on different manifestations of identity formation by emphasizing social, cultural, religious, political, and psychological differences.

Beijaard et al. (2004) determined that teacher identity formation is (a) ongoing, (b) involves both person and context, (c) consists of sub-identities that must be harmonious, and (d) requires a level of agency by teachers. Giddens (2002, p. 53) refers to self-identity or personal identity as that which is "understood by the person in terms of his or her own biography."

One aspect of many English language teachers' personalities is professional identity. According to Farrell (2008, p. 2), teachers "collect data about their teaching, examine their attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and teaching practices, and use the information obtained as a basis for critical reflection about teaching." Helleve, Flisher, Onya, Mukkoma, and Klepp (2009, p. 191) contend that "there will be different perceptions, understandings and values among those persons who have been given the task of delivering an [education] programme."

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Different studies have different definitions of professional identity. Brown (2001) identified qualities of professional language teachers by classifying his ideas into four categories: technical knowledge, pedagogical skills, interpersonal skills, and personal qualities. Ghafar Samar et al. (2011, p. 32) asserted that identity, as a nonspecific term, is characterized as the type of persons individuals see themselves as or are seen as in a specific setting, a self-built procedure which is adjusted by various elements. Teacher identity, similarly, defines teachers regarding their profession. Investigation on teacher identity results in great impacts in different educational aspects such as teacher commitment (Day & Gu, as cited in Ghafar Samar et al., 2011). It also leads to a better perception of educational theories and practice.

Teachers' self-efficacy. The other aspect of many English language teachers' personalities is their efficacy. Bandura (1997) has defined self-efficacy as, "beliefs in one's capability to organize and execute the courses required to manage prospective situations" (p. 2). Bandura (1997) also suggests three context levels at which self-efficacy can be assessed, including: a domain general level, a domain specific level, and a task level. These four main forms of influence are sources of self-efficacy including: (a) *Demographic Variables* such as age, area of certification, gender, grade(s) instructed, and so on (Pajares, 1996; Pintrich & Schunk, 1995; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001); (b) *Performance Accomplishments* refers to individual's successes to increase self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997); (c) *Vicarious Experience* refers to indirect experience such as imitation and observation (Bandura, 1997); (d) *Verbal Persuasion or social persuasion* refers to the positive or negative comments from other people (Bandura, 1997; Maddux, 1995).

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007), in their study about the difference between the efficacy of novice and experienced practicing teachers, found that verbal persuasion significantly predicted novice teachers' sense of efficacy because "teachers who are struggling in their early years in their careers tend to lean more heavily on the support of their colleagues" (p. 953). Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998, p. 233) define teachers' self-efficacy as a "teacher's belief in his/ her abilities to organize and perform activities required for fulfillment of teaching duties against a specific background."

Teacher efficacy has been defined as "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance" (Berman,

McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly, & Zellman, 1977, p. 137). Berman et al. (1977), in their study to evaluate 100 Elementary and Secondary Education Act teachers, found that "teachers' sense of efficacy emerged a powerful explanatory variable… Indeed the regression coefficient of the effects of a sense of efficacy [is] among the strongest relationships identified in our analysis" (p. 136).

Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) stated that researchers have found few constant relationships between teachers' characteristics and students' behavior or learning. Teachers' sense of efficacy is an exception to this general rule (p. 81). Gibson and Dembo (1984), in one of the first studies aimed at attempting to measure the dimensions of teacher self-efficacy, stated that by applying Bandura's theory to the construct of teacher efficacy, outcome expectancy would essentially show the degree to which teachers believed the environment could be controlled (Gibson & Dembo, 1984, p. 570). Additionally, Ross (1994) investigated teacher efficacy studies in pre-college settings and identified a significant relationship between teachers' sense of efficacy and their behaviors. Soodak and Podell (1993) defined teacher efficacy as the conviction that one can successfully bring about the desired outcomes in one's students; that is, confidence in one's teaching abilities. Then, teacher self-efficacy beliefs can predict their effort and persistence in encountering difficulties and keeping students on task.

Critical thinking skills. The influences of critical thinking on human life, especially concerning education, cannot be ignored by teachers and researchers. The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) states that: "critical thinking is self-directed thinking and a self-monitored process that requires effective problem solving abilities" (as cited in Colby, 2009, p. 121). According to Paul and Elder (2005), the four main reasons why critical thinking is becoming more important are: speeding up changes, increasing complexity, having more interdependence, and expanding danger. Facione (2009) argues that critical thinking skills are the "cornerstone of higher education" (p. 5). Unrau (1997) defines critical thinking as "a process of reasoned reflection on the meaning of claims about what to believe or what to do" (p. 14). The main features of critical thinking are: defining assumptions, focusing on uncertainties, analyzing discussions, asking and answering questions and evaluating the reliability of sources (Anderson et al., as cited in Emir, 2009).

Branch (as cited in Seferoglu & Akbıyık, 2006) stated that good critical thinkers are those who are inquisitive, open minded, proficient, analytical, scholarly, mature, self-confident, and seekers of truth. According to Carroll (2005), an excellent critical thinker is (1) curious and insightful, (2) perceptive and open-minded, (3) flexible, (3) fair-minded in evaluation, (4) fair in confronting individual needs and inclinations, (5) judicious in making judgments, (6) willing to reconsider and is clear on issues, (7) well-regulated in issues, (8) well-organized in seeking relevant information and seeking precise results, and (9) reasonable in the selection of criteria. Thinking skills including reasoning, problem solving, decision making, and creative thinking are considered the skills of great importance in social and educational contexts (Collier, Guenther, & Veerman, 2002). Therefore, schools need to concentrate on how to think rather than what to think.

Method

This study explores the relationship among EFL teachers' professional identity, their efficacy, and their critical thinking skills. In order to achieve the objective of the present study, a survey was conducted among Iranian EFL teachers.

Participants. In the present study, the participants were EFL teachers teaching English as a foreign language in private language institutes of Iran. In selecting the main participants, availability sampling was used. The participants consisted of 90 experienced English language teachers holding a BA, an MA, or a PhD degree in TEFL, English literature, linguistics, or English translation. Out of the 90 teachers who participated in this study, 15 teachers were selected to take part in a pilot study on the questionnaires. Out of the 75 participants who completed the questionnaires, 51 (68%) of them, were females and the remaining 24 (32%) were males; the majority of them were below 30 years of age.

Instruments. In the present study, the researchers used the Professional Identity questionnaire, Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System-Self Form (TEBS-Self) questionnaire, and the Watson□ Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal test. Prior to the study, the three questionnaires were piloted with a group of 15 EFL

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teachers. The purpose behind piloting the questionnaire was to estimate their reliability. The reliability index estimated through Cronbach's Alpha showed acceptable values:

Table 1. Reliability Statistics of the Questionnaires

	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient
Professional identity questionnaire	14	0.765
Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs	31	0.15
Critical thinking appraisal questionnaire		0.76

Beijaard professional questionnaire. This Beijaard Professional questionnaire was used to investigate teachers' professional identity. This questionnaire is modified based on the sets of professional identities questions used by Beijaard, Verloop, and Vermunt (2000). The questionnaire consisted of two parts; the first part contains questions about demographic aspects such as teachers' gender, age, and years of experience. The second part subsumes 14 items, which are categorized in three sub-scales including: subject matter knowledge and skills (items 1-4); didactical field (items 5-10) to express to what extent their teaching was based on knowledge and skills regarding the planning, execution, and evaluation of teaching and learning processes; and pedagogical field (items 11-14) to describe how much they base their teaching on knowledge and skills to support students' social, emotional, and moral development. This instrument uses a five-point scale, including: 1= never, 2= rarely, 3= sometimes, 4= often, 5= always.

Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System-Self Form (TEBS-Self). Dellinger, Bobbett, Dianne, and Chad's (2008) Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System-Self form (TEBS-Self) was used to assess teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about their own abilities to successfully perform specific teaching (Appendix I). The TEBS-Self subsumes 31 items, which are categorized in six sub-scales with some of the items falling within two or more categories including: communication/clarification (items 9, 5, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23); management/climate (items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 24, 30, 31); accommodating individual differences (items 1,

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2, 7, 12, 13, 14, 27, 28); motivation of students (items 3, 26, 29, 30); managing learning routines (items 3, 4, 5); and higher-order thinking skills (items 4, 19, 20, 21, 25). This instrument uses a five-point scale, namely: 1= very weak, 2= weak, 3= moderate, 4= strong, 5= very strong.

This questionnaire is used by the researchers in various contexts to measure teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about their own abilities.

The Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal questionnaire. The Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal is an assessment tool designed to measure an individual's critical thinking skills. It is used to determine an individual's ability to think critically and to assess their suitability for an organization or a specific position within it (Appendix V). The test comprises five sections: 1) Inferences; 2) Assumptions; 3) Deductions; 4) Interpreting Information; and 5) Arguments. The participants read the instructions preceding each section and answer the questions. There are a total of 85 questions in this test and they should aim to correctly answer as many questions as they can within 40 minutes.

Procedure. During the 2017-2018 academic year, the three questionnaires were distributed to the participants at the institutions participating in this study and were completed at the time of distribution. Detailed instructions were given by the researcher on how to complete the questionnaires. While distributing the questionnaire, the researchers informed the participants of the goals and importance of the study. They were also asked to present their true and honest responses. On average, it took each respondent around 65 minutes to read and answer the items.

Data analysis. To analyze the data, teachers' responses to the items of the questionnaires were fed into SPPS (version 21). In order to investigate the relationship between teachers' professional identity, self-efficacy, and their critical thinking skills, the data were analyzed quantitatively using Pearson Correlation. To analyze the data for the second and fourth research questions, simple linear regression, whose significance is shown through ANOVA, was run.

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Results

This part presents the results of the data analyses in order to provide answers to the above questions.

Demographic information. Table 2 below shows the information related to the participants' demographic characteristics.

Table 2. Participants' Demographic Information Statistics

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender				
Male	24	32.0	32.0	32.0
Valid Female	51	68.0	68.0	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	
Degree				
BA	15	20.0	20.0	20.0
MA	56	74.7	74.7	94.0
Valid PhD	4	5.3	5.3	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	
Major				
English Translation	14	18.7	18.7	18.7
TEFL	51	68.0	68.0	86.7
Valid English Literature	7	9.3	9.3	96.0
Linguistics	3	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	
Age				
Below 30	36	48.0	48.0	48.0
31-35	29	38.7	38.7	86.0
Valid 36-40	5	6.7	6.7	93.3
Upper 41	5	6.7	6.7	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

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Table 2 indicates the information related to the respondents' gender, academic degree, major, and age. From the total of 75 respondents, 24 were male and 51 were female. As shown in Table 2, from the total of the 75 teachers, 15 had a BA, 56 had an MA, and 4 participants had a PhD. And most of the respondents' major in education was TEFL. The information related to participants' age is

presented in this table as well. Out of the total of 75 respondents in the study, most of the respondents' age was below 30.

Research questions

Q1: Is there a relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity and their self-efficacy?

Table 3. The descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' professional identity and their self-efficacy

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Teachers' Efficacy	137.12	8.261	75
Teachers' Professional Identity	57.65	3.607	75

The relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity and self-efficacy was analyzed by Pearson correlation coefficient.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation; Self-Efficacy with Professional Identity

		Teachers' Efficacy	Teachers' Professional Identity
Teachers' Efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.443**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	75	75
Teachers' Professional Identity	Pearson Correlation	.443**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	75	75

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The obtained results showed positive correlation between the two variables (P </000 and r = 0/443, n = 75). The positive relationships between

two variables indicate that, as EFL teachers' professional identity increases, the level of EFL teachers' self-efficacy increases too.

Q2. Does EFL teachers' professional identity significantly predict their self-efficacy? A simple linear regression was run to predict EFL teachers' self-efficacy through their professional identity. As shown in Table 5, the EFL teachers' professional identity predicted 19.6 percent of their self-efficacy ($R = .443$, $R^2 = .196$).

Table 5. Model Summaryb: Predicting EFL Teachers' Self-Efficacy through

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.443[a]	.196	.185	7.458

a. Predictors: (Constant), teachers' Professional Identity
b. Dependent Variable: Teachers' Efficacy

The results of the ANOVA test of significance of the regression model (F $(1, 73) = 17.788$, $p = .000$) indicated that the regression model was significant. That is to say, EFL teachers' professional identity could predict their self-efficacy.

Table 6. ANOVAa Test of Significance of Regression Model

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	989.432	1	989.432	17.788	.000[b]
1	Residual	4060.488	73	55.623		
	Total	5049.920	74			

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a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' Efficacy
b. Predictors: (Constant), teachers' Professional Identity

The results of Table 7 can be used to build the regression equations as:

Self-Efficacy = Constant + (b * professional Identity)
Self-Efficacy = 78.680 + (0.240 * professional Identity)

Table 7. Coefficientsa ; Predicting EFL Teachers' Self-Efficacy through Professional Identity

Model B	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	Std. Error	Beta				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	78.680	13.883		5.667	.000	51.012	106.349
1 Teachers' Professional Identity	1.014	.240	.443	4.218	.000	.535	1.493

a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' Efficacy

Q3. Is there any relationship between Iranian English language teachers' professional identity and their critical thinking skills?

Table 8. The Descriptive Statistics of EFL Teachers' Professional Identity and

Their Self-Efficacy			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Teachers' critical thinking	72.76	5.514	75
Teachers' Professional Identity	57.65	3.607	75

In order to answer the third research question, the researcher could use Pearson correlation coefficient.

Table 9. Pearson Correlation; Critical Thinking Skills with Professional Identity

		Teachers' critical thinking skills	Teachers' Professional Identity
Teachers' critical thinking skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.388**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	75	75
Teachers' Professional Identity	Pearson Correlation	.388**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	75	75

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The obtained results showed a positive correlation between the two variables ($P </ 001$ and $r = 0/388$, $n = 75$). The positive relationships between these two variables indicate that, as EFL teachers' professional identity increases, the level of EFL teachers' critical thinking skills increases too.

Q4. Does EFL teachers' professional identity significantly predict their critical thinking skills? In order to answer the forth research question, the researcher could also use simple linear regression to predict EFL teachers' critical thinking skills through their professional identity. As shown in Table 10; the EFL teachers' professional identity predicted 15.0 percent of their critical thinking skills ($R = .388$, $R^2 = .150$).

