Non-certified ELT teachers’ narratives: A pedagogical reflection

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Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas
School of Science and Education
Masters of Arts in Applied Linguistics to the Teaching of English
Bogotá, D.C. Colombia

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Note of Acceptance

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Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude towards the participants for contributing to my teacher professional development. Their experiences have taught me a lot and have contributed to what I feel I am now. I so much admire their total commitment to their teaching and the caring they demonstrate towards their students.
Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my son Joshua who has come to my life to help me understand that limitations are just in one’s mind. Sometimes it was just the two of us against the odds; you were there with me, smiling and demanding all my attention and love, but also making me stronger and wiser with your so pure baby heart.
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Abstract

This thesis presents a narrative study that looks into the experiences of two non-certified ELT teachers working in elementary public schools in order to give account of how they understand their teaching practices given the particularities of their educational contexts. The study was conducted in Bogotá, Colombia. Data was collected through narrative interviews, which were then transcribed and analyzed in order to answer the research question. The analysis was addressed from a thematic content analysis approach. Results point out that the participants of this study understand their practices as a sort of inevitable challenge. Such challenge was divided into three categories: emotions that arise when teaching English, teaching the subject, and interest in improving. These categories suggest that we need to understand teachers’ emotions as a fundamental part of their knowledge and their professional development. Moreover, their teaching experiences have taken them to get involved in professional development courses and sessions as they demonstrate their interest in their students’ learning process. However, their stories also show that the language policy related to bilingualism in Colombia needs to be revised in the light of teachers’ experiences in the classroom. Finally, the study suggests that more research action is needed in regards to non-certified ELT teachers in elementary school.

Key words: Teacher knowledge, teacher professional development, narratives.
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Chapter I

Statement of the Problem

Introduction

This chapter describes my interest in the experiences of two public elementary school teachers who participated in an English course program, and who also teach English in primary schools, without having studied for actually being English teachers. My concern is focused on how these teachers comprehend their own practices from a narrative perspective, considering that their realities – teaching a foreign language even when not being certified – may be similar to that of other elementary school teachers across the country (See Chapters III and IV); their stories may then guide us in having a better understanding of the reality of English teaching in Colombia.

Some local studies (e.g. Maturana, 2011; Vera & Delgado, 2014) and news reports have remarked upon the reality of a bilingual policy in the country and its limited results, which seems to be related to the research participants’ realities in regards to the teaching of English. For instance, in an article from Vanguardia, Martinez (2012) reports that in many public schools in Bucaramanga, English classes are taught by teachers who are not English graduates; also, even though the Ministry of Education (MEN by its acronym in Spanish) has given support for teacher training, that does not guarantee an ideal English teaching and learning process.

In another article from El País newspaper, Mera (2013) explains that the English level of teachers in Cali and El Valle is rather basic, and it is evident that there is a need to offer more training courses so that they can be competent enough in their practices is evident. In that regard, the MEN asseverates that they continue to work on the improvement of teachers’ English level
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(Lizarazo, 2015 in El Tiempo).

A way to approach these teachers’ realities – that inevitably occur within the framework a language policy – is through listening to their stories. Stories or narratives lead us to understand people’s experiences (Creswell, 2013) and they are valuable data in narrative inquiry (See Chapter III). Connelly and Clandinin (2006) remark upon the use of narrative inquiry as a methodology that involves valuing people’s experiences as an object of study. As for analyzing people’s experiences, Polkinghorne (1995) points out that one as a researcher may either proceed on narrative analysis or analysis of narratives (See Chapter III). To that extent, this study conducts an analysis of teachers’ narratives.

In working with teachers’ experiences, Barkhuizen (2014) suggests that the use of narratives allows us to have a better perspective of teachers’ professional development processes and teaching practices. The use of narratives can also contribute to understanding teachers’ construction of knowledge (Beattie, 2000) originated from their experiences.

Thus, firstly, in a general way this chapter outlines how I met the participants enrolled in an English course program offered to public school teachers, and how I developed an interest in their stories, which implies a situational analysis pertaining the background of the participants and their teaching context. Then the chapter addresses the research question and the corresponding objectives, and I conclude with arguments about why the issue presented here is pertinent and worth researching about.

**Situational Analysis**

In 2014, the MEN established the National English Program goals for 2015-2025, as a way to give continuity to what has been done in the last decade. Within the proposal, the MEN has established the training of 125,000 elementary school teachers – in charge of teaching
English as a Foreign Language (MEN, 2014), as it has also been done in previous years.

Building on that basis, Secretaría de Educación del Distrito de Bogotá (SED) has been developing strategies for what is called *Fortalecimiento del inglés* in which they have thought of strategies for the improvement in the teaching – learning process of a second language for teachers and students from public schools. Thus, SED has made inter-administrative agreements with universities from the city, in order to train and certify teachers in B2 – according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) –, and provide them with the language knowledge and pedagogical and instructional strategies for teaching the language (MEN, 2013).

That is how in 2014, I was hired as an English teacher for levels A1 to A2 – within the framework of that inter-administrative agreement –, and I was assigned a group of 25 teachers – 16 women and 9 men – from different public schools that were in charge of teaching English at different levels, but were considered not to speak English or did speak it but needed to improve their level. The participant teachers work at different schools from localities such as Bosa, Ciudad Bolívar, Engativá, Kennedy, Puente Aranda, San Cristóbal, Suba, Tunjuelito, Usaquén and Usme. All of them work in the morning shift. At the beginning of the course, students took an informal diagnostic test provided by the language institute from Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, ILUD, to see how much they knew about the target language, and the results pointed that they were to take level A1, although some of them were more advanced than others (See Appendix A). The course program lasted around 8 months. During that time, many teachers dropped out because of personal and job-related issues; thus by the end of the course there were only ten students.

During the course the teachers that faced more difficulties were the ones teaching in
primary school. However, they were always very enthusiastic and eager to learn. Their improvement was evident so most of them were able to catch up with the others. Thus, I got interested in this group of teachers mainly, not only because I saw they had difficulties at the beginning, but because in very informal conversations during the course, some of those teachers shared their experiences with me and those comments were valuable since they were included in my personal journal for the program. I could get to know that they were professionals of other areas of education, except for only one student who got a bachelor’s degree in Philology and Languages, but felt she was not good enough at English. Some of their comments were “teacher, es que a veces es difícil enseñar si uno no sabe el idioma” (teacher, it is sometimes difficult to teach if one does not know the language); “es que a uno le toca enseñar casi todas las materias incluyendo inglés, y entonces uno se defiende con lo poquito que sabe” (we have to teach most of the subjects including English, and we do what we can with the little things we know); “Teacher, es que yo no aproveché inglés cuando era más joven, y ahora es una obligación aprenderlo porque ¿cómo hace uno?” (Teacher, I didn’t take advantage of English when I was younger, and now it is mandatory to learn it, because what can we do?). Thus, I felt these comments were bringing up the issue of teacher knowledge and development in the current context of a bilingual language policy that is determined to have teachers learn English (See Chapters II and IV).

At the end of my course I had a conversation with the teachers and expressed my interest in their experiences, and in the end two of them agreed to share more of their experiences with me. They agreed on telling me their English teaching stories and on the possibilities of sharing them not only with me but with other colleagues who may feel identified with them.

As much as the participant teachers in this research let us know about their realities, other teachers may find themselves struggling with the issue of teaching a foreign language.
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Being that the case, I believe that a way of having a more global view of what goes on with English language teaching (ELT) in Colombia is by reaching stories from those teachers working in public schools who have plenty of experiences to share about how they understand the ease or difficulty of their own pedagogical practices. In narrating a story – about certain life events such as those embedded in teaching a language – there is an evident perception of the world, and that narration conveys meaning, not at the end but throughout the whole story (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000).

**Research question**

Bearing in mind this concern, the question and objective that guide this study are

- How do non-certified ELT teachers in primary school comprehend their own pedagogical practices in teaching English as a Foreign Language from a narrative perspective?

**Research objective**

- To explore how non-certified ELT teachers in primary school comprehend their own pedagogical practices in TEFL through narratives.

**Justification**

The issue stated in this proposal is pertinent in the sense that it can contribute to the discussion on the implications that bring hiring non-certified ELT teachers for English teaching in public primary schools. It is an issue that still needs to be more explored and even more when it comes to having teachers participating and stating their voices in order to expand the understanding of their pedagogical practices, which may also contribute to the field of Teacher Education and Development.

Besides, the use of narratives allows not only researchers to understand teachers’ realities, but teachers themselves to reflect upon their own narratives and to seek for alternatives to solve
and deal with those things that may be seen as obstacles at the beginning, but that can lead to solutions and new ways of doing.

Finally, this proposal is related to Teacher Education since it deals directly with teachers. It suggests a need for teachers to reflect upon their practices in teaching English. This at the same time can be addressed as Teacher Development. Diaz-Maggioli (2003) and Richards and Farrell (2005), define Teacher Development as an evolutionary process that involves reflection and at the same time seeks to facilitate teachers’ comprehension of themselves and their own teaching practices (as cited in Cárdenas, González & Álvarez, 2010, p. 54).

Certainly, conducting this research is an exercise that not only contributes to my personal professional development, but also to the field of Applied Linguistics itself and this Master’s program research line on *Processes of Teacher Education and Development*; the objective of the line is to provide understanding on the social practices of educational contexts that need to be explored in order to bring equity to educational practices.

Thus, one way of contributing to that objective is by means of narratives. Narratives allow to analyze the practices of others and with the others, thus providing insights on the importance of going beyond what we know as reality. It is then necessary to inquire into teachers’ everyday practices as a paramount necessity in our country, especially in public school contexts in which sometimes reality may appear harder than in any other educational contexts.
Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

This study attempts to explore how non-EFL certified teachers in primary school comprehend their own pedagogical practices in TEFL through narratives. Having a narrative approach to research, which is known as Narrative inquiry, means recognizing the worth of stories – narratives – in helping us to learn from and about others’ experiences. Connelly and Clandinin (2006) regard the importance of telling stories as “a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful” (p. 375). In that sense, Narrative inquiry brings “new meaning and significance to the work of teachers within their own professional landscapes” (Johnson & Golombek, 2002, p.4) and it allows to reproduce teachers’ voices which might have remained hidden for a larger community (e.g. the academic community) (Trahar, 2013; Riessman, 2008).

Johnson and Golombek (2002) advocate for narratives as a way of seeing the world, and that is why narrative inquiry may be regarded as both a method and object of study (See also Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007). They also argue that teachers’ narratives per se are attached to the sociocultural and sociohistorical contexts in which they are developed, and they “embody emotions such as frustration, fear, anger, and joy, and they center on the caring emotions and actions of trust, dialogue, feelings, and responding […] that permeate the activity of teaching” (p. 5). Then Gloria and Mary’s narratives may inform the ELT teaching community about who they are, what characterizes their contexts, what they feel in term of teaching a foreign language, how such act traverses what they are and vice versa, etc.

I believe that Gloria and Mary’s stories might be better understood when considering the constructs – theoretical literature and research – of teacher knowledge, teacher professional
development (TPD), and narratives themselves, which may be seen as intertwined at certain point in the analysis of their stories.

Thus, in this chapter, teacher knowledge theory is presented from the perspective of Shulman (1986, 1987), Wallace (1991), and Freeman and Johnson (1998) whose models coincide in the importance of reflection in the acquisition and development of teacher knowledge. The role of the emotional dimension in teacher knowledge is also a growing discussion that is considered in more recent studies as well as the need of conceiving teachers as “adaptive experts” (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008) due to the constant social, political and historical changes in society. There is also a review of local research in Colombia related to pre-service (Cárdenas & Suárez, 2009; Fandiño, 2013) and in-service teachers (Álvarez, 2009; Macías, 2013) in which the tendency is to point out how teachers acknowledge the different forms of knowledge and how such knowledge is expanded throughout everyday practice.