Table 10. Model Summary: Predicting EFL Teachers' Critical Thinking Skills

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.388a	.150	.139	5.117

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teachers' Professional Identity
b. Dependent Variable: Teachers' critical thinking

The results of the ANOVA test of significance of the regression model
(F (1, 73) = 12.920, p = .001) indicated that the regression model was signifi-
cant. That is to say that EFL teachers' professional identity could predict their
critical thinking skills.

Table 11. ANOVAa Test of Significance of Regression Model

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	338.288	1	338.288	12.920	.001[b]
1	Residual	1911.392	73	26.183		
	Total	2249.680	74			

a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' critical thinking skills
b. Predictors: (Constant), Teachers' Professional Identity

The results of Table 12 can be used to build the regression equations as:

Critical thinking skills = Constant + (b * professional Identity)
Critical thinking skills = 35.589 + (0.593 * professional Identity)

Table 12. Coefficientsa: Predicting EFL Teachers' Crit ical Thinking Skills through
Professional Identity

Model B	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	Std. Error	Beta				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	38.589	9.525		4.051	.000	19.606	57.572
1 Teachers' Professional Identity	.593	.165	.388	3.594	.001	.264	.921

a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' critical thinking skills

We are 95% confident that the slope of the true regression line is some-
where between .264 and .921. In other words, we are 95% confident that teachers'
professional identity can predict their critical thinking skills somewhere between
.264 and .921.

Discussion

In the present study, the main objective was to investigate the relationship between English language teachers' professional identity, their efficacy, and their critical thinking skills. In response to the first research question, the results obtained in this study confirmed a relationship between English language teachers' professional identity and their efficacy. The positive relationship between the two variables indicates that as EFL teachers' professional identity increases, the level of their self-efficacy increases too. As for the second research question, the results indicated that EFL teachers' professional identity could predict their self-efficacy. The findings are in line with Bandura (1998), Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), and Volkmann and Anderson (1998). Bandura (1998) interpreted that an individual's profession presents a significant reference of personal identity, and self-worth and self-efficacy beliefs play an important role in career development. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) believed that teacher efficacy is related to some meaningful educational issues including teachers' persistence, enthusiasm, commitment, and instructional behavior, as well as student issues such as achievement, motivation, and self-efficacy beliefs. Volkmann and Anderson (1998) maintained that professional identity is a complex and active equilibrium where personal self-image is assessed with a variety of social roles that teachers feel obliged to play.

In response to the third question, the results confirmed a relationship between English language teachers' professional identity and their critical thinking skills. The positive relationships between these two variables indicate that, as EFL teachers' professional identity increases, the level of their critical thinking skills increases too. As for the fourth question, the results indicated that EFL teachers' professional identity could predict their critical thinking skills. The findings are in line with Ruminski and Hanks (1995). Halvorsen (2005) defines critical thinking as, "To think critically about an issue is to consider that issue from various perspectives, to look at and challenge any possible assumptions that may underlie the issue and to explore its possible alternative" (p. 1). Ruminski and Hanks (1995) believe teachers should have an astute concept of critical thinking before they commence teaching and evaluating.

The value of the findings of the present study lies in the fact that almost all the claims related to the prediction of teacher professional identity about

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their self-efficacy and their critical thinking skills have been theoretical and this study sheds empirical light on the issue. Thus, the results of the study imply that pre-service and even in-service teachers should familiarize themselves with the influence of professional identity and their other personal identities on their teaching process. The essential quality inherent in the two variables is a desire to teach well. As is evident, upon dissecting the three variables, they all have qualities which aim at a common goal, that is, the better presentation of opportunities for teacher development.

Conclusions and Implications

In traditional (or formal) education, teachers are the most important influences concerning student achievement. EFL teachers can improve their own teaching by deliberately and analytically concentrating on their personal identities during their teaching process. Professional identity as a part of teachers' identity can affect the other language teachers' personal characteristics such as their efficacy and their critical thinking skills. The role of teachers' perceptions, beliefs, identities, and efficacy in making EFL instruction effective, and also in improving their performance to enhance students' learning can be helpful. Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004) believe that research on teachers' professional identity focuses on the ways "teachers relate to other people, and the responsibilities, attitudes, and behaviors they adopt as well as the knowledge they use" (p. 125). Teachers' awareness of their identities, self-efficacy, and critical thinking skills, which can be considered as important factors in professional development, can also be helpful in their general development. In conclusion, teachers' individual professional identity was concentrated on their self-efficacy and critical thinking skills. The findings of the present study demonstrate that EFL teachers' self-efficacy and their critical thinking skills increase as their professional identity increases.

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Professional identity as one of the language teachers' personal features can affect their other personal characteristics. In the present study, the researchers wanted to consider professional identity as a predictor of EFL teachers' self-efficacy. The findings in the present study demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity and other variables. However, due to some important limitations, the results of this study need to

be interpreted cautiously. First, the study was based on correlational data, and second, the number of participants was limited.

The findings are interpreted to have pedagogical implications for students, language teachers, curriculum developers, and those who took part in the study. These findings can be helpful in teacher development where teacher identity, self-efficacy, and critical thinking skills are considered as important factors in professional development.

The present study set out to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity, their self-efficacy, and critical thinking. However, much remains to be done in this field such as: the functions of different personal characteristics in EFL teachers' professional identity and the difference between EFL experienced and inexperienced teachers' professional identity and their efficacy.

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HOW

Reflections on Educational Issues among Modern Language Students*

Reflexiones sobre las problemáticas educativas entre estudiantes de lenguas modernas

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Abstract

The following pedagogical proposal seeks to understand what types of reflections Modern Languages students reveal about educational issues when analyzing artwork within their context. We worked with twelve Modern Languages students in their fifth and sixth semester at a public university in Colombia. The students began by analyzing four murals located within the university. Then, they created their own artwork and provided reflections on each other's pieces of art. The findings showed that the students first began analyzing visual aspects of the murals and artwork, followed by the educational issues represented in each piece. As a common theme, the students reflected on the idea that working together yields a diversity of solutions. Finally, the students demonstrated that they could benefit from reflective practices despite not having started their teaching practicum.

Keywords: reflections, reflective thinking, educational issues, artwork and murals.

Resumen

La siguiente propuesta pedagógica busca comprender qué tipos de reflexiones revelan los estudiantes de Lenguas Modernas sobre problemas educativos al analizar obras de arte dentro de su contexto. Trabajamos con doce estudiantes de Lenguas Modernas, quienes están en su quinto y sexto semestre en una universidad pública en Colombia. Los estudiantes comenzaron analizando cuatro murales ubicados dentro de la universidad. Luego, crearon sus propias obras de arte y proporcionaron reflexiones sobre cada una de estas obras. Los hallazgos mostraron que los estudiantes comenzaron analizando los aspectos visuales de los murales y las obras de arte, seguido de los problemas educativos representados en cada pieza. Como tema común, los estudiantes reflexionaron sobre la idea de que trabajar juntos produce una diversidad de soluciones. Finalmente, los estudiantes demostraron que podrían beneficiarse de las prácticas reflexivas a pesar de no haber comenzado su práctica de enseñanza.

Palabras clave: reflexiones, pensamiento reflexivo, problemas educativos, obras de arte y murales.

Introduction

In the following pedagogical proposal, we seek to understand what types of reflections Modern Languages students reveal about educational issues when analyzing artwork within their context. This study was developed at a public university in Colombia with twelve female students majoring in the Modern Languages Program. As part of their core curriculum, the School of Languages proposes that its students become reflective teachers throughout their educational and pedagogical practices. In fomenting the skill of reflective thinking, the hope is that these students will become community leaders, problem-solvers, and transformers of their own educational contexts.

Within the Colombian context, its public universities are usually at the forefront of educational reforms and issues. Because of this, understanding how the students majoring in the mentioned program viewed educational aspects within their university context became important to us as their teachers. The twelve Modern Languages students participating in this pedagogical proposal had not started their teaching practicum. The majority of these students expressed that they did not want to be teachers. For those who had had some experience in the field of teaching, issues like inclusion and violence had created a negative impact on their desire to become teachers. Therefore, this pedagogical proposal was aimed at providing these students with the space to reflect on and dialogue about their current role as students and future teachers.

In order to provide spaces to reflect on educational issues, we, as the participating students' teachers, developed a pedagogical proposal. This incorporates artwork as the medium by which educational issues could be explored and be the object of reflection. First, we began by exposing students to photography and art pieces that displayed educational issues around the world, such as ethnic exclusion, child labor, and poverty. To follow up, the students analyzed national educational issues in order to gain knowledge to be able to analyze in a reflective manner the murals found within the university. Within most public universities in Colombia, murals are commonly a big part of student life and expression. At the end of the pedagogical proposal, the participating students created then analyzed their own artwork, which summarized their reflections.

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For this pedagogical proposal, we attempt to answer the following research question: What type of reflections do Modern Languages students engage in while analyzing the university's murals and their own artwork?

Theoretical Framework

Reflections. Even before the study, it was evident that the students had a lot to say in regard to educational issues in their current and future context. In many of these cases, the students had not been given the opportunity to reflect on the educational issues surrounding them. A reflection may be referred to as "a generic term for those intellectual and effective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences to lead to new understandings and appreciation" (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985, p. 3). In order to differentiate reflection or reflective thinking from other forms of thought, Dewey (1933) provided the following criteria, "(1) a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which thinking originates, and (2) an act of searching, hunting, inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity" (p. 12). In other words, the first part of this definition refers to a "mental difficulty" or challenge, such as having a *problem*. Meanwhile, the second part of this definition is the *inquiry*.

As Dewey (1933) explained, an *inquiry* comes about when one tries to find a solution to the *problem* based on evidence. Ultimately, "Demand for the solution of a perplexity is the steadying and guiding factor in the entire process of reflection." (p. 14). As mentioned before, part of the core curriculum for Modern Languages students is to be able to reflect on their pedagogical practices in order to become problem-solvers within their educational contexts. Núñez, Ramos, and Téllez (2006) explained that reflections, "allow for the recognition of possible problems in learning among students, with the purpose of identifying and reporting their causes, as well as proposing alterative solutions that lead to changes in the classroom" (p. 111, trans.). Furthermore, Núñez and Téllez (2015) added that "The notion of a problem fosters reflection since teachers' concerns make them act to alleviate a learning difficulty" (p. 56).

In addition to finding solutions, reflective thinking also involves the ability to build on previous experiences for future reference. Though the Modern

Languages students had not started their teaching practicum, it was crucial for them to start reflecting on the experiences they had had as students. Dewey (1933) added that,

> Reflection involves not simply a sequence of ideas, but a con-sequence — a consecutive ordering in such a way that each determines the next as its proper outcome, while each outcome in turn leans back on, or refers to, its predecessors. The successive portions of a reflective thought grow out of one another and support one another; they do not come and go in a medley. Each phase is a step from something to something. (p. 4)

Based on the idea that reflection is built upon consecutive outcomes that support each other in the need to find a solution, we took into account two aspects that needed to be considered for the pedagogical proposal: *interconnectedness* and *ownership*. By having a similar medium and topic of reflection presented throughout the pedagogical proposal, the students could interconnect reflections that were brought up during the sessions. For instance, reflections on experiences that were discussed during the first session might appear in the students' artwork in the last session. The second consideration was "ownership of the identified issue and its solution" (Dewey, as cited in Aguirre & Ramos, 2011, p. 172). By allowing students to analyze artwork within their own context, they could take ownership of the problem and solution as it pertained to them and their context.

The role of artwork and reflection. The benefits of utilizing artwork in the classroom are countless. Artwork can help develop observational, thinking, and literacy skills, among many other skills. Through artwork, students can be challenged to think critically and analytically (Barber, 2015). Moreover, the visual arts can develop logic, reasoning, and problem-solving skills (Mackey & Schwartz, n.d.). In a recent workshop titled "Applying Advanced Methods of Reflective Practice in Decision-Making" held by the Dutch Foundation for the Conservation of Contemporary Art, artwork was used to raise awareness for the creative potential and importance of empathy in this process. This practice not only implies critical self-reflection, but also the inclusion of different perspectives in order to overcome biases and create an atmosphere of curiosity and mutual respect (Schäffler, 2018, p. 45). Therefore, reflections on artwork can be a means of creating consciousness in the teaching practice. According

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to Núñez and Téllez (2015), "reflection is critical in raising teachers' awareness for personal and professional growth, creating a reflective environment and a positive affective state." (p. 54)

In addition, artwork could also promote the "inclusion of different perspectives" (Schäffler, 2018, p. 45). As part of the *Lineamientos Política de Educación Superior Inclusiva* [Guidelines for Inclusive Higher Education Policies] established in Colombia in 2013,

"The understanding of diversity and the inclusion of the community in educational processes as part of an intercultural dialogue are central aspects in the teaching-learning process." (Ramos, 2017, p. 143) Nonetheless, Ramos (2017) stated that "Although the new document suggests the need to provide pre-service teachers with sufficient spaces for them to learn and reflect on the context, the emphasis is on having future educators teaching classes" (p. 146). To combat homogenization in foreign language programs, as well provide spaces for students to reflect, Ramos (2017) proposed that,

An intercultural perspective in foreign language pre-service teachers' education understands that education is a social and situated construction. That is to say, it is a dynamic process built not only in the pedagogical space, but in and with society. From the social and situated perspective of education, this should be understood as a process that implies the participation of all society in a dialogue that promotes the understanding nd encouragement of consciousness with regard to the cultural, political and economic aspects in which people live their lives. This, in turn, will allow the same community to implement proposals that transform its context. (p. 148)

From this proposal, Ramos highlighted the importance of promoting dialogue that involves the community, which could be connected to Schäffler's concept that artwork promotes the "inclusion of different perspectives." In this case, reflecting on artwork that is both "social and situated" could lead to the types of dialogues that promote "consciousness with regard to cultural, political and economic aspects in which people live their lives" (Ramos, 2017, p. 148). As a consequence, students in foreign language programs could reflect on and with their community to find solutions for issues within their context. This, in turn, could help future teachers make changes in their educational contexts that benefit their community.