Regarding teacher professional development, it is presented from the perspectives of Richards and Farrell (2005), Díaz-Maggioli (2004, 2012), and Hardy (2012) who acknowledge reflection as fundamental for a professional development process in which teachers may become agents of change in their different social contexts. There is also a review of local research in Colombia and an article by Avalos (2011) presenting a broad review of the tendency in TPD research at an international level. Local research is inclined towards knowing about EFL teachers’ professional development and their teaching realities; however, there is also research addressing the case of elementary school teachers who do not necessarily hold studies in English Language Teaching.

Finally, there is the construct of narratives which is understood as a way of understanding teaching practices and experiences (Creswell, 2006; Barkhuizen, 2014) in the sense that they
consider the past and make sense for the future (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, as cited in Shi, 2002). Likewise, narratives become a way of constructing knowledge (Beattie, 2000). It is also seen how narratives are illustrated in research works that analyze teachers’ experiences in relation to the complexities of teaching contexts and the enhancement of teacher development.

At the beginning of each construct there is a map - from my authorship - that also summarizes the main ideas that are found in the text.
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Figure 1.
Teacher knowledge

What teachers need to know and where such knowledge generates from is at the core of teacher education and finding a definition for teacher knowledge is significant as it leads teachers to “improve the quality of their practice” and teacher development programs to “meet the standards for excellence in education” (Pineda, 2002, p. 11). Bearing that in mind, understanding the relationship between the concepts of content and pedagogical content knowledge is key as these have historically been of great interest and discussion in teacher education (Grant, 2008) as forms of teacher knowledge. Thus, content knowledge refers to subject matter knowledge itself (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Grossman, Wilson & Shulman, 1989), how this can be organized in different ways, and what makes it legitimate; in other words,

The teacher need not only understand *that* something is so; the teacher must further understand *why* it is so, on what grounds its warrant can be asserted, and under what circumstances our belief in its justification can be weakened or even denied (Shulman, 1986, p.9).

For its part, pedagogical content knowledge “represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction” (Shulman, 1987, p.8).

Nonetheless, teacher knowledge includes other forms such as curriculum knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, and knowledge of educational contexts and educational ends (Shulman, 1986, 1987). In a more detailed way, McDiarmid and Clevenger-Bright (2008) list these other aspects as “educational foundations (multicultural as well as historical, philosophical, sociological, and psychological), policy context, diverse learners
(including those with special needs) and their cultures, technology, child and adolescent
development, group processes and dynamics, theories of learning, motivation, assessment” (p. 134). In considering these forms of knowledge, Shulman (1987) claims that the major sources of
teacher knowledge are scholarship in content disciplines, educational materials and structures,
formal educational scholarship, and the wisdom of practice. These last two sources are of great
importance as the first one refers to the body of literature based on the understanding of teaching,
learning and human development in education through research that is either generic or content -
specific. The wisdom of practice concerns the principles that are born in the exercise of teaching
and on this Shulman suggests that “One of the more important tasks for the research community
is to work with practitioners to develop codified representations of the practical pedagogical
wisdom of able teachers” (p. 11).

Another important proposal for teacher knowledge is made by Wallace (1991) who
presents a model for teacher education called the “reflective model” that considers two kinds of
teacher knowledge development: received knowledge and experiential knowledge and it is based
on a continuous reflection and interpretation of theory and practice. Received knowledge refers to
language teaching theories, research findings and skills that a teacher needs to know, while
experiential knowledge is developed throughout practice - either in action or by observation - and
entails reflection. Wallace (1991) argues about the need of finding a steady relationship between
the two kinds of knowledge; thereby his model implies acquiring theoretical constructs while
being student-teachers (pre-training), becoming aware of the relationship of such received
knowledge in the light of classroom experiences (professional education), and making informed
decisions that are the result of professional development processes (professional competence).
Freeman and Johnson (1998) also address the issue of teacher knowledge – in language teacher education – by making a call to redefine the concept of knowledge base as it must be understood as a contextualized process “that focuses on the activity of teaching itself -who does it, where it is done, and how it is done” (p. 405). Thus, they posit three interrelated domains at the core of teacher knowledge base: (a) the nature of the teacher-learner; (b) the social context; and (c) the pedagogical thinking process which includes an understanding of the subject matter and the content, and language learning.

The first domain has to do with how teachers learn to teach and all the factors influencing such process - prior knowledge, beliefs, teaching experiences, teacher education, etc. The second one argues about the need of examining the sociocultural contexts in which teacher learning takes place, that is to say, schools and schooling, being schools the framework and schooling the process that becomes meaningful throughout time. And the third domain refers to the act of teaching itself in which the authors state a difference between content - teachers’ and students’ perceptions of what is being taught - and subject matter - the disciplinary perception -. This proposal urges teachers to view each domain as part of the other two and to try to understand their own process as such comprehension is “the wellspring of reflective practice, classroom inquiry, and ongoing professional development” (Stevick, 1998, as cited in Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 412).

From a wider perspective, these models of teacher knowledge from the last decades are not distant from one another in the sense that they have been advocating for the figure of a teacher who is oriented towards reflection and cares more about his own professional development. Hence, the idea of teacher knowledge most assuredly will continue to expand and
even change, as Grant (2008) affirms that what teachers need to know is a debate that elaborates around “changing social, economic and political agendas” (p. 129).

In this regard, McDiarmid and Clevenger-Bright (2008) also suggest that what teachers need to know is the product of social, political and historical negotiations, and the ideal of what must or must not be done shapes the way we understand ourselves and our actions as teachers. However, teacher knowledge is also being created in a constant flux from past and present experiences and this requires for them to become adaptive experts which “consists both in establishing routines and being prepared to adapt to specific circumstances that change rapidly and often unpredictably” (p. 146). Let us include the fact that constant changes now imply the need for teachers to deal with diverse learners and their cultures. On this matter, Howard and Aleman (2008) point out that subject matter knowledge is not enough when it comes to having diverse classrooms that demand from teachers to have a pedagogical content knowledge supported by a solid understanding of the role of culture and context in the complexity of human development. They suggest that teacher education programs need to be concerned about teachers being prepared for dealing with diverse educational contexts. It is then argued that having adaptive experts may take place if the educational community becomes aware of that and understands that teachers need to be provided with the right time and support for learning opportunities in their professional development (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008).