For this study, we decided to focus on "social and situated" artwork as the medium for which students could talk about and reflect on educational issues. They would start by looking at artwork dealing with international educational issues as an initial practice. In the following sessions, they would focus on reflecting upon local art and their own creations.

Our Colombian context is rich with urban artwork that often represents social and cultural issues. In particular, Colombian public universities often display an array of murals and artwork painted by students as forms of protest and expression. Public universities, like the Universidad Nacional in Bogotá, Colombia, have been the object of studies related to murals and their portrayal of social and political issues. As Rolston and Ospina (2017) explained,

> They [murals] are periodically whited out by the university authorities, only to be replaced within a short time by the next generation of political murals. In autumn 2015 the themes tackled ranged from Latin American leftwing heroes such as Camilo Torres and Che Guevara, through the rights of indigenous peoples, to women's rights, as well as references to memory and justice in relation to the Colombian conflict. (p. 34)

In the case of the university where this study took place, murals are an abundant art form that often express educational issues in addition to the themes mentioned above. Taking the time to reflect on their purpose fosters a sense of reflective practice within the educational context and community.

The creation of artwork can also aid in the process of reflection. Wallas (as cited in Tyler & Likova, 2012, p. 3) described the following experiential aspects associated with the creation of artwork:

i. *Preparation* by focusing on the domain of problem and prior approaches to its solution

ii. *Incubation* by subconscious processes without explicit activity related to the problem

iii. *Intimation* that a solution is on its way

iv. *Insight* into a novel solution to the problem

v. *Verification* and elaboration of the details of the solution

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The abovementioned aspects are similar to Dewey's *problem* and *inquiry* stages of reflection. By having students create their own artwork, they could reflect upon educational issues within their context, while considering possible solutions. Furthermore, by reflecting on their own and others' individual pieces, they might also take ownership of their own solutions and outcomes. Participation as a group yields and/or can also encourage an intercultural perspective in the classroom when it comes to constructing solutions and taking action for the benefit of the community.

Pedagogical Proposal

Context of the experience. This pedagogical proposal took place at a public university in Colombia, and was carried out with a group of twelve female students from the ages of eighteen to twenty five. The participants are in their fifth and sixth academic semester of the Modern Languages Program of the university. This program focuses on three main aspects (which are related to the fields of education and language teaching), pedagogy, research, and communicative competence. For the most part, students are expected to become elementary or high school Spanish and/or English language teachers after they graduate.

The pedagogical proposal was carried out with the Intermediate English II group. As part of the overall teaching methodology for the course, the communicative approach was employed. This approach views language as the expression of one's worldview in order to interact and communicate with "the other" and the world. Students enrolled in the course attend twice a week in two-session classes for sixteen weeks in a semester. For the most part, the students come from neighboring cities and towns. They must also travel approximately thirty minutes to an hour every day to get to the university, which demonstrates the commitment they have to their undergraduate studies.

At this point in their learning process, the students are expected to have a high intermediate level of English in order to communicate and teach English as a foreign language. One particularity of this group was that ten out of the twelve participants were unsure about wanting to be teachers. This was unique given the pedagogical focus of the program whose main goal is to educate them to become

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language teachers after graduation. That is why it seemed essential to provide them with activities that supported them not only as language learners, but also as individuals who are still in the process of constructing themselves as teachers.

Objective of the pedagogical proposal. The main objective of this pedagogical proposal was for the participating students to discuss educational issues within their contexts. In particular, they would reflect on these issues through the artwork found on their university murals and their own creations. The teacher-researchers who directed this experience were the same authors of this paper. Both worked together in order to select and provide the material used in class, as well as guide the discussions regarding the university murals and the artwork created by the students.

The role of the teacher-researchers and students. The main role of the teacher-researchers was to provide students with the space to reflect on the educational issues within their context. We looked to provide a comfortable, trustworthy, and natural environment where they could express their thoughts. For the focus group discussion pertaining to the murals, we began with a general question regarding visual aspects of the artwork. The students would answer the question and lead the discussion to the topics they wanted to reflect on. In some cases, we would also interact with the discussion. Our interaction was meant to stimulate conversation, model speech, and build a rapport with the students. Therefore, "the collective view is given more importance than the aggregate view" (Descombe, as cited in Dilshad & Latif, 2013, p. 192).

The students played the most important role in this pedagogical proposal given that they were the ones providing their reflections while we listened. As no particular student was directed to speak, they could talk and join the conversation whenever they felt comfortable to do so. The students were also the authors of the artwork that they created, and they were free to choose what they wanted to draw based on their reflections about educational issues in their context.

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Conditions of the implementation. For this pedagogical proposal, the students engaged in three steps throughout the reflection process carried out in three separate sessions. These steps were: *discuss, reflect*, and *reflect together*. The table below outlines the session, objective, and activities implemented in each one of the steps.

Table 1. Sessions, Objective, and Activities Carried Out in the Pedagogical Proposal

Session	Objective	Activities
1	For students to practice reflective thinking by analyzing issues, such as ethnic exclusion, child labor, poverty, and domestic violence, in recognized photography and artwork around the world.	1. *Discuss:* Talked about the main aspects of the image. 2. *Reflect:* Evaluated the image. 3. *Reflect together:* As a group, considered issues related to the images and reflected on solutions.
2	For students to identify educational issues portrayed on the murals. As a group, to promote reflective thinking and community problem solving.	1. *Discuss:* Talked about the main visual aspects of the murals. 2. *Reflect:* Reflected on the author, purpose, and possible application to their university context. 3. *Reflect together:* Answered each other's inquiries and came up with solutions as a group.
3	For students to manifest their reflections onto their own artistic pieces. Students would also reflect on each other's pieces and what they thought they meant.	1. *Discuss:* As a group, communicated their reflections about the previous sessions. 2. *Reflect:* Created their own artwork that represented what they had reflected on throughout the sessions. 3. *Reflect together:* Exchanged artwork and analyzed what the other meant to portray.

For the second session, we previously selected four murals that the students had to analyze. The location of the murals was also considered given that the students probably walked by them every day on their way to class. It is worth noting that even though the fourth mural might not be considered as such, it is an integral and significant part of the university with an author and purpose.

Therefore, we decided to include it as part of the artwork analyzed for this pedagogical proposal. The table below outlines the main aspects of the murals, provides an image, and describes the location.

Table 2. Murals and Their Main Aspects. Location, and Educational Issues.

| Murals	Main Aspects	Image	Location
1	A young girl painted in black and white is covering her ears. She is behind a blue and yellow background, and she appears to be bothered.		In front of the main library entrance
2	A rural woman in black and white is standing in front of a stained glass. There are angels above her and demons below her.		Next to the central building near the Faculty of Education
3	A black and yellow portrait of Edwin Ricardo Molina Anzola, a student who passed away after an explosion in a student protest at the university. A commemorative plaque is located on the left of the portrait.		At the main entrance of the university
4	About ten paint splotches appear on the central part of the building. Most of the splotches are near the bottom part of the building.		In front of the central part of the administration building

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Data Analysis and Findings

Given that we were working with a particular group and context, the data were collected keeping a case study approach in mind. According to Baxter and Jack (2008), a case study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This decision ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses that allows revealing and understanding of multiple facets of the phenomenon (p. 544). In order to collect the data, we took field notes before, during, and after each session. During the sessions, the students provided their reflections within focus group discussions, which were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. In the last session, the students created and commented on their own artwork, which was also recorded, transcribed, and analyzed.

Once all the data were collected, common patterns regarding educational issues and reflective thinking emerged. We used the grounded theory approach to analyze the data, which "involves the progressive identification and integration of categories of meaning from data" (Willig, 2013, p. 70). In the case of the field notes and focus group discussions, we used a system of color-coding to determine patterns present in the information. For the students' artifacts, we analyzed the artwork for patterns, and we confirmed our interpretation with the students' comments provided in the focus groups.

From the data obtained, two main categories emerged based on the educational issues explored in the artwork, which were *The Problem is…* and *The Solution is…* As seen in Figure 1 below, the students' reflections interchanged between identifying a problem and announcing a solution. Additionally, as one student would propose a problem, another might recommend a solution and vice versa.

140 **The problem is…** In this category, the focus was the students' reflections based on educational issues identified either in their university context or in their past experiences as students. One of the murals that produced most of the reflections was the fourth one (see Table 2 above). The students began by first describing the visual aspects of the mural, although we noticed that they immediately moved into describing the problem, as seen in the excerpt below:
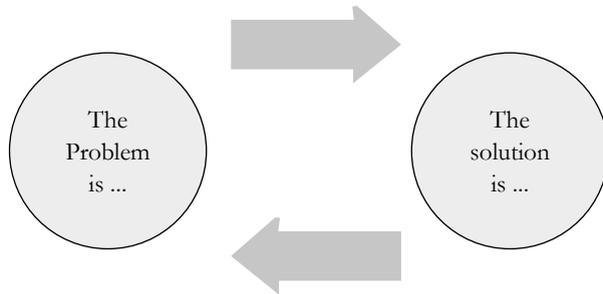
Figure 1. Main categories identified in the data analysis.

> I think that students were the subjects that made this painting, and I think
> that they attacked this building because it is the center of power in the
> university…So, usually when they state a new rule or a new *decrit* for the
> university, students don't agree with those rules. So, the idea is to block the
> building and to say we *aren't in agree* with those rules. [sic] (Maria Camila,
> Session 2, Focus group 2)

In this excerpt, Maria Camila described the enforcement of educational
reforms as being an educational issue within her context. As she mentioned,
students block the university in protest when these new rules are imposed at
the university. Moreover, her reflections showed how she took ownership of
the issue. As she finalized her statement, she used the word "we", in which she
placed herself with the "students" who do not agree with the enforcement of
new rules without their consent.

Another student, Karou, talked about how her position of power is an
educational issue in her context. She explained,

> I think it's difficult to talk with him (vice principal) about the situation
> about our *career*, but he *didn't listen us* because we are a low level. We are
> students. We are unimportant to him. This is the reason why the spots are
> low and not high *of the* building. [sic] (Karou, Session 2, Focus group 2)

In this except, we analyzed how Karou saw herself as a student. Given her
reflection that she was unimportant in her educational context, she associated

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herself with the low spots on the building. This was supported by a statement Nana made about a splotch of blue paint in front of the administration building with the words *No privatización* [No privatization] written nearby. She added:

> The blue of these people and how they differ from us, from them because probably they thought, they think they are in a different *stages*, so they can do what they want without the *perspective of the opinions* that we have in our lives. So, it's about the relation between blue blood and red blood, the real blood. [sic] (Nana, Session 2, Focus group 2)

Once again, we observed how the students reflected on what they saw visually and appropriated it to their own educational issues. In this case, Nana made a distinction between her social group (students) and the other (administration). An interesting point that Nana made is her distinction between blue blood, often associated with royal blood, and "red blood", which she called "the real blood". Despite the lack of symmetry in decision making and being disadvantaged by it, she considered herself as a "real" human being and social actor in her context.

Many instances of profound reflection were evident in this focus group discussion. As one of the teacher-researchers reflected:

> From my perception, I was really impressed to see that some students have some valuable perceptions about a single colorful spot….I think it was really interesting to see how just by a single image they can say so many things about a single person. (Teacher-Researcher 2, Session 2, Field notes 2)

With the first mural (see Table 2 above), the students were also able to provide their reflections on the current educational issues seen within public schools in rural areas. When they were asked about what they observed in the mural, Camila mentioned the following:

> Maybe violence with girls, work, maybe with child work, things like this, maybe bullying. [sic] (Camila, Session 2, Focus group 2)

From her statement, we saw how Camila interpreted the mural given current educational, and even cultural, issues that she was aware of in her context. In the next excerpt, Maria Camila complemented this statement by adding her reflection on rural students' disinterest in attending school. She stated:

Students don't want to go to the classes because teachers don't have the patience to teach them. And they want kids to learn knowledge, knowledge, and only knowledge, *and that they repeat* all the things the teacher says. So, students don't want to continue listening to those teachers, and they want to speak. [sic] (Maria Camila, Session 2, Focus group 2)

In this excerpt, we noticed that Maria Camila took what she saw visually and tied it to an educational issue. In her case, she reflected upon traditional methodologies of teaching and the role of the teacher as a transmitter of knowledge and nothing else. It is worth noting that even though Maria Camila focused on the problem at first, she finalized with a reflection on what the student might want to do, which is "to speak". This is important in the sense that Modern Languages students should be provided with spaces to reflect upon educational issues and the practice of teaching before starting their practicum.

The solution is... The following category emerged as a result of the students reflecting on solutions to the educational issues that were discussed within the sessions. As seen in the literature review, *inquiry* is the stage that proceeds identifying an issue, in which a solution to the problem is explored. In the excerpt that follows, Karou recalled her own educational experience in a religious institution before starting college.

Here, the nuns only taught me about values and religion and beliefs. But I think that things, important things, like drugs, alcoholic issues, or gays, or things like that are important topics to talk in class. [sic] (Karou, Session 3, Focus group 3)

She reflected on the idea that current issues within her context should be taught in schools before students go away to college. This was apparent in her artwork (see Figure 2 below), in which she added:

I consider that in many subjects the teacher just *focus* on their main topics. For that reason, they forget the importance to teach critical thinking. Wouldn't it be nice if all students *have* the opportunity to learn not only about geography or grammar, but also how this kind of knowledge can be integrated with issues in our real context? [sic] (Karou, Session 3, Focus group 3)

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We observed how she viewed education as an open door for meaningful learning in terms of not only focusing on content itself but giving students the chance to integrate real issues that are present in their current context. Additionally, she came to the conclusion that critical thinking should also be integrated into the curriculum, along with different life lessons.
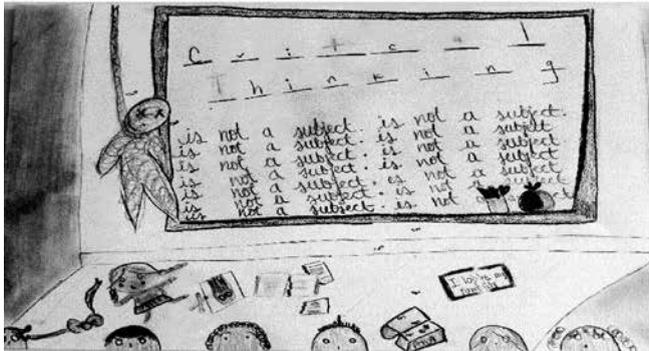
Figure 2. Karou's reflection on the importance of teaching critical thinking. (Karou, Session 3, Students' artifacts 1).