In Colombia, local research has also tried to document how teacher knowledge is understood and addressed in regards to the teaching of English both with pre-service and in-service teachers. Among recent works there is the study of Cárdenas and Suárez (2009) who gathered voices from five pre-service teachers about where their knowledge base comes from and what elements constitute it. Their findings show that the participants consider their knowledge
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base originates from theory - academic readings - that has helped them construct their visions about teaching; such knowledge also comes from what they have learned from peers and teachers, and from the practicum as such that has helped them to be aware of students’ needs and classroom management. In regards to the elements that constitute knowledge base, the researchers found that participants highlight content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and knowledge of the learners as components that every language teacher must have in mind. One more aspect that they found as crosscutting teacher knowledge is the teacher’s personality which poses teachers as “individuals with specific ways of feeling, behaving, and perceiving or conceptualizing the world they live in, and it is according to these patterns that they rule their actions in the classroom” (p. 127); thus, the participants pointed out that values such as respect, responsibility, and honesty are qualities that professional teachers should have.

For his part, Álvarez (2009) conducted a study for seven months in Bogotá which focused on how five in-service teachers have constructed their knowledge and what it is composed of. The researchers found that teachers’ knowledge base is a continuous process of construction that is firstly nourished by people - such as former teachers - and personal experiences that teachers have as learners and educators. Thus, new experiences contribute to produce changes in the knowledge base. However, knowledge base is also shaped by the theory teachers have learned in a formal context and how this is applied to their teaching scenario. In regards to the components of knowledge base, the researcher found that teachers understand content knowledge - which they regard as language proficiency -, pedagogical knowledge and knowledge about their role - as providers of knowledge and as agents of change -, their students and the teaching context as vital elements in the process of knowledge construction. The study concludes that teachers’ knowledge base must be understood from a broader perspective in which the learning and teaching
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experiences of teachers be considered within a given sociocultural context. He also suggests the need of education programs to reconsider the construction of teacher knowledge based on teachers’ needs and problems faced in their particular teaching contexts.

Focusing again on pre-service EFL teachers, Fandiño (2013) makes a review of models about teacher knowledge and about how teacher knowledge has been addressed in Colombia and argues about the need for a more complete framework for teacher education. In regards to models of teacher knowledge, he poses that the different approaches have tried to guide teachers in the production and development of subject matter, pedagogy, knowledge of the learners and the context, etcetera. Moreover, these models suggest that reflecting on teaching practices and decisions in the classroom is paramount in the construction of knowledge. As for Colombian teaching programs in EFL - English as a foreign language -, the researcher’s review demonstrates that due to the socioculturally diverse teaching contexts that influence teacher knowledge, it is hard to propose a single model; however, Fandiño proposes that the strengthening of systematic research in English teaching programs for pre-service teachers may lead to a conceptualization of knowledge construction in a more critical way considering teachers’ realities. Furthermore, the researcher concludes that proposing new agendas for professional development may contribute to expanding teacher knowledge in practice.

Finally, another work that is worth mentioning is the research conducted by Macías (2013), in which he brought together teacher educators and novice teachers in order to know their perceptions on what the sources of their pedagogical knowledge were and how these were approached in a teaching education program, under the premise that teachers’ pedagogical knowledge is generated from sources such as “being learners and observers, from professional teacher education and training, from teaching experience, from their “wisdom of practice”
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(Shulman, 1987), and from their engagement in research” (p. 101). His findings point out that there is awareness about the sources of pedagogical knowledge and participants expressed such knowledge comes from their learning experience in basic and general education, the language teacher education program they were enrolled in, their teaching experience and the enrollment in classroom research. However, novice teachers in this study attribute their pedagogical knowledge mostly to method courses and their teaching experience. It was also evidenced that observing other experienced school teachers, conducting research, and promoting teachers’ implicit theories of teaching through reflective teaching are sources of knowledge that need to be more emphasized in the curriculum. Thus, the researcher suggests that teacher education programs need to help pre-service teachers to recognize the different sources of knowledge that influence their teaching and also provide them with opportunities to be more exposed to real school settings. Furthermore, research and reflection are paramount to guide teachers into the construction of their practical knowledge.

In sum, these research works are based on the debate about the forms of knowledge that a teacher must possess when facing the act of teaching, and also, how such knowledge gets to broaden throughout the everyday teaching practices, which implies a long-life process. Furthermore, the models presented in this construct illustrate how the idea of what teachers need to know has evolved as to recognize that reflection is significant in teacher development and in the comprehension of how each form of knowledge complement one another.

However, it is important to highlight that there is still a need to consider the role of teachers as knowledge construction agents and not as mere receivers of sanctioned knowledge (e.g. the discussion about what teachers should know). As for generating the knowledge that is needed to understand and develop pedagogical practices, Johnson and Golombek (2002) explain
how some teacher education programs and schools continue to marginalize teachers in telling them “what they should know and how they should use that knowledge” (p.1). Yet, once importance is placed on teachers generating knowledge based on their experiences and practices, transformation may emerge as the meaning of educational change relates to change in practice” (Piñeros & Quintero, 2006, p. 185).

At this point, it is also important to realize that the debate about teacher knowledge continues to expand as to also have a deeper comprehension of the emotional dimension as a key aspect in knowledge. In this regard, emotions have been addressed from the perspective of teacher identity (Zembylas, 2005) as teaching and learning are practices that imply cognition, but also emotions (Hargreaves, 1998). Thus, Zembylas (2007) argues about the need of interrelating pedagogical content knowledge and emotional knowledge in teaching and learning as “teachers must be able to connect their emotional understanding with what they know about subject matter, pedagogy, school discourses, personal histories, and curriculum” (p. 364). Such emotional knowledge occurs within an emotional ecology in which there are connections that obey to individual, relational, and socio-political planes as it is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planes</th>
<th>Types of emotional knowledge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual</strong></td>
<td>Emotional connections to the subject matter; attitudes and beliefs about learning and teaching; educational vision and philosophy; emotional self-awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relational</strong></td>
<td>Emotional affiliations with students; students’ own emotional experiences; caring; empathy; classroom emotional climate; knowledge of students’ emotions; social–emotional interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-political</strong></td>
<td>Emotional knowledge of the institutional/cultural context (power relations); emotional understanding of curricular deliberations; emotional politics of pedagogies and subject matter discourses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Planes of emotional ecology and types of emotional knowledge (Taken from Zembylas, 2007, p. 358)*
Considering all these perspectives of teacher knowledge also becomes a challenge for teacher education programs as they are in great part responsible for preparing teachers, and that implies going beyond conventional paradigms in which many language teacher education programs merely “provide teachers with a codified body of knowledge about language, language learning, and language teaching” (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 402). This construct of teacher knowledge may provide us with underlying insights for a better comprehension of the next construct, teacher professional development.
Non-certified ELT teachers' narratives: A pedagogical reflection