In Maria's case, she shared an experience she had in visiting a rural elementary school. In analyzing the first mural (see Table 2 above), her reflections demonstrated how her experience helped her develop empathy and understanding of students' situations in rural areas.

> I saw, for example, a girl, she needed to walk every day for one hour to go to the school, and one hour to go back to the house. I saw in the class that the children *feel* better in the class 'cause maybe they have a lot of problems in the family. And in the school, they feel comfortable. [sic] (Maria, Session 2, Focus group 2)

Maria's reflection is particularly relevant to her role as a future teacher, as some of the students might work in rural settings after graduation. She also realized that going to school might be a haven for some students, which might make her reconsider her role as a nurturer rather than just a transmitter of knowledge.

In terms of the educational issues within their university context, problem solving appeared after the situation had been analyzed in several ways. Once again, Angela invited her social group to think about taking part in the solution after analyzing the fourth mural (see Table 2 above):

As we are students, we cannot try to change the administrative part, but maybe, if we are *as a* resistance, maybe *can be listened* in some way. But if we are *as a* passive students, we cannot say nothing, and they never listen us, and the situation at the university cannot change *never*. [sic] (Angela, Session 2, Focus group 2)

Interestingly, this statement came after an analysis of the spots on the administrative building and how they might represent "a few students that fight" (Karou, Session 2, Focus group 2). So, we saw how one idea helped build another, which eventually provided a solution. In this case, the solution was to work together as a force of resistance in order to be heard. The idea of constructing solutions together is supported by the teacher-researcher's field notes:

They were all able to build different and multiple perspectives and were able to scaffold on each other's ideas. (Teacher-researcher 1, Session 2, Field notes 2)

The idea of working together and building on each other's ideas was also evident in the students' artwork. We saw a common theme associated with problem solving and finding solutions (see Figures 3 and 4 below). As Figure 3 showed, there was a person with a question who sought a solution. After searching for the answer, and with the help of someone, he found the tools to solve the problem. In Figure 4, different kinds of people were working to put the pieces of the puzzle together.

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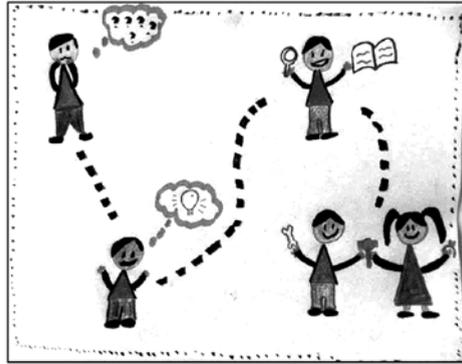
Figure 3. Solving a problem together. (Mariana, Session 3, Students' artifacts 1)

Figure 4. Different people coming together to solve the puzzle. (Maria Camila, Session 3, Students' artifacts 1)

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In analyzing her partner's artwork, Tatiana had the following to say:

…we arrive to a specific *think*, that is to give a solution to bring help to different people. [Sic] (Tatiana, Session 3, Focus group 3)

The idea of finding solutions with different perspectives also came up in several other reflections, such as that provided by Alejandra, who mentioned the following regarding Figure 5 below:

So, the people who follow rules, they see, they accept the same problem with the same glasses. They don't go beyond that to analyze a problem. But people who see the problem with different glasses, with different perspectives because they have different *thinkings* about the same problem. [Sic] (Alejandra, Session 3, Focus group 3)
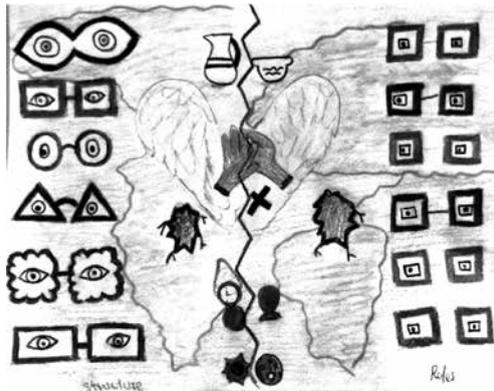
Figure 5. The eyes of rules and structure. (Nana, Session 3, Students' artifacts 1)

In Figure 6 below, Maria reflected on the importance of having one's eyes open to new experiences. According to Maria, when the eyes are open, they can see many perspectives. Meanwhile, when a person is close-minded, his or her eyes are closed as well. For that reason, he or she can only see darkness.

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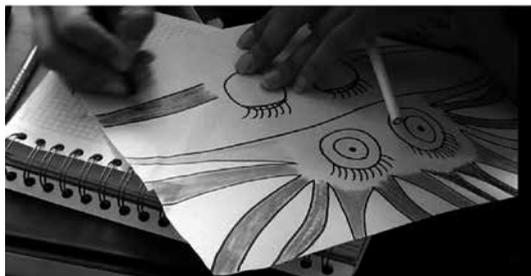
Figure 8. With eyes wide open. (Maria, Session 3, Students' artifacts 1)

Through their artwork, the students primarily reflected on the importance of working together to find solutions. In particular, they discussed the significance of viewing a problem from different perspectives. The use of colors, eyes, and multiple people helped show this idea.

Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

The main objective of this pedagogical proposal was to explore the types of reflections Modern Languages students had when analyzing artwork in their university context. From the data collected, we noticed that students began by analyzing the visual aspects of art, whether it was the murals or personal art pieces. This was immediately followed by a focus on the issue. As the discussions continued, the students worked together to expand on the problem from different perspectives. Moreover, they also suggested solutions to the problem, which relied on helping each other to solve the issue.

At the fourth mural, students primarily discussed the problem with educational reforms being imposed on students without their consent. In the case of Maria Camila, she took ownership of the problem by including herself as a person affected by the issue. Similarly, Nana and Karou talked about their positions of power in relation to that of the administration and how their status as students affected their education. When discussing issues related to rural, public, and traditional education, the students relied on previous experiences. One thing that marked these reflections was that the students were more willing to come up with solutions. Though they had little or no teaching experience, it was evident that their reflections showed an understanding of empathy toward the student. Both Maria Camila and Camila also questioned the role of the teacher as just being a transmitter of knowledge.

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In the second part of the reflective process, we considered the types of solutions the students provided. For the most part, they talked about the importance of working together to solve the puzzle. Their artwork showed this through the use of puzzle pieces and multiple people. Another commonality was the use of colors to show diversity of thought, as well as eyes to show different perspectives. As Alejandra reflected, "people who see the problem

with different glasses, with different perspectives." Overall, the students demonstrated two main aspects when it comes to problem solving, which were *working together* yields a *diversity of perspectives.*

Engaging students' in reflective thinking is not a novelty within the Colombian context. There have been significant benefits reported when it comes to reflective thinking and students in the field of language education. As Cote (2012) concluded on reflective thinking and foreign language student teachers, "they were better able to question the types of materials used, better balance the allocation of time to class activities, and implement sudden changes on the students' particular attitudes and reactions" (p. 33). Likewise, Núñez and Téllez (2015) commented that "Reflection also serves the purpose of creating a reflective learning environment that engages teachers in appropriate and relevant activities and motivates them to ponder their pedagogical and research practices" (p. 67).

Though the Modern Languages students had little to no experience in teaching, they were able to reflect on issues and solutions related to their educational context. As seen in the findings, the students leaned toward helping the student out and taking on nurturing roles in the classroom. Furthermore, having the space to talk about issues with their peers and teachers also motivated them to consider solutions to possible issues that could be encountered in their teaching practicum and educational contexts. Therefore, it would be useful to engage students, even if they have not started their practicum yet, in reflective thinking. They could begin by practicing on educational issues related to their context so that when the time comes to teach, they will be better prepared as reflective thinkers and social actors in their communities.

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HOW

EFL Teacher Professionalism and Identity: Between Local/Global ELT Tensions[*]

Profesionalización e identidad del profesor de inglés: Entre tensiones locales/globales en la enseñanza del inglés

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Abstract

This article of reflection considers socio-political issues such as linguistic imperialism, native speakerism, English as an International language, and appropriate teaching methodologies, which are currently contentious issues in the ELT community. Framed within a critical approach of applied linguistics, these issues are addressed in three sections (global/local tensions, teacher professional identity, and a new EFL professional identity) in order to argue that a dynamic, shifting, and multifaceted perspective of a globally-minded EFL teacher professional identity is needed so that Colombian EFL professionals can define or redefine their own identities in taking an informed and critical political stance.

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Keywords: EFL professionalism, professional identity, critical applied linguistics, English as an international language.

Resumen

Este artículo de reflexión considera elementos sociopolíticos como el imperialismo lingüístico, la ideología del hablante nativo, el inglés como lengua internacional y las metodologías de enseñanza apropiadas; aspectos que son controversiales en la comunidad ELT. Dentro del marco de la Lingüística Aplicada Crítica, estos elementos se discuten en tres secciones (tensiones globales/locales, identidad profesional del docente y una identidad profesional EFL nueva) para argumentar que se necesita una perspectiva dinámica, multifacética y cambiante de la identidad local y global del profesor de inglés, para que, de esta manera, los profesionales del inglés como lengua extranjera puedan definir o redefinir sus identidades tomando un posición política informada y crítica.

Palabras clave: profesionalismo EFL, identidad profesional, lingüística aplicada crítica, inglés como lengua internacional.

Introduction

Within education, newly emerging professionals in occupations such as TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), ESL (English as a Second Language), and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) had shared a disadvantaged status until recently. Malley (1992) stated that TESOL teachers are not 'professionals' in quite the same sense as doctors or lawyers. The president of TESOL, Nunan (1999), declared that even with a number of committed and active institutions and associations, TESOL still has a weak disciplinary basis and low standards of practice and certification. However, this perspective has now changed because English language teachers have gained professional status by participating in and contributing to the field (Lorimer & Schulte, 2011). English Language Teaching (ELT) is regarded as a career in a field of educational specialization, which requires a specialized knowledge obtained through both academic study and practical experience. It is now a field of work wherein membership is based on entry requirements and standards (Richards, 2008).

Are EFL teachers in Colombia regarded as professionals? It can be said that they can be given such a status, and therefore a particular professional identity,

if, besides being qualified, experienced, and up-dated ELT specialists, they work to become practitioners who are aware that any teaching context is situated on both global and local scales simultaneously. Guerrero-Nieto and Meadows (2015) and Varghese (2011) refer to this as a global professional identity. In the same way, it has to be recognized that local/global tensions place EFL teachers at a disadvantage as non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs). It may happen since global perspectives as well as local views on specific issues of English language teaching have become conflicting among scholars who have worked for EFL professionalism in Colombia in the last decades. Issues such as what English to teach, what culture to emphasise, and what methods to follow undoubtedly are now priorities for English language teachers' practices, and therefore for their professional identity development at the local level.

Global/Local ELT Tensions and EFL Professionalism

The global perspective of ELT has favoured the Western views of "standard" languages (linguistic imperialism) as the mandate that has to be followed by the colonies and neo-colonies in the peripheral countries. Therefore, English as a global language (Crystal, 2012), inner circle cultures (Kachru, 1992), and communicative language methods as the most effective way of teaching the language have become the global trends in the ELT world. It is important to acknowledge that "the English language, in its long march to its current global status, was aided and abetted by the colonialist and imperialist projects that trampled upon the political, cultural and political heritage of millions of people around the globe." (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 539) Together with it, the native speaker of English (NSE) has been established as the authority, not only in linguistic terms but also in cultural and pedagogical terms as universal perspectives in English language teaching.

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External pressures such as neo-colonialism, globalization, and neoliberal policies have impacted the development of ELT (Holliday, 2005; Pennycook, 2001; Phillipson, 1992). According to Bourdieu (as cited in Phillipson, 2004), U.S. norms seem to be the global default since globalization fundamentally means Americanization:

> Globalization serves as a password, a watchword, while in effect it is the legitimatory mask of a policy aiming to universalize particular interests and the particular tradition of the economically and politically dominant powers, above all the United States. It aims to extend to the entire world the economic and cultural model that favours these powers most, while simultaneously presenting it as a norm, a requirement, and a fatality, a universal destiny, in such a manner as to obtain adherence or, at the least, universal resignation. (p. 84)

According to Lin and Martin (2005), a key paradox is the widespread demand for more English, although English does not serve all equally well. Within differing country reports, the pattern is of a disappearance of 'linguistic local' and the one-sided pursuit of the 'linguistic global' (p. 9). Examples of this situation in India, Singapore, and even China are presented in order to explain how inadequate educational policy leads to the perpetuation of social inequalities in these and other African and Asian countries. Lin and Martin (2005) argue that the global proliferation of English is a precondition for the success of corporate globalization; therefore, how and why the language is learned and used ought to be a major concern in the neo-imperial age in which we now live. The interaction of globalisation forces and neoliberal policies with language teacher education is now eminent, evidencing the geopolitics of teaching English as an international language.

Nowadays, a globally-minded identity of professional ELT practitioners is necessary due to political, economic, cultural and market factors that have positioned Western epistemologies in ELT rather than those of EFL local communities. Global perspectives have influenced dramatically ELT local perspectives and have impacted EFL teacher professional identities. The field of ELT has become a global phenomenon. The neoliberal flows in education have placed English and English language teachers in a position of diverse levels of professionalism and therefore in the need to assume different professional identities in order to be able to respond to the high demand in increasingly complex national and international scenarios. Native and non-native English language teachers are part of the working force used everywhere in the globe, regardless of their qualifications, experience, or previous training. ELT professionalism has been constructed based on power and knowledge differentials

that privilege the inner countries and native speakers and masks the subordination of peripheral countries and non-native speakers. All the above mentioned factors might mark the origin of conflicts and tensions in the ELT community.

Globalization has exposed contradictions or tensions and opened a space for ELT professionals to be able to challenge the conventional boundaries of authority and legitimacy in terms of what content to teach, who will teach it and how English should be taught (Kachru, 1992). For example, ELT scholarship in the critical tradition (Phillipson, 1992) has illustrated the historical legacy of colonialism, which marginalizes non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) for not meeting the British Australian North American (BANA) cultural and linguistic profile. Due to these external international pressures, certain influences and forces arise and cause local communities to feel ill at ease, worried or discontent. Native speaker teachers represent the authoritative knowledge of English and learning methods; Standard English varieties (British and American) are taught around the globe.

The global spread of ELT now means that the majority of English teachers worldwide are NNESTs (Canagarajah, 1999; Park, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2005). In spite of this fact, native speakerism, a pervasive ideology within ELT, is characterized by the belief that 'native-speaker' teachers represent a 'Western culture,' associated with the ideals of the English language and of English language teaching methodology (Holliday, 2005), which seems to be the norm in different settings where English is taught as a second language (ESL) or foreign language (EFL). The native speaker fallacy, which is the notion that the ideal English teacher is the native speaker of that language (Phillipson, 1992), has been a global perception in many places until research in this area questioned this still prevalent belief. Fundamental constructs such as the legitimacy and authority of native speakers are now being challenged and redefined from multiple viewpoints within the profession and across the globe. However, this ideology has privileged certain groups and harmed NNESTs, not only in economic and political terms but also in issues related to their professional identity and confidence.

Colonialism in the pedagogy and didactics of ELT has not been out of the question in regard to methods used in the field. Communicative language teaching (CLT), task-based approach and content-based learning have become

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fashionable trends promoted from the inner circle countries in the last three decades. However, according to Copland, Garton, and Burns (2014), "CLT is a pedagogical approach developed in Western countries to teach adults in small, well-equipped classrooms" (p. 740); however, it may not be appropriate for teaching large groups of students in classrooms where resources are limited. Furthermore, as EFL teachers may receive only basic training in the underpinning theory and practical applications, they might struggle to implement it effectively. Also, Kumaravadivelu (2006) has demonstrated that "not a single method is universal and therefore can serve all needs, contexts, and learning or cognitive styles" (p. 69). He has challenged current ELT methods like CLT based on research as to its efficacy that casts serious doubts, and suggested entering in a post-method era in which some orienting principles should be applied to find a context-sensitive pedagogy that best suits a particular population and context.

These principles are: authenticity, acceptability, and adaptability. Kumaravadivelu (2006) defines authenticity as a feature of a method that should promote serious engagement with meaningful negotiation, interpretation, and expression in the language classroom; acceptability, a widely accepted view of a method; and adaptability as a principle that can be applied to suit various contexts of language teaching across the world and time. It has become increasingly apparent that CLT does not meet these criteria in a lot of contexts in the globe. Holliday (2005) suggests a plan for designing an appropriate methodology, a modified CLT that is sensitive to different sociocultural demands. CLT, task-based approach, or content-based learning has not been easily adaptable to diverse settings, or teachers do not have a sense of plausibility for these methods in several local contexts.

Together with language and who that language belongs to, the issue of whose culture to teach and what perspective of culture should be taught represent other contentious aspects of the global interests in ELT. From the cultural neo-colonial perspective that goes hand in hand with linguistic imperialism to the essentialist perspective of one language, one culture and one nation, the ELT professional has been moving from a practical *laissez faire* attitude to more critical positions towards the teaching of English, in which world Englishes, intercultural education, and multilingual and pluricultural competences are

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fomented. Teachers of English as an International Language (EIL) should start with an understanding of the various ways culture can be related to language.

Sharifian (2009) describes 'cultural conceptualizations' as schemas and cultural metaphors that 'emerge from the interactions between the members of a cultural group' (p. 242). EIL involves, by definition, speakers negotiating communication across different cultural conceptualizations (p. 246). This emergent character implies that EIL teachers and learners are agents of transculturation, not just the subjects of acculturation. McKay (2002) lays out a framework for understanding how EIL learners need knowledge of diverse cultures and, besides understanding other cultures, helps learners see the distinctiveness of their own cultures (p. 83). That is to say, understanding the general nature of cultural difference is more important to communication than mastering the cultural specifics of a given Inner Circle country, or the cultural specifics of any particular interlocutor (Dogancay-Aktuna & Hardman, 2012).

Nonetheless, cultural differences are not 'neutral' but embody differences in access to a variety of types of cultural capital (economic, political, social, etc.). Kubota (2004) critiques 'liberal multiculturalism' as uninterested in the political nature of cultural difference and for essentializing cultures as static. Therefore, EIL teachers do not need specific knowledge of a particular culture 'transmitted' to them, but an understanding of how culture is continually generated, reproduced, and changing in socio-political contexts. For years, native speakers and their cultures have been the centre of attention; it is about time that EFL teachers recognize that the teaching of English does not imply a monolithic perspective of language and culture of the inner countries, but rather a transcultural perspective of intercultural communication, that is to say, the development of an intercultural communicative competence in learners, teachers, and teacher-educators.

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Professional English Language Teacher Identity and Professionalism

The global concerns in ELT mentioned above and the search for more pertinent approaches to EFL policies in local realities are part of professionalism in ELT and teacher identities in many peripheral countries; this is so

because English language teachers' subject area, their identity as NS or NNS, their position towards cultures, and the language teaching methods used are intrinsically related to what defines Teacher Professional Identity (TPI). Interest in TPI in the ELT field is fairly recent (Liu & Xu, 2011; Norton & Early, 2011; Tsui, 2007). In fact, it can be said that global and local tensions are embodied in the sociocultural self of teachers and their practices, therefore, in their professional identity.

A review of literature about language teacher identity (Liu & Xu, 2011) shows that three main themes have been widely discussed. The first is the relationship between teachers' linguistic positions and professional identity. These studies explore how the dichotomy of NS/NNS has burdened NNS teachers with feelings of inferiority, thus prompting them to question their competence as legitimate language education professionals (Jenkins, 2005; Park, 2012; Pavlenko, 2003). The second theme explores conflicts between social and professional identities (Varghese et al., 2005) and posits that teachers' professional identities have been undermined by their gender, race, and ethnicity. These studies defend a holistic, dynamic view of understanding how the negotiations between teachers and the wider socio-cultural contexts have shaped TPI. The third theme explores how teacher identity is mediated in educational reforms (Liu & Xu, 2011; Tsui, 2007), and how the mediating role of power relationships in the process of identity formation exerts a strong influence.

According to Lasky (2005), TPI is how teachers define their professional roles. This dynamic construct (Barrett, 2008; Varghese et al, 2005) has been shown to have significant effects on teachers' development and performance. From a sociocultural perspective, even learning to teach is primarily a process of professional identity construction rather than knowledge acquisition (Nguyen, 2008; Varghese et al., 2005). Therefore, the extent to which teacher education leads to positive changes can be largely determined by the identities that teachers bring to contexts and how they are reconstructed during teacher education (Singh & Richards, 2006, in Abednia, 2012).

An essential part in the construction of professional identity is what any teacher does in everyday practice when the teacher assumes his/her practice as critical reflective practice (Kumaravadivelu, 1999). This way, teachers can inform their practices and consequently modify beliefs, conceptions and personal

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theories that are used as teachers´ assumptions in their practice. Borg (2006) framed it in what is called Teacher Cognition, that is to say, how teachers' experiences, beliefs, thoughts and thinking processes shape their understanding of teaching and their classroom practices, and therefore their professional identities. Teacher cognition is, besides practical knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge, and personal theories of teaching, which are very much concerned with teachers' personal and 'situated' approaches to teaching (Richards, 2008, p. 167). Therefore, critical reflective practice (Moncada, 2009), teacher cognitions, and situated EFL methods (Mora, Trejo, & Roux, 2014) as part of Colombian EFL teacher identity, should be the starting point to build a contextualised construct of professionalism.

Wenger (1998) identifies five dimensions of identity, which are apposite when thinking about professional identity; they embrace the most relevant aspects of teacher professional identity presented up to this point. These are: (1) identity as negotiated experiences where teachers define who they are by the ways they experience their own selves through participation as well as the way they and others reify themselves. (2) identity as community membership where they define who they are by the familiar and the unfamiliar; (3) identity as learning trajectory where they define who they are by where they have been and where they are going; (4) identity as a nexus of multi membership where they define who they are by the ways they reconcile their various forms of identity into one identity; and (5) identity as a relation between the local and the global where they define who they are by negotiating local ways of belonging to broader constellations and manifesting broader styles and discourses.

These five dimensions of identity have application in developing "a revised view of professional identity for teachers as they address the social, cultural and political (macro and micro, individual and group) aspects of identity formation" (Sach, 2001, p. 154). In the same track of thought, the view of professional identity reconstructed by many personal, social and emotional experiences has an important effect on the teaching expertise of several EFL teachers who commit themselves to the profession (Ubaque & Castañeda-Peña, 2017).

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This TPI, which has been studied and researched within broader perspectives, should now focus on the complexities of globally minded professionals who not only reconcile global and local tensions but also deal with internal

conflicting dilemmas and challenges present in their current context-sensitive pedagogies and practices. The next session will intend to address how going from colonial to de-colonial perspectives, from professionality to professionalism and departing from a construction of a strong TPI, a more critical and globally minded professional of EFL can be envisioned.

Local/Global ELT Tensions and EFL Professionalism

Besides these "external" factors mentioned above, some internal factors are part of the complex milieu of ELT professionalism in peripheral countries like Colombia at present. For instance, in the last decade, through various foreign language policies, The Colombian Ministry of Education (MEN in Spanish) has progressively and strategically been reducing the concept of being bilingual from a number of working languages to considering only English and Spanish, leaving aside other Colombian languages and transforming the Colombian language paradigm into a form of English mono-lingualism. According to Escobar (2013) and Usma (2009), these distortions of the concept of bilingual education can have negative implications in cognitive, cultural, linguistic and identity interrelationships. In other words, standardization, homogenization, and simplification of the notion of language are being fostered in the quest for power and control, consequently overthrowing the value of local knowledge, difference, and diversity. Consequently, a new EFL teacher is needed to try to balance the external and the internal factors that affect the teaching of English in Colombia.

Why is a globally minded identity necessary as part of the TPI presented above? In the ELT field, the increasing interaction between ELT communities around the world, as well as the recognition of traditional epistemologies and ways of teaching that English language professionals use in diverse contexts are day after day more evident. Nowadays, ELT professionals establish contact with one another around the globe, through transnational conversations. However, they do not establish symmetrical dialogues because there are forces of colonialism and neo-colonialism that permeate international collegial interactions. The preponderance of native speakers, the symbolic power of English, and the structures of knowledge that privilege inner circle research production are

some of these forces or discourses that mediate ELT professionalism at the local and global levels.

ELT discourses of professionalism and professional identity, it is claimed, hide processes of marginalization and discrimination because they come from Eurocentric or Imperialistic perspectives (Adams, 2012). According to Adams (2012), in the postmodern world, a unified construct of the concept of professionalism does not only require a set of practices, a type of expertise or a disciplinary mechanism, but an episteme that enables teachers to analyse professionalism as a broad discursive formation – "other" epistemological configuration, not the prevailing epistemologies associated with colonial or post-colonial legacies. As Larson (1990) suggested, "a theory of professions should be centrally concerned with the conditions under which knowledge is produced and applied in ways that make a difference for the life of "others", the historically neglected local indigenous peoples or third world inhabitants" (p. 32). In the local context, de Mejia (2011) concurs with this idea about the disregard of local knowledge and expertise when informing language policy perspectives, as well as when excluding other types of bilingualism (including indigenous languages or creole varieties) in Colombia.

Castro-Gomez (2007) and Mignolo (2009) say that, although colonialism and modernism seem to have disappeared in previous centuries to give birth to post-colonialism and postmodernism, hegemonic and Eurocentric perspectives remain deeply ingrained in peripheral countries. "Geopolitics of knowledge goes hand in hand with geopolitics of knowing" (Mignolo, 2009, p. 2), but by whom and when, why and where is knowledge generated are questions that intend to shift the attention from the current loci of enunciation, the euro-centred epistemologies, to the "other" epistemologies of the local communities.

The issues of colonial legacy and the native speaker bias in ELT are critical matters in local ELT communities and/or organisations. The global native speakerism ideology (Holliday, 2005) and the weak confidence of the local NNS teachers impact the identity of professional EFL teachers in different ways. For instance, the deficit perspective (Jenkins, 2006) of their language competence disempowers EFL teachers who do not reach the C2 level of English according to the CEF (Common European Framework) and marginalises them, causing them to go through audits, targets, performance reviews and leading to the

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de-professionalization (Evetts, 2012) of local English teachers. This might happen due to the vision of professionalism "from above", institutionalised by means of top-down policies that establish de-contextualised standards, universal methods, and culturally biased materials in particular settings (Guerrero-Nieto & Meadows, 2015; Gonzalez, 2007), and also due to the imposition from external authorities to promote organisational control and subsequently undermining local professionalism, thus replacing it with external values or norms, as stated by Evetts (2012) and Gonzalez (2007). This is what has been going on in the local context like Colombia where English is taught as a foreign language with foreign materials and foreign teaching approaches. De Mejia (2016) states that researchers in Colombia have recently questioned the common practice of adopting pedagogical systems which have been designed and implemented in very different contexts.

In Colombia and other peripheral countries foreign approaches to teaching English have been adopted. In doing so, EFL teachers have faced difficult adaptation processes with multitude challenges. For instance, a potential challenge for teachers to implement CLT has to do with the level of English they require. Teachers' low proficiency level, or their lack of confidence in their ability, is identified in the literature (Cárdenas & Chaves, 2013; Kuchah, 2009; Littlewood, 2007). Many teachers believe that CLT demands particular classroom procedures, such as teaching in the target language, which causes anxiety and leads to teachers' questioning their competence, particularly their speaking and listening skills, as reported by Kuchah (2009). In Colombia, this is particularly true according to studies on EFL high school teachers (Gonzalez, 2010; Torres-Rocha, 2017) who reported different levels of proficiency.

Torres-Rocha (2017) also reported teachers' mixed emotions towards the language requirements associated with a national bilingual programme in Colombia. This showed how these demands have affected their professional identities in various ways. These issues of methodology, language requirements, and imposed language policies reflect the hegemonic perspectives of inner circle countries and the legacy of colonial times still present in peripheral countries like Colombia. Applied linguists, scholars, and teacher-educators who regard them from a critical position are now problematizing these and many other "givens" of the Colombian ELT world (Bonilla & Tejada-Sanchez, 2016).