Figure 2.
Teacher professional development

TPD can be understood as long-term professional growth, which implies a reflection process on the different dimensions that build teachers’ practices. Nonetheless, even though teacher development includes the reflection of practices, beliefs, values, among others, individual reflection itself does not contribute to the understanding of other important aspects such as subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical expertise. Thus, besides individual reflection, it is also important to explore new trends and theories in a critical way (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Díaz-Maggioli (2004, 2012) also presents his idea of teacher development as all the activities either pre-service or in-service teachers enroll in, which imply professional learning in pursuit of their students’ learning process. Such development becomes tangible through teacher training or teacher education, being teacher training the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary to have an effective performance in the classroom, and teacher education a process that involves reflection and interaction in order to become “adaptive experts”, that is to say “professionals who are well grounded in their area of expertise and who can use their knowledge, skills and dispositions to adapt to the changes the profession presents” (p. 7).

Furthermore, Hardy (2012) proposes an extensive concept of TPD as policy, research, and practice. This means that TPD is a multi-faceted reflexive social practice which is situated in a determined socio-political context; it does not just occur inside teachers’ minds but it goes from individuals to groups as to make active decisions based on their educational or teaching settings. Hardy (2012) takes on Bourdieu’s social theory to argue that TPD is not an individualistic decontextualized practice of training teachers by offering them workshops or courses so they can enact policies or programs established by the government; it is rather “the relationship between
educators and the conditions under which they work which serves as the primary unit of analysis” (p. 2) and that influence how professional development is endeavored.

These three ideas coincide in the importance of reflection as a pivotal part of TPD, not only as a process that occurs and remains in the individual sphere but as something that moves towards a collective sphere to produce changes. Such reflection occurs in the light of the educational context of teachers and this should be considered fundamental in the implementation of educational language policies. Consequently, it is important to take a look at the constant research - both national and international - that illustrates the advances that have been made in TPD always seeking to improve teachers’ practices and students’ learning process.

Hence, a study that is worth starting with is the work of Avalos (2011), who makes an international literature review about publications on TPD throughout the last decade. In a general way, the author classifies the themes of the articles into professional learning, mediations through facilitation and collaboration, conditions and factors influencing professional development (learning and change), effectiveness of professional development, and specific areas and issues. These studies use different methods such as narrative accounts, discourse and content analysis, ethnography, case studies, action research, etc. Then, she selects nine articles that illustrate those thematic areas and that take place in different geographical regions and cultures. These nine studies are also classified into three main thematic areas: the learning of practicing teachers, the embedded or situated nature of teacher professional learning and development, and the role of mediations in the quality of their learning.

Avalos (2011) suggests that the essence of TPD is teacher learning and everything that it implies to facilitate students’ learning, as well. However, it is not to be taken as a static process, as we need to consider all the variables that affect it, that is to say, teachers’ involvement -
willingness to participate - , school cultures, instruments used for development, among others. The researcher also points out that there have been advances in the field, in the sense that TPD now takes into account more aspects of teachers’ experiences as they are subjects and objects of learning. Also, even though each country or community has particular factors that influence the learning needs of teachers and the need of engaging in professional development, the studies show there is uniformity in the way models of teacher development are being constructed; for instance, it was evidenced that longer interventions with teachers have better results on their professional development as well as the combination of different tools for learning and reflection.

Another aspect that was significant in the review was teacher co-learning whose importance lies in the fact that teachers’ informal exchanges have educational goals such as observation and peer feedback. Along with co-learning there is the practice of partnerships between researchers working with teachers as co-researchers in order to change the traditional gap between scholars and teachers in practice. Finally, the researcher found that studies pertaining to the effects of policies that relate to standardized examinations, demonstrate that these try to make teachers - especially those working in difficult contexts - produce quick results expected by the education systems.

From this researcher’s findings, it is to be said that TPD is an area that needs to keep in mind teachers’ backgrounds and constant changes in the communities they belong to. Thus, the need of doing research in the field is paramount, not only by studying who teachers are and how they teach or learn, but also getting them involved in research as to create a degree of awareness of their own process and empower them to change anything that is needed in their teaching contexts. From the findings, one aspect that becomes salient is that of the implementation of policies that intend to have teachers produce quick results in quite a short time. Although this
research work does not intend to focus on policy issues as such, it is rather an inevitable aspect that is present from the beginning, as it is precisely because of a language policy that the participants of this research and I met in the context of an English course (See Chapter I). The need for having quick results in order to meet educational goals is then a cross-cutting issue to some regions or countries and it has already been studied in Colombia (González, 2007; Usma, 2009).

Now, in order to have an understanding about in-service EFL teachers’ professional development in the Colombian context, Cárdenas, González and Álvarez (2010) characterize some of the concepts that are at the heart of EFL TPD based on research from different scholars: teaching objectives, the teacher’s role, teacher’s learning, teacher development strategies, and in-service teachers’ professional development. They also present an analysis of professional development models proposed by Richards and Farrell (2005) and James (2001) as they consider these models are suitable for our context. They also highlight some of the most important appreciations about TPD in Colombia, considering local research publications from the last twenty years. In such a way, the researchers present a literature review that in sum tries to propose strategies for the strengthening of teacher education in the country. Rather than a classification of topics on professional development research, the authors present research works that revolve around one single aspect and it is the need to define the constituent parts of teacher education in order for teachers to have a more active role of researchers and academic leaders in their professional practice.

Thus, on the one hand, we can find reflection in the pursuit of having an inquisitive conscience for making right decisions in a determined school setting and considering theory and experience in an integrated way; and there is also the importance of prioritizing teachers’ needs
and expectations in regards to a continuous process of professional development, considering the socio-cultural context. On the other hand, research shows that having teacher educators who have a good command of the target language and promote linguistic skills, and are expert in doing research, may guide them in the implementation of research in their own school settings. This need of including research as a key element for any professional development program is something that has been worked on in the last few years in Colombia, and it aims at the construction of local knowledge, keeping in mind post-structuralist theories of language and learning. Many of those research works illustrate efforts to document the reality of language teachers both in public and private schools in regards to TPD in the country.

Among those efforts, we can find González, Montoya and Sierra (2002) who conducted research in Medellín, addressing the needs manifested by a group of public and private school teachers in terms of their roles as workers, instructors and learners. Such needs show the difficult work teachers have in some schools and the necessity to consider their voices for having professional development programs that can fulfill what teachers claim to be important in the educational work, and not only to consider the role of teachers as instructors. For instance, in the domain of teachers as learners, the researchers specify that the participants manifest a need for having better language proficiency, developing research skills and having reflective teaching, and even accessing graduate studies. It is evident that teachers manifest a need for learning, and that aspect needs to be expanded having in mind that providing teachers with more complete professional development programs, can empower them to be agents of change in workplaces.

As a way to give continuity to this research process on TPD, González (2003) presents findings on the voices of sixty EFL teachers in Medellín about what they consider to be the main agents that provide them with professional development opportunities: universities - especially
public institutions because of the affordability - professional conferences, and publishers’ sessions. The author argues that none of these alternatives fully contribute to teachers’ growth as there is a need for TPD programs to value teachers’ knowledge, be practical, promote language acquisition and practice, involve local experts and teachers in researching about classroom practices and teachers’ realities, and have a collaborative nexus among institutions.

Now, focusing more on teacher educators, González and Quinchía (2003) report on the testimonies of thirty-one teachers from private and public schools about the ideal characteristics of an EFL teacher educator. Their findings show that teachers have a high ideal of what it takes to be a teacher educator as he must have knowledge of teachers’ local realities, have a good command of the target language, be an experienced EFL teacher, and be involved in doing research. What is significant in the findings is the fact that teachers do not only claim for educators who have knowledge about the language, because even though it is an essential aspect, they give great importance to educators who can bring their background knowledge and insights that are valuable to accompany teacher learners in the process of making sense of theory and practice.

González (2007, 2009) has continued researching about professional development of EFL teachers in Colombia as to critically analyze national policies of English-Spanish bilingualism in the country and imposed models of education and certifications - such as ICELT and TKT - that the researcher understands as forms of standardizing, excluding, and businessificate TPD of EFL teachers. Her conclusions point out the need for implementing new models of professional development in which local knowledge be recognized by policy makers. All these studies make an invitation to reflect upon the way professional development in Colombia has been managed in relation to the increasing need of English learning; it seems there has been a top-down approach
“in which something is done to the teachers rather than with them” (Mora, Trejo & Roux, 2014, p.50).

Another initiative that is of great value in TPD in Colombia is the work of Cárdenas (2003) on leading in-service courses for EFL teachers at Universidad Nacional. Such initiatives motivate teachers to implement action research in their classrooms and share the findings of their realities in journals in order to strengthen academic communities. Thus, in one of her research studies, Cárdenas (2003) analyzes the experiences of teachers when working on the writing of their research. The researcher suggests that teachers require particular criteria when working on their writing before being published, as writing and publishing is an important part in the process of TPD and classroom research. Also, she argues that the sense of doing research and then writing lies in the fact that it may be shared with others in order to exchange experiences, reflections, innovations, etc.

Furthermore, Cárdenas (2004) conducted a case study with thirty-nine EFL teachers from Bogotá - participating in professional development courses at Universidad Nacional- to find out about the nature of their research works, the impact these had at their workplaces, and their perceptions about their own roles as teacher-researchers. The researcher highlights that TPD programs are no longer interested in just training teachers but they are oriented towards reflection through research processes that show interest in classroom experiences, and collaborative work among teachers. Also, she points out the importance of action research as one of the main components in the courses the participants were involved in. The findings demonstrate that doing research strengthens teaching practices and leads teacher researchers to examine and question what they do from a different perspective, and be agents of change. Also, the researcher affirms that even though teacher researchers manifest they have tensions because of working conditions
at school and factors such as anxiety, there is still the desire of continuing doing research and having spaces of individual and collective reflection.

The works presented so far demonstrate how much has been done in order to establish a strong basis of teacher professional development in Colombia that does not promote teacher training under foreign models of teaching, but that leads to a research foundation that gives space to local knowledge based on teachers’ realities. Nonetheless, the works presented are based on EFL teachers who hold studies on the teaching of English and mostly teach in public high-schools or private institutions. Thereby, it is also paramount to look through research projects that focus their attention on elementary school teachers who may share similar needs to other EFL teachers, yet they might face very particular situations in their practices; a way to understand these practices is through the narrative lens which is addressed in this chapter, too (See third construct).

In that regard, we can find the work of Cadavid, McNulty, and Quinchía (2004) who present an ethnographic study with 12 elementary school teachers from public schools in order to describe teachers’ realities and then propose a professional development course through action research. First, they address the issue of educational language policies in the country as an aspect that has led to the inclusion of English teaching in elementary school curriculums, and therefore, the need of elementary school teachers to know how to teach the subject. In this regards, there has been support from the government as they recognize the need of including English in elementary school curriculums and possibilities to learn the language and how to teach it have been offered. However, teachers go through the difficult task of teaching the language as they lack subject matter knowledge.
Thus, the researchers characterize most of the teachers holding Bachelor degrees in Education in areas and even postgraduate studies. Only three of their participants studied to be English teachers, but they did not have enough preparation on teaching young students. They found that classes are based on presentation, practice, memorization, and part of the class time is employed in disciplinary issues and organization. This implies that the use of Spanish and translation play an important role and classes are mainly focused on vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. Most teachers either do not count on enough resources or do not make full use of them, and teachers are the main models and class controllers. Conclusions on this study point out the need of reflecting on educational processes and language policies in Colombia from the perspective of classroom realities. Teachers also need to become reflective on their practices so that they can be agents of change.