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Researchers have evidenced the need for teachers to move from their narrow technical role to a more political stance that will extend their professionalism as English educators to a broader political activist role, the role of educational activist (Apple, 2012).

Critical perspectives that challenge hegemonic views and power structures benefit language teacher education across global contexts. Specifically, Critical Applied Linguistics (CALx) has helped teachers develop a critical professional stance by considering the many external and internal factors that affect them in their particular contexts (Guerrero-Nieto & Meadows, 2015). CALx is a relatively new field of social sciences, education, and applied linguistics. However, it is necessary to highlight important contributions and sketch the peculiar characteristics of this perspective. A place to start is the politics of knowledge that is concerned with the workings of power, especially in applied linguistics and language policy in a world where English seems to be imposed all around, regardless of its utility, relevance, and potentially harmful symbolic power (Pennycook, 2001). Closely related to this issue is a political understanding of language and its extremely powerful representation of imposed realities that fight against each other in global and local contexts. I am referring to the unstoppable spread of English and the dramatic disappearance of indigenous languages all around the world. Also, the epistemologies of the western colonisers opposed to the neglected worldviews of post-colonialism; decolonialisation is a concern in the same line of thought.

In the same way that CALx regards ideology as the main focus of inequality, marginalisation, racism (as part of exclusion in the ELT area), and externally imposed perspectives of professionalism can also be seen as part of the exclusion within a "sophisticated understanding of professionalism" (Wilson et al., 2013). Nevertheless, I would argue that an internally determined "awareness of the nature of professional expertise, quality, conduct and ethics" comes from a personal experience of professionalism as a part of teachers' self-identity, relevant to all aspects of their lives. Therefore, I believe that internal teachers' cognitions (Borg, 2006) are more influential than external factors implicated in the enactment of professionalism when it comes to the process of teaching and learning English and the development of critical professional identity.

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It does not really matter which authorities or ministries create or determine the frameworks for professionals of teaching. These imposed frameworks are complied with by institutions, regardless of teachers' previous experiences, conceptions, and practices which are actually the elements that exert the enactment of professionalism in local contexts. In this regard, Sachs (as cited in Evans & Waring, 2014) affirmed, "Professional standards for teachers and what it means to be a teacher cannot be imposed, they need to be owned and overseen by the profession itself" (p. 6). I would argue, in the next session that a new professional identity in Colombia is arising from the current socio-political tensions and collective awareness; a situation that represents the emergence of critical, reflective, and political ELT professionals.

Towards a New EFL Teachers' Professional Identity in Colombia

In this century, for EFL teachers, expert knowledge of the subject, of pedagogy and students or the compliance with general professional standards is not enough; developing a strong professional identity as an English language practitioner by raising a thorough awareness of the socio-political factor of ELT at internal and external levels is also necessary. Horn (2016) states that profession, professionality, and professionalism might be "about the formation of a professional identity" (p. 130). Therefore, EFL teacher educators should have a strong professional identity in order to pass that on to student-teachers in "Licenciatura" programmes. This could be done by means of coherent curricular proposals that take into account EFL teacher educators' experiences, beliefs, and practices obtained throughout their professional development.

Mainstream educational research recognises the impact of teacher cognition on teachers' professional lives. According to Borg (2006) teacher cognition is an inclusive term referring to the complex, practically oriented, personalised, and context-sensitive network of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs that language teachers draw on in their work. Borg's work examines what teachers think, know, or believe in relation to any aspects of their work and the relationship between cognition and practices. If EFL teachers identify, understand, and modify their cognitions, for their part, they will be able to respond to the needs of a globally minded professional and locally aware practitioner.

As far as I am concerned, only when interaction of cognition and practice is understood, can EFL teachers then achieve a critical professional identity. The externally imposed standards can be examined, and external and internal perceptions of professionalism can be reconciled by means of a dialogic approach in which authorities, scholars, and teachers come to agreements on situated professional frameworks which are the product of a thorough understanding of local professional identities and professionality. However, the MEN (2017) established the characteristics of the *Licenciatura* programmes and a profile for teacher-educators that might not meet the experience, beliefs, practices, and roles that they currently have at universities in Colombia.

Transformation comes from within, therefore, following Bronfenbrenner (1979)'s ecological theory of human development, teachers can move from an internal conception of professionalism (micro and meso dimensions) or professionality to an external development and exercise of professionalism (exo and macro dimensions) in which micro-political factors, integration of knowledge, and professional development orientation can occur in a situated manner. This transformation cannot be established by simply issuing a decree (No. 18583, MEN, 2017) in a top-down way.

In other words, following Evans's (2011) view of professionality (personal or individual sphere) and professionalism (collective sphere), if professional development essentially involves the advancement of individuals along the professionality continuum towards the 'extended' end, then it is certainly approaching professionality a way to start constructing teacher professional identity. Consequently, professional identity can function as the lens through which professionalism can be further explored and constructed in local realities (see also Evans, 2014), rather than imposed "from above" (Evetts, 2012) through managerial use or organisational professionalism to promote only organisational control.

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Through a journey of professionalization, the ELT global community has constructed frameworks of relationships that would enable an effective negotiation of practices and discourses between the different professional communities, which facilitate more constructive teacher identities (Canagarajah, 2012). A new global professional identity for a language teacher practitioner entails, besides the identification of where their cognitions come from, a critical view of what ELT professionalism is in their own context, an awareness of

the geopolitics of the teaching of English as an international language, and an ongoing search for the most appropriate methods of language teaching in line with the context and situation of practice. In short, a dynamic construction of identities as something complex, changing and multifaceted (Norton, 1997, Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004) will lead to a pluralistic conception of professionalism.

Canagarajah (2014) and Dogancay-Aktuna and Hardman (2012) framed new EFL/ESL teachers in the development of an EIL Teacher model where English is conceived as a "form of practice" (Canagarajah, 2014; Pennycook, 2010) and a "mobile resource" (Blommaert, 2010). Canagarajah (2014) considers the engagement with diverse languages and cultures as contributing to the language awareness and negotiation strategies of the students. He says that EFL teachers have to adopt a different disposition when teaching students for the unpredictable contexts of globalization. They have to become learners with their students–learning new varieties of English, new genres of communication, and new modes of negotiating language diversity.

According to Escobar (2013), identity is closely and directly related to discourse since "this is how individuals act and interact, position themselves and are positioned in a social place, a way of being in the world, and thus a way to form and transform identities" (p. 45). By using power and control, discourses are maintained and perpetuated, as stated by Bernstein (as cited in Escobar, 2013). Relations of power create, justify, and reproduce limits between different group categories: gender, social class, nationality, etc. Escobar (2013) also argued that, in Colombia, this is the way foreign language policies, as identity-forming discourses, have nurtured EFL teacher identity as NNS, which "would naturally accept processes of exclusion, unequal social structures and thus, unfair educational conditions governed by foreign intentions" (p. 46).

It is important to keep on "exploring these issues for NNESTs and their professional identities in the ELT field because this can benefit our understanding of language teacher education for the global society" (Guerrero-Nieto & Meadows, 2015, p. 26) as well as for the local communities wherein complex realities are yet to be discovered and understood. Further research is necessary to establish the new venues of research regarding language teacher professional identities (González et al., 2002; González, 2007). According to Varghese et al.

(2005), distinguishing between researching on teachers' professional identity in general and language teacher identity is also crucial. In the latter, sociocultural, sociolinguistic, and ethnic considerations take a central stage. Varghese et al. (2005) summarise the most important issues in identity research as follows: first, identity is multiple, shifting and in conflict; second, identity is crucially related to social, cultural, and political context; and, third, identity is being constructed, maintained and negotiated primarily through discourse.

Conclusions

I would like to suggest actions to foster the development of a strong professional identity not only in EFL student-teachers, but also in EFL teacher educators. First, nurturing a strong contextually constructed EFL teacher identity, in Colombia and other EFL settings, can develop new perspectives on situated professionalism. This can be done by recognising local epistemologies that characterise teacher learning, reconcile global and local in a locally responsive approach to EFL teaching, and in the end, decolonise language, practices, and education. Other researchers in Colombia have proposed similar agendas, regarding teacher professional development. They suggest three actions: first action, giving teachers' agency and voice in construction of their own professional profiles, their development process, so that they will "fulfil their professional needs of expression of self-esteem, sense of belonging to a community, and self-realization" (Maslow, 1998; González et al., 2002; González, 2007).

Second, celebrating local knowledge implies a "process of negotiating dominant discourses and engaging in an ongoing construction of relevant knowledge in the context of our history and social practice" (Canagarajah, 2005, p. 13). Third and final action, deconstructing established knowledge to understand its local shaping and reconstructing local knowledge for actual needs. González (2007) argues that making the reflective interpretation of established knowledge for local needs is necessary; also, accommodating local knowledge to current conditions so that it can be relevant for other settings beyond local needs. This might as well be true for rural settings in Colombia, as suggested by Bonilla & Cruz-Arcila (2014), where EFL teaching and learning processes become more complex due to the particular sociocultural factors involved in such endeavour.

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All the above suggestions will be plausible within a "democratic approach to professionalism" in the local context. In fact, this is the big challenge for most EFL communities in peripheral countries like Colombia because democratic professionalism and its associated "activist identity" (Sachs, 2001; 2003) require stronger professional bodies and associations (Whitty, 2006). This can be done if teachers and teacher-educators, who are themselves scholarly and politically prepared, work in an open and meaningful way with stakeholders as well as with colleagues in collaborative learning groups (self-study groups) for the benefit of learners.

Finally, I would suggest future action and reflection on fomenting professional identity construction of teachers in Colombia in Teacher Education programmes. In this way, they will be able to take responsibility for initiating informed processes of change, bearing in mind local realities and global concerns (De Mejia, 2016). EFL practitioners have to face informed decisions, and construct a strong professional identity and agency that will help them face their responsibility as individuals, rather than having to comply with an accountability culture (Biesta, 2004) imposed by the state through the MEN and the foreign language policies. With this reflective article on professionalism, local and global tensions in the ELT field, and EFL teacher professional identity, I want to contribute to the current concerns and expectation of Colombian scholars, especially teacher-educators like me, with the intention to encourage new possibilities of research and professional learning from a political stance and local knowledge creation pertaining to our educative contexts.

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Classroom Management and Novice Language Teachers: Friend or Foe?*

El manejo de clase y los profesores de idiomas novatos: ¿Amigos o enemigos?

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Abstract

This article describes the importance of classroom management for language teachers, particularly for novice L2 teachers since it can affect their permanence in the teaching profession. A definition of classroom management along with a description of its dimensions, a set of initial principles and practical ideas to approach teaching with more confidence are provided in this paper. It is expected that this information will contribute to equip inexperienced teachers with procedures and strategies that can be translated and adapted to their teaching situation and ease the transition from student-teacher to being in charge of a classroom on their own.

Keywords: classroom management, foreign language teacher, novice teachers, strategies.

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Resumen

Este artículo examina la importancia del manejo de clase para los profesores de lenguas extranjeras, especialmente para los profesores novatos, dado que el manejo de clase puede afectar su permanencia en la enseñanza. El documento proporciona una definición de manejo de clase, así como una descripción de sus dimensiones, y una serie de principios e ideas prácticas para aproximarse a la enseñanza con mayor seguridad. Se espera que esta información brinde a los docentes que no tienen mucha experiencia en enseñanza de lenguas estrategias que puedan ser adaptadas a su situación y que faciliten la transición de profesor practicante a ser la persona a cargo de un grupo.

Palabras clave: manejo de clase, profesor de lenguas extranjeras, profesores novatos, estrategias.

Introduction

If a doctor, lawyer, or dentist had 40 people in his office at one time, all of whom had different needs, and some of whom didn't want to be there and were causing trouble, and the doctor, lawyer or dentist, without assistance, had to treat them all with professional excellence for nine months, then he might have some conception of the classroom teacher's job. -Donald D. Quinn (*The importance of teaching*, 2004).

Classroom management (CM) is that subjective and almost magical element that allows teachers to either succeed or merely survive in a class, as most teachers might have experienced at least once in their professional practice. Some teachers seem to "own" the magic, while others struggle with managing conflict, assuming their authority role, or managing time. How can this be explained? Let us take a look at this idea: "We often hear educators say that teaching is both an art and a science. I take this to mean that teaching is basically a subjective activity carried out in an organized way." (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 5) This statement sums up the multidimensionality and complexity of the teaching profession. CM is the perfect example of how each teacher brings their own assumptions and feelings to objective tasks like planning and executing lessons, sometimes unsuccessfully.

Foreign language (L2) teachers, novice or otherwise, struggle with stressful situations, including those associated with classroom management such as handling large classes or working with limited materials (Renaud, Tannenbaum & Stantial, 2007; Rhoades, 2013). This struggle may negatively impact L2 teachers' permanence in the teaching profession (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Lewis, 2009; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004), their students' motivation and involvement levels (Wright, 2014), and in general, the amount of learning that takes place in a classroom. Supporting novice L2 teachers is important because their well-being and their effectiveness

[1]in handling the classroom ultimately affect learners. Thus, the goal of this article is to outline a characterization of CM, its dimensions, and set of initial ideas to approach L2 teaching with more confidence. It is expected that these ideas will benefit not only novice L2 teachers, but also experienced ones. Even though learners cannot be removed from the teaching/ learning process, this article focuses on articulating issues about CM that novice L2 teachers need to navigate toward as they permanently construct their professional identity.

Classroom Management and Novice Teachers

Expert teachers are more sensitive to the task demands and social situation when solving pedagogical problems; expert teachers are more opportunistic and flexible in their teaching than are novices… expert teachers have fast and accurate pattern-recognition capabilities, whereas novices cannot always make sense of what they experience (Berliner, 2004, p. 201).

Berliner (2004) refers to instruction, but flexibility, responsiveness and metacognition can also be applied to CM. The relationship between CM and pre-service or novice teachers has been profusely researched in the last four decades in general education, educational psychology and foreign language teaching (Cyril & Raj, 2017; Hart, 2010; Macías, 2018; Pineda & Frodden,

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1   The words "effective" and "effectiveness" are used throughout this article to refer to best practices in language teaching. Although their potential contentious meaning, these terms are kept since they are widely used by the authors in the literature that supports the manuscript.