In order to continue with their proposal, McNulty and Quinchía (2007) implemented a professional development program aimed at target language development, methodology and evaluation with a group of thirteen teachers who had similar characteristics to the ones who participated in the previous study. They conclude that implementing this course has motivated teachers to work on the improvement of EFL teaching and learning in their school contexts, which needs to be supported by continuous research and support from educational policies.

Through the research works presented (Avalos, 2011; Cárdenas, González & Álvarez, 2010; González, Montoya & Sierra, 2002; González, 2003; González & Quinchía, 2003; González, 2007, 2009; Cárdenas, 2003, 2004; Cadavid, McNulty & Quinchía 2004, 2007), it can be concluded that reflection given through research in the school context is fundamental in TPD to produce changes. Moreover, the involvement of teachers in doing research should no longer be an option, but an element that is always present as it helps to document and understand what
happens with language policies at a micro-level in every teacher's classroom and its particularities. Thus, the image of the teacher goes from mere teaching a subject to being a teacher-researcher that is aware of all aspects influencing the teaching of such subject. It should also be said that the purpose of doing research must be strongly based on the principle of sharing knowledge with other teachers and thereby co-constructing knowledge.

In addition, TPD programs should be designed based on the needs of teachers and the communities they belong to in order to develop local knowledge based on local realities and supported by post-structuralist theories of teaching and learning. In turn, this will nourish more local models of TPD.

Regarding elementary school teachers, they are in more disadvantage compared to high-school EFL teachers. Therefore, more proposals are needed to implement programs aimed at this population as even though some researchers have been developing projects, there is still a lot to be done and it may be supported by the realities of the participants in this research work.

Let us now focus on the following construct that has to do with narratives as a way in which we can generate awareness about teachers’ practices and realities assuming that “[h]uman life has always been deeply embedded in a web of narratives which in turn allow individuals, communities, cultures and nations to express who they are, where they have been, how they have lived and what they aspire to” (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p.6).
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Figure 3.
Narratives

There may be several ways of understanding teachers’ experiences; however, one of those ways is by means of narrative accounts because they allow teachers to talk about their professional development and their practices (Barkhuizen, 2014). It seems that when teachers use narrative accounts, they are able to express their past and present concerns. These narratives also allow teachers to reflect upon their own practices, thus constructing new knowledge (Beattie, 2000).

According to Creswell (2006), narrative arises from those experiences lived by individuals and the analysis of the experiences told in those narratives inform the academic community so as to find meaning and make sense of what teachers go through in their everyday educational work. Similarly, Connelly and Clandinin (1988, as cited in Shi, 2002) state that narratives lead us to get insights of how we “make meaning of experience by endlessly telling and retelling stories about [our]selves that both reconfigure the past and create purpose in the future” (p.148).

When considering narrative as a way of enhancing TPD, it is paramount to reflect on the following research works that are framed in a qualitative narrative inquiry approach to understanding teachers’ experiences. Let us keep in mind that narrative studies “do not follow a lockstep approach but instead represent an informal collection of topics” (Creswell, 2006, p. 55). Likewise, Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) propose that narrative inquiry embraces narrative as both the method and phenomena of study (p.5). Thus, the following studies address the issue of teachers’ experiences in relation to teacher development and knowledge, the relationship between the self, the context, and the others, the construction of professional identity, and the motivation that emerges from experiences.
Baurain (2013) explored EFL teachers’ stories of teacher development during a graduate seminar in Literature and Language Teaching with a group of student teachers – full and part-time – in Vietnam. Baurain (2013) draws on the interrelationship between teacher development, narrative inquiry and diary studies to emphasize human experience. Through course documents, a professional diary kept by the researcher, and student portfolios, the researcher found that it is through lived experience that an authoring process is evidenced in professional development.

Thus, teacher development should not be thought of as a linear process of building skills, but as a multidimensional process that promotes praxis through experience. For the author, TPD is developed as a story – as experiences – since it implies the teacher doing something at a certain place and moment; that is to say, a character, a plot, and a setting. Those experiences are part of a narrative construction that is built in the melting process of the professional and the personal sphere, as Baurain suggests that there is a “practical impossibility of maintaining strict boundaries between the personal and the professional in teacher development in lived experience” (p. 11). Hence, it is suggested that narrative-based research should be used to explore teacher development more in depth in language education and the issues that are implied in it such as cultures, pedagogies, traditions, beliefs, values, etc., as it is through experience that knowledge is developed.

In regards to knowledge derived from experience, in her study about three EFL teachers, Mendieta (2011) characterized the narrative knowledge teachers held about language teaching and learning processes, as well as the role that knowledge plays in the constant construction and evaluation of curriculum. Through bio data surveys, concept maps, narrative interviews, among other instruments, she examined her participants’ narrative stories in regards to educational and EFL theoretical concepts. Her findings indicate that the way teachers acted revealed them as bent
towards experience, interaction, and language. That leads to consider that teachers’ knowledge of
language teaching and curriculum is individual due to their own experiences and beliefs, despite
the fact that they are members of the same teaching community. They also imply that the
knowledge teachers possess directly affect the type of decisions they make in planning and
developing their own classes, and in interpreting the curriculum that is previously set. Mendieta
highlights that “if institutions come to value teachers’ knowledge about teaching and curriculum,
we could more easily recognize how what they think, experience, and know form an integral part
of the implementation of any pre-established curriculum or curriculum as a course of study.” (pp.
104-105).

While Mendieta (2011) comes to a realization about the implications of the knowledge
teachers possess, Beattie (2000) addresses the issue of professional learning in the context of
becoming a teacher and how teacher knowledge may be developed. She presents narrative
accounts of three prospective teachers who implemented narrative inquiry, went through a
process of reflection and dialogue, and created professional knowledge based on their
experiences, feelings, and thoughts.