2008; Quintero & Ramírez, 2011; Veldman, Admiraal, Mainhard, Wubbels, & Tartwijk, 2017). These authors coincide in the idea that setting up an adequate work atmosphere and dealing with challenges in the classroom is a sensitive and, at times, difficult area for every teacher, particularly for novices (Caner & Tertemiz, 2015; Fowler & Saraplı, 2010; Lewis, 2009; Macías, 2017; Macías & Sánchez, 2015; Marzano, Marzano & Pickering, 2003; Quintero & Ramírez, 2011; Sánchez, 2011a, Sánchez, 2011b; Pineda & Frodden, 2008; Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). Given its influence on learning outcomes, CM could be more prominent, and instruction on it could be more explicit in L2 teacher education programs, conferences and workshops for professional development. Many have voiced this need in journals (Macías, 2018; Pineda & Frodden, 2008; Quintero & Ramírez (2011), post-observation conferences, methodology courses, and blog posts (e.g., https://tesol1and2.wordpress.com/classroom-management-task/). In informal comments concurrent with research, student-teachers and novice teachers expressed feeling confident about their L2 communicative competence and their teaching skills (e.g., lesson planning, syllabus design), but CM was perceived as a significant challenge. An accurate impression as they "from the very first day on the job must face the same challenges as their more experienced colleagues, often without much guidance from the new school or institution" (Farrell, 2010, p. 436).

It sounds reasonable then, to promote metacognition about the theoretical and practical aspects involved in CM among novice teachers. Why? First, it helps them establish clear roles in the class and leads learners to engage in the activities planned for a lesson with less resistance. Second, if novice L2 teachers handle the planning and execution of a lesson effectively, they will be able to make the most out of the available time and resources regardless of their teaching conditions. Third, the lack of CM skills might negatively affect the roles novice teachers assume, their self-esteem, their sense of self-efficacy, and, ultimately, their permanence in the profession. Fourth, it does not matter how strong the theoretical background of an L2 teacher is, or how fluently s/he speaks the language; if the environment s/he has created is not conducive to learning, the fundamental nature of teaching is lost. Fifth, if novice teachers enter the practicum with a basic set of principles and practices, they will have more confidence in initially approaching teaching (Sánchez, 2011b). True, CM improves with time and experience, but novice teachers cannot afford the luxury

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of teaching and taking their time to get a grasp of classroom dynamics. They must start teaching as part of their practicum whether they feel ready for it or not, something that is not without its consequences. As Ingersoll and Strong (2011) point out, between 40% and 50% of teachers leave the profession in the first five years adding that,

> Pre-employment teacher preparation is rarely sufficient to provide all of the knowledge and skill necessary to successful teaching, and that a significant portion can be acquired only while on the job (see, e.g., Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ganser, 2002; Gold, 1999; Hegstad, 1999). Hence, this perspective continues, there is a necessary role for schools in providing an environment where novices are able to learn the craft and survive and succeed as teachers (pp. 201-202).

One initial step in supporting novice teachers' knowledge of CM is exploring its different definitions and the elements associated with it.

Understanding Classroom Management

CM in second/foreign language (L2) teaching is interpreted from diverging perspectives, something that may obscure its meaning. These perspectives go from conceiving CM as a synonym of discipline, to seeing discipline as one sub component of CM. CM could also be something as broad as the teacher's role in a class (e.g., motivator, facilitator), or something as specific as arranging chairs in a certain way to foster interaction. For some, CM is a teaching skill that serves to create, maintain, and if the circumstances require it, reestablish the classroom atmosphere to foster teaching and learning (Brophy, 1986), while a broader view establishes it as "…a wide-array of proactive, well-established, and consistent techniques and practices teachers employ to create an atmosphere conducive to learning" (Johnson et al., 2005, p. 2). The latter view is broader in nature than discipline and encompasses planning, monitoring, transitions, and the sequencing of classroom tasks (Latz, 1992). A more recent and simplified definition sees it as "a well-planned set of procedures and routines for avoiding problems, and having a plan in place for when misbehavior does occur" (Rawlings, Bolton & Notar, 2017, p. 399). As the authors explain, this definition goes beyond early definitions that focused on

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the teachers' behavior, not student behavior and on the idea that CM fostered instruction. One idea agreed upon is that CM encompasses how teachers deal with multiple issues inside the classroom simultaneously: from keeping learners on task, to changing the physical environment of the classroom to foster learning, to handling misbehaving learners, to deciding how to transition into the next activity, all while working with content and assessment (Brown, 2007; Harmer, 2007; Scrivener, 2011; Ur, 2012). All these require teachers to think on their feet and think metacognitively (i.e., being aware of what they are doing and why they are doing it).

I contend that although practical hints for CM can be helpful to quickly address novice learners' concerns, CM is more than that. CM refers to the teachers' dynamic decision-making about learning, and their emotionally-mediated reactions toward disruptive situations in the classroom. These reactions reflect the teachers' beliefs about effective learning and teaching, their theoretical background regarding how an L2 is learned and the teachers' teaching experience, problem-solving and planning skills, all of which results in successful or unsuccessful learning conditions in the classroom. This idea concurs with those of Pineda & Frodden, 2008; Sánchez, 2011a; Quintero & Ramírez, 2011).

Even though teaching is both an art and a science, and is always affected by teachers' idiosyncrasies, teachers need to approach CM as a task that requires planning and a basic knowledge of its components instead of as an unplanned reaction guided by mere intuition. Getting acquainted with extant research, reflecting and writing about these issues, and analyzing examples of exemplary teaching are initial steps in that direction. Further knowledge is gained by acknowledging the challenges and consequences of not handling the dynamics of the classroom, something that has been researched from different perspectives, while highlighting the prominent role of CM in the classroom (Landau, 2001; Latz, 1992; Yerli Usul & Yerli, 2017). For some, CM is the most essential issue in a teacher's day-to-day professional practice (Wright, 2005), the most valuable set of skills instructors can have (Landau, 2001), or one of the most difficult responsibilities that teachers deal with in the classroom (Caner & Tertemiz, 2015).

Research is a healthy way to understand the scope of CM. Future research avenues may revolve around isolating the elements found in the dimensions of CM and observing the effects of an intervention (e.g., intervening in class size by dividing a class into two groups and comparing the classroom dynamics of the smaller groups versus those of an undivided one); working with novice teachers to understand, from their narratives, their conceptions of CM and how these evolve, or observing the effects of explicit instruction on classroom management in a group of pre-service teachers versus no additional instruction.

Having outlined a definition for CM and its relevance, we can now discuss its dimensions.

The Dimensions of Classroom Management

The divergence observed in the definitions of CM is also found when advancing its components. However, it is possible to find recurring topics in the literature: effective classroom management relates to teachers, students and classroom atmosphere, and these can be stated as "(1) rules and procedures, (2) disciplinary interventions, (3) teacher-student relationships, and (4) mental set". (Marzano, Marzano & Pickering, 2003, p. 8)

Table 1 presents novice teachers with a quick glance at recurrent components of L2 classroom management (Brown, 2007; Harmer, 2007; Scrivener, 2011; Ur, 2012). The table provides teachers with an inventory of the elements included in CM and shows that the interaction of a number of elements may enhance or hinder the teaching and learning process. For instance, novice L2 teachers might underestimate the effect of acoustics or board use on their lessons. This table might help them visualize the wide array of elements that could disturb instruction.

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Table 1. Classroom Management Components

Classroom management components	Aspects each one entails
1. The physical environment (Elements that might foster or hinder teaching and learning)	Acoustics Lighting Tidiness of the classroom Availability of equipment Seating arrangements Effective use of the board
2. The teacher	The teacher's voice Body language Tone of voice Nonverbal communication Attitude towards teaching and towards the learners Reactions to disrupting students Confidence How comfortable the teacher is with his/her authority
3. Unplanned teaching	How teachers deal with: – unexpected digressions – interruptions – learners' questions – teachable moments – disruptions – technical problems – discipline problems
4. Teaching under adverse circumstances	Large classes Administrative constraints affecting content or methodology Teaching mixed-proficiency levels Having to teach to the test (standardized, government tests)

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Classroom management components	Aspects each one entails
5. Teacher roles and styles	Roles
	Authority figure
	Director
	Manager
	Counselor
	Source of knowledge
	Guide
	Styles (a continuum rather than an either/ or choice): Shy vs. gregarious
	Rational vs. emotional
	Restrictive vs. permissive

Note: Adapted from Brown (2007), Harmer (2007), Scrivener (2011), and Ur (2012)

It is important to clarify that some of these components are particularly permeated by context: Teaching under adverse circumstances reiterates the role of subjectivity in teaching and deserves some comment. For instance, the definition of "large class" is subjectively and culturally defined (Brown, 2007). The challenges for teachers in Colombia as reported by Macías (2018) are not different from those reported in other settings, but similar circumstances may be perceived as challenging depending on the context. For instance, working with 40 students is not uncommon in some EFL settings, but in other contexts a group of 25 learners may be too large to handle. Other issues include: grouping learners with different L2 proficiency levels or dividing them, making decisions about the selection of content, and deciding on suitable methodology for the course.

Discipline, one of the elements included in classroom management, is also context-dependent since cultural expectations vary. In some contexts, a certain amount of noise is acceptable since the goal is that learners use the language communicatively and it is not problematic, whereas other contexts will require teachers to keep students quiet all the time. Discipline does not have a uni-dimensional definition, but as Ur (1996) suggests, if in a classroom a) learning is taking place, b) teacher and students cooperate to achieve a common goal, c) students are motivated to engage in the tasks planned by the teacher and d)

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the lesson is going as planned, then discipline is present. Finally, teaching roles and styles are also mediated by culture. Students from different backgrounds (e.g., Colombian, Chinese, and American) may have diverging expectations on classroom dynamics, on how explicit teachers are in the provision of feedback, error correction, and how they are supposed to handle instruction and assessment. These expectations might affect how teachers are perceived and how students relate to them. In one context, a teacher might be perceived as authoritarian or rude, while in a different context the teacher is perceived as strict.

I consider classroom management to involve three dimensions related to the components already described, but more comprehensive in nature. Those dimensions are: the teacher, the planning, and the environment. The first one includes teachers' attitudes, the roles they may assume, and the decisions they make before, during, and after the lesson, all of these in order to foster the best possible conditions for language learning. The second dimension is planning, including course planning, lesson planning, classroom management planning (e.g., establishing routines to give learners a predictable framework), and even planning how to react in certain challenging situations. The third dimension is the environment which has to do with working on the constraints of the classroom and creating an atmosphere of cooperation, respect, and well-being (i.e., what Brown, 2007, calls energy) so that tangible elements as materials, equipment, tasks, and tests can be used effectively and foster learning.

These dimensions address potential sources of CM problems prevalent in the reviewed literature for this paper. These dimensions are more suitable being managed by the teacher and more likely to be addressed with planning and awareness.

Successfully Managing the L2 Classroom

CM might not be rated as one of the strongest stressors for L2 teachers (Lewis, 2009) if teachers had at their disposal some adaptable guidelines for facing it. Although teachers can find some straightforward, practical advice in books and websites such as Edutopia, Teaching Channel or The Teacher's Guide; in the long run, it is desirable to undertake teaching as an activity led by principles (Jackson, 2009) and reflection (Richards & Lockhart, 1996). Thus, situations like student misbehavior will not be read as a challenge to teachers' authority, but as a deviation from the class principles. Unfortunately, some

educators may not be that objective, leaving CM to be guided by perceptions of what is acceptable or not. In fact, sometimes teachers may objectively know what to say, but this will be different from what they do:

> Ask around and you'll likely find that most every teacher that you question believes that he or she is an effective classroom manager, including ones who clearly struggle. Disconnect between perception and reality occurs at times because even less-effective teachers can point to certain maxims that they accept as the foundation of quality management, and identify the specific things that they do to carry them out. (Englehart, 2012, p. 70)

Consciously attempting to make the connection between what you say and what you do needs to be kept in mind to approach CM according to contextual demands. Coherence is important: what you say *should* match what you do. To be coherent in their professional practice and create a sense of predictability in their lessons, teachers need to determine which role they want to play, what their beliefs are, how they match their planning to the actual lesson execution, and how their class interactions enhance learning. In short, we need to be reflective (Richards & Lockhart, 1996).

Next is a set of perspectives which are connected to the three dimensions of classroom management (i.e., the teacher, the planning, and the environment), and which can contribute to managing a classroom. Let us begin with the person in charge of managing all the moves in the classroom so the conditions facilitate learning.

The teacher. CM should not be based on improvised reacting, but on being proactive. That is, L2 teachers need to have a plan when they enter the classroom and this plan begins with themselves. L2 teachers need to be knowledgeable about the theoretical background of their profession, including but not limited to, foreign language methodology, second language acquisition (SLA), research methods, and instructed second language acquisition (ISLA). In addition to this specific knowledge, L2 teachers also need to support their practices with findings from general education. For instance, educational psychology, particularly group processing (Schmuck & Schmuck, 2001), can be useful in understanding the dynamics of classrooms and providing principles for classroom management. In this light, students are not seen as individuals, but as a group that behaves and interacts in unique ways, and which exerts

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influence on each other and whose goals, roles, and emotions affect, among other things, classroom climate, and consequently, CM. A strong background can help L2 teachers make evidence-based decisions, shape their plans for CM, reflect on their past actions, and if needed, introduce modifications to enhance their future actions, but again, a good plan involves action, a deliberate attitude, and a sense of agency on the part of the teacher towards the craft of teaching and towards managing the class. As it has been suggested,

> A major theme of classroom management research is that teachers who are effective classroom managers demonstrate an ethos of "warm demander," that is teachers signify to all that they care for their students and simultaneously hold high expectations for their academic, social and overall continued success (Pool & Everstone, 2013 as cited by Salvosky, Romi & Lewis, 2015, p. 57).

This means that a commanding, authoritative presence is important. How do we achieve it? Again, how do we own the magic? There are simple things L2 teachers can do: Be aware of your posture and how you address your audience. Be comfortable with being the authority in the classroom and show that you enjoy teaching, be in touch with your emotions as you teach and try to read your students' reactions to what you are doing. Also, make sure your students can hear you and see you clearly, which means you need to be as mobile as possible, even if the layout of the classroom does not allow you to reach every corner of it. It is important not to hide behind your desk or just stand next to the board. Mobility will help you do different things: notice who is absent, monitor what students are doing, keep them on task, attentive (no one speaks when the teacher is standing right next to you!), and deal with little disruptions (e.g., learners are not using the L2) without drawing too much attention to the issue.

A final word about the role of L2 teachers has to do with avoiding self-defeating attitudes: not every student likes the class we teach. Students do not always have to behave perfectly, and L2 teachers do not need to be in total control of the class all the time. Unrealistic expectations will leave L2 teachers feeling stressed, frustrated, and threatened by learners (Macías, 2018), even resenting their students. Instead of taking things personally and responding to feelings only, a metacognitive attitude will allow L2 teachers to respond adequately and make positive choices (Lewis, 2009). L2 teachers need to monitor their reactions and attitudes during and after the class, because as Lewis and Lovegrove (1988)

(as cited in Lewis, 2009) conclude, students "may become less interested in subjects taught by teachers who display anger, mis-target and punish innocent pupils, and don't give warnings before issuing punishments" (p. 28).

Classrooms, however, are unpredictable; they are complex and under constant reshaping and construction thanks to the interaction between L2 teachers and learners, the contributions of learners, and the context. Not everything can be solved solely by the teachers' attitude and presence, but planning and awareness can contribute to fostering learning and positive classroom dynamics.

Planning classroom management. The perfect plan would be one that completely avoids disruption in the classroom, but again, that is not realistic. The next best thing is creating a tight lesson plan following the coherence, variety and flexibility principles (Jensen, 2001), and including a clear goal, explicit transitions among stages, and specific roles for learners in each stage of the lesson. It should suffice to prevent difficulties, and potential disruptions could even be noted in the lesson plan, along with the possible alternatives to solve them. Over preparing is strongly suggested, especially for novice L2 teachers. Getting materials ready beforehand (e.g., hand-outs, photocopies, movies, audio files), knowing how the equipment works, and deciding how learners will interact/ work at different points in the lesson (e.g., group work, pair work) will enhance teachers' confidence and keep the pace of the class. Two important elements to highlight inside planning are routines and conflict strategies.

Establishing routines. Routines are part of planning and teacher preparation, and can contribute to creating a predictable environment and safe spaces where learners can practice the L2 (e.g., start every class greeting in English and getting two students to provide a one-minute oral report on an interesting piece of news). The benefits of routines include decreasing the likelihood of teacher stress and teacher burnout, the prevention of chaotic classroom environments, the establishment of a culture of respect and care inside the classroom, and effective time management (Rawlings Lester, Bolton Allanson & Notar, 2017). Routines need to be determined by the teacher and included in lesson planning. These routines need to have a clear purpose. This will help teachers think about transitions, required materials and featured language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing). A good example of routines for beginner L2 learners is classroom language. Classroom language refers to the

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vocabulary, commands, and expressions used in the lesson. When beginners do not understand what they are being asked to do, they might start talking to others or be unable to follow the task. Classroom language could be the focus of the class for at least two or three weeks. At the beginning of each class, teachers can establish a routine for practicing, recycling the expressions previously learned and introducing new ones until learners are familiar with the language the teacher uses to direct attention (e.g., I want you to just listen to the story), use materials such as textbooks (e.g., open your books to page X), or organize a task (e.g., I want you to get in pairs and find the differences in the picture). Similar routines can be planned for the last minutes of the class (e.g., a vocabulary game can be played to reinforce contents) when learners tend to be tired, become disruptive, and/or do not want to work.

Dealing with conflict. Having a plan regarding CM also means knowing how to react when disruptions do occur despite careful planning. When the problem is starting to manifest itself, teachers can deal with the disruption quietly. If someone is playing with a phone, the teacher can stand next to the student, call him/her by name and ask him/her to pay attention. Do not overreact (e.g., crying, yelling, storming out of the classroom – remember: you will have to come back to that same classroom eventually). Avoid begging or playing the victim (e.g., I'm too young, I'm not the main teacher, or I do not have experience). Avoid taking things personally, or using threats you do not intend to follow up on. In short, keep cool; keep your poise (Brown, 2007). Remember that "teachers who lose their tempers and yell at such pupils, or attempt to quell their misbehavior by using cutting sarcasm, are likely to escalate the conflict" (Lewis, 2009, p. 22).

When conflict has manifested itself, there are three ways to deal with it: explode, give in, or negotiate in a way the learners cannot refuse (Ur, 1996). Let us elaborate on these options.

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Explode. Exploding does not refer to being aggressive, sarcastic or offensive, but rather to being assertive and giving a brief, loud, firm command; telling learners what you expect them to do at that moment. This might be followed by a quick reminder of the rules they need to follow in your class.

Give in. Imagine that your students get too involved playing a vocabulary game and do not want to go on to the next activity you have planned. Do not get engaged in a confrontation with the whole class as you will spend time ar-

guing and you will always lose face. Give in and allow them to keep on playing, but make sure they know they need to compromise. Tell them they will have to do the activities you had planned as homework, or that they will research the topic in small groups so the class does not fall behind.

Negotiate. In the final option, teachers can use three strategies: postpone (e.g., I can give you 20 minutes tomorrow to discuss the problems you have had with the project. Right now, let us continue with the task…), compromise (e.g., the date for the test will be kept, but I will post the possible questions on the class blog), or arbitrate (e.g., since we cannot reach a decision, you will vote on the deadline for the presentation and the whole class will accept the result).

A caveat is needed here: If you use these brief outbursts too often, give in too often or allow learners to make decisions too often, these strategies will lose their effectiveness. Use your judgment and remember that prevention is better than cure.

The environment. The final component of classroom management discussed here is the classroom itself and it is relevant to include it since it influences the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Some prevalent characteristics of classrooms that might be a challenge include the organization of desks in rows, having a separate space or even a raised platform for the teacher, and having the board as the only available material (Wright, 2005). Although there is not much that L2 teachers can do to actually change the physical features of the classroom (acoustics, number of desks or equipment), L2 teachers can stand up and interact with others, walk around and get closer to the learners instead of directing the class from the platform. Also, L2 teachers can ask learners to bring one large picture taken from a magazine to create a picture file that can later be used in pair work or in oral tests. Other elements to consider include getting things ready before learners come in the classroom, and asking them to hand things out instead of wasting time going from desk to desk handing papers out. If L2 teachers are using technology, they need make sure the classroom has electrical outlets, and that the whole class can see or hear what has been prepared. Also, L2 teachers should erase the board, and make consistent use of it; for instance, writing key vocabulary on the right side, new information in the central part, and the date and homework reminders on the left side (Brown, 2007).

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One aspect that influences classroom management and the environment, although it is not a physical entity per se, is time.

Time. Similar to class size, time is a relative concept. Some L2 teachers may feel that teaching two hours is too long, while others are comfortable teaching for three hours or more. Again, lesson planning is key in preventing time management problems such as finishing the class without having achieved the set goal, making learners write a paragraph they did not get to read to the class or rushing to do two or three activities in ten minutes. Specific timing is needed for practicing, for assimilating the new vocabulary or form introduced by the L2 teacher, to engage in routines and to assess the outcomes of the class. Depending on how L2 teachers shape their lesson plans, there could also be time for checking homework or clarifying doubts. L2 teachers' decisions about how to use the allotted time will also help them choose and prepare materials accordingly. For example, it is not uncommon for novice L2 teachers to find themselves taking ten minutes out of a 45-minute class to set up the equipment for watching a 5-minute video. Time is a valuable asset for teachers, students are quick to notice when a teacher is either killing time because they ran out of activities, or desperately trying to cram everything when the first fifteen minutes of the class were spent doing small-talk. We structure our lives around time and teaching should not be an exception. Time, same as CM, can be a teacher's friend or foe.

The intention of this paper is not to prescribe or homogenize classroom management practices. Nothing guarantees that a strategy will always work. However, after 20 years as a teacher educator, I have learned that novice teachers appreciate having a scaffold before walking into a classroom. As Macías (2018) claims, "research on classroom management in foreign language education has also focused on providing ways or mechanisms to help foreign language teachers reduce the impact of classroom management issues in their courses" (p. 162), and this should be a positive thing.

Conclusions

It has been suggested in this article that CM is to be assumed as a reflective and planned activity rather than one guided by impromptu reaction, and that teaching is supported more effectively by principles than by a one-size-fits-all set of rules. However, this article looks to provide novice L2 teachers with practical ideas to enhance their initial encounter with teaching, thus the following compilation of ideas of authors addressing each classroom management dimension (Brown, 2007; Castellanos, 2002; Quintero & Ramírez, 2011; Renaud,

Tannenbaum & Stantial, 2007; Ur, 1996, 2012; Wright, 2005) is presented in Table 2. This summary gives novice L2 teachers the idea of the multiple tasks they will have to control in the classroom, and they can take away some preliminary strategies that facilitate approaching these tasks.

Table 2. Classroom Management Strategies

Dimension	Strategy/Behavior
The teacher	• Establish a good rapport with the class. Learning also depends on the fostering of a classroom where the teacher expects learners to succeed and grow.
	• Be attentive to your feelings and to your students' feelings and make decisions. Empathy and a genuine interest in your students will contribute to creating a respectful and trusting atmosphere.
	• Be respectful, be friendly, but do not try to be your students' friend. Teachers need to have a good sense of humor, but do not use sarcasm. You can laugh with your students, but you should never laugh at them.
	• Enjoy the class; after all, you planned it. If changes need to be introduced mid-lesson, do it. A lesson plan is flexible and so should be the teacher.
	• Keep eye contact; be in touch with your students' reactions to act accordingly. If one activity has become monotonous and learners are no longer engaged, bring it to an end and move on. Don't be afraid to be spontaneous and use teachable moments.
	• Make use of the students' first language (L1) when learners do not understand the directions for a task, to clarify a point, or to talk about cultural content (e.g., a concept that does not exist in one of the languages). It is better to quickly explain things in the L1 than to spend precious class time elaborating in the foreign language.
	• Do not expect your students to read your mind. Be explicit in your expectations and standards for the learners' behavior and performance.
	• Be fair and respectful. Treat everyone equally.
	• If you need to address misbehavior, correct the behavior, not the student.
	• Consider cultural conventional rules and appropriateness regarding proxemics, kinesthetic, and attire.
	• Give feedback and praise.

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Dimension	Strategy/Behavior
The planning	• Provide a set of classroom rules at the beginning of the year. These rules should not be too many, so that they can be kept consistently. • More knowledgeable learners can be group leaders or monitors to discourage boredom and misbehavior. • Maximize interaction, be mindful of too much teacher-talk, and tailor the tasks to your learners' needs. • Directions need to be clear and concise and they should be understood by the class before the task begins. Repeat directions twice or three times and ask learners to repeat them so they can use time to actually carry out the task. • Keeping the lesson going does not require the latest technology. Use realia (i.e., everyday objects that can be used to teach) to bring variety and interest to the lesson. A simple object like a key chain can be used to elicit L2 use in a dialogue (e.g., Where did you buy it? Why did you buy it? Was it a present?) • Choose topics, activities and materials that are attractive to the learners, not to you. • The materials need to be ready when the class begins, avoid interruptions.
The environment	• Create a seating chart to facilitate remembering and using students' names. Flashcards or name tags can also be used at the beginning of the year to foster interaction and organization. • Start and end the class on time. • Provide a specific time for classroom activities and remind them about the time they have left to keep them on task. • Make sure the equipment and resources are working and know how to use them.

Note. Adapted from Brown (2007), Renaud, Tannenbaum, and Stantial (2007), Ur (1996; 2012), Quintero & Ramírez (2011), and Wright (2005).

Earlier in the article, it was suggested that CM is challenging for novice L2 teachers. The challenge is always there, even for L2 experienced teachers. That is why the decision-making of teachers is dynamic: A perfectly planned lesson can go wrong, and a disruption can be transformed into a teachable moment. Paradoxically, L2 teachers' job consists of expecting the unexpected and being ready for things that cannot be anticipated when they walk in the classroom. What novice L2 teachers need to remember is that being comfortable in their own skin, good planning and knowing how to work with the environment will contribute to facing those challenges more effectively. In the long run, being attentive to what works and what does not in the classroom, and making decisions to appraise and address the situation (i.e., being metacognitive) will lead L2 teachers to effective classroom management. As experience is gained, CM will likely become their ally. In sum, be confident, be knowledgeable, be organized, be flexible, be tidy, be reflective, and be ready.

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  When paraphrasing the general idea, page numbers are not required. . . . which offered a theoretical backdrop for a number of innovative behavior modification approaches (Skinner, 1969).

- Reference at the end of the text (list of references)

  Levy, M., & G. Stockwell. (2006). CALL *dimensions: Options and issues in computer-assisted language learning.* New Jersey, US: Mike Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Harlow, H. F. (1958). Biological and biochemical basis of behavior. In D. C. Spencer (Ed.), *Symposium on interdisciplinary research* (pp. 239-252). Madison, US: University of Wisconsin Press.

Journal Citations

- Reference in the text

  Even some psychologists have expressed the fear that "psychology is in danger of losing its status as an independent body of knowledge" (Peele, 1981, p. 807).

- Reference at the end of the text (list of references)

  Barletta Manjarres, N. (2009). Intercultural competence: Another challenge. *Profile Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 11(1), 143-158.

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American Psychological Association. (n.d.). *APAStyle.org: Electronic references.* Retrieved from http://www.apastyle.org/manual/index.aspx

Conference Presentations

Rodríguez, M., Cárdenas M. L., & Aldana, C. (2008). *The design of Alex virtual courses: Challenges and implications for ELT* [PowerPoint Slides]. Plenary Session 8 at ASCOPI Conference, Tunja, 2008.

Unpublished Master's Thesis

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Ochoa, M. (2004). *Meaning negotiation in EFL project work: How students express themselves and interact with others* (Unpublished master's thesis). Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá.

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Cabrales Vargas, M., & Cáceres Cabrales, J. A. (2013). La dinámica del currículo y la evolución de la autonomía en el aprendizaje del inglés [The dynamics

of curriculum and the evolution of autonomy in learning English as a foreign language]. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, 18(1), 45-60.

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