Beattie divides the excerpts from teachers’ narratives into three themes: creating a
professional identity: connecting the personal and the professional, creating relationships and
making new relations: learning from and with others, and creating new narratives: connecting
self, school and society. The author recognized how participants expressed frustrations,
dilemmas, failures, joys, successes, and difficulties in the process of becoming teachers and
mixing the professional and personal sphere. Their feelings were not only about the experiences
they were living inside the classroom, but rather the whole experience of growing professionally
and the active role they were to take.
The author concludes that the voices of the prospective teachers illustrate how through the processes of reflection and inquiry they question who they are, and critically choose and assign meaning to their professional lives. Most importantly, teachers’ accounts evidence that their identity as professionals “is a unique process for each prospective teacher, and that the process involves the examination and transformation of existing knowledge and the adaptation of such knowledge, skills and attitudes to the professional situations at hand.” (p. 19).

At this point, it is to be highlighted the importance of valuing and exploring teachers’ knowledge from a narrative perspective in order to understand the complexity of the teaching context in which they work, and to position teachers’ voices in professional education.

From a different angle, there is the idea of the self being connected to different spheres when talking about experiences. In this regard, Beattie, Dobson, Thornston, and Hegge (2007) developed a narrative study in teacher development that accounts for the lifelong learning practices of eight educators as the researchers intended to understand how educators create a context within which they recreate and transform not only themselves, but the way they teach through the narratives they choose. Their findings show how there is a degree of interconnectedness of the aesthetic and spiritual dimensions of participants’ ways of knowing and being. They also allow to understand that the outer and the inner sphere of the self are connected, thus the two spheres influence each other. Furthermore, they found that teacher development happens in the sense that teachers create and re-create themselves in connection with the world, and connecting the personal and the professional selves.

Similarly, Barkhuizen (2008) addresses the idea of interconnectedness in teachers’ stories or narratives. In his experience with South African teachers in the context of a university postgraduate ELT course, he developed collaborative narrative inquiry and he requested from the
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participants a series of three personal narratives, which led him to see how stories were connected. He found three levels of interconnectedness, the first one is the teacher’s story that is constructed in an immediate context as it is the classroom; the second level obeys to a stage in which teachers have less control and their experiences are influenced by regulations, policies, the school environment, among other; the final level refers to a sociopolitical context, a macro level in which the process of teaching and learning takes place. This means teachers’ practices are influenced by a context they have no control of. Barkhuizen (2008) emphasizes on the need of exploring our own contexts through narrative inquiry as the telling, re-telling and interpretation of our stories may give coherence and sense to the exercise of teaching.

Hence, it is important to reflect on the fact that teachers are undeniably bounded to other individuals and to their own contexts. Zhao and Poulson (2006) make this point valid in their study about the way Chinese EFL teachers know and understand EFL, within the frame of social changes in China. Through biographical narrative interviews and observations applied to three Chinese teachers of three different generations, the researchers constructed life stories that shed light on how teacher knowledge controlled and simultaneously empowered teachers themselves and the society they live in. The authors argue that through narrative accounts of learning and teaching biographies it is possible to get into critical and important moments in teachers’ lives and understand the background of their knowledge. Also, an intergenerational focus in the study implies how changes in society go quite fast, but there is persistence of continuity in the representation of the self.

In spite of the fact that everything varies from one individual to another, when talking about teachers’ experiences, commonalities may be found and relationships might be established among individuals sharing and experiencing things under the same community. Yet, the same
situation can be experimented in different ways depending on the individual, even when being under the same social and educational context implies sharing common aspects with others.

Narrative research on teacher development also focuses attention on the construction of professional identity through experiences. In this regard, Zacharias (2010) focuses specifically on the construction of teacher identities through the analysis of their stories. He addresses the case of 12 non-native EFL (Asian) teachers enrolled in TESOL PhD or MA programs in the University of Pennsylvania, US and their negotiations of multiple identities in order to be active members of an academic community in a foreign country. Through in-depth narrative interviews, focus groups, and documents, the researcher found that linguistic identities continue to be central in non-native English speakers’ identity construction. There is also great importance of critical pedagogies to teacher identity construction in generating a positive shift - being agents of change. The author stresses the importance of including language aspects in teacher education programs, helping non-native teachers develop their voices, and establishing positive identities through critical pedagogies, since that will strengthen their unique features and knowledge.

In that construction of identity, Schultz and Ravitch (2013) also examined the narrative writings of a group of 15 new teachers – from university and alternative certificate programs – during the course of a year. They were part of a Narrative Writing Group that sought to study how teachers construct a professional identity, and how narrative and inquiry plays an important role in teacher learning. The findings show that teachers develop professional identities in relation to moments and relationships with others, and in relation to the introspective and personal sphere. Since teaching is a professional practice, the authors suggest the need for providing more space for debating on the acquisition of a professional identity and the dimensions of professional practice, since the experience of being a new teacher is affected by
dive experiences in practice.

In a similar way, through autobiographical narratives Trejo and Mora (2014) present the trajectory of two English teachers at a university in Mexico. By means of narratives they evidenced how professional identity and agency are mediated by the social and educational context in which teachers are immersed. The researchers make emphasis on the importance of enhancing pedagogical practices and professional development through the understanding of teacher’s agency. That can be achieved through autobiographical narratives to the extent that they allow teachers to make connections and set active reflexivity between their past and present experiences. The impact of professional development in professional identity varies depending on the individual, thus professional identity may be strong from the very beginning or it may be developed throughout time. The same process is evidenced in the degree of agency that teachers display depending on their own decisions about professional development. Finally, the authors suggest the use of narratives as a way of teachers to become aware of their professional lives and be able to make connections between their past and present experiences.

The hallmark of these studies lies in the fact that identities are formed in the process of experiencing and reflecting on teaching practices themselves. This means that teachers’ identities are not developed in isolation, but in connection with inner and outer spaces, and flashes of motivation and demotivation that help to reevaluate what and who we are.

In that view, Kumazawa (2013) conducted a study into the teaching motivation of four novice secondary school EFL teachers in Japan. Through a narrative analysis of interviews, and bearing in mind the relation between self-concept and motivation, the researcher found that teachers displayed their ideal self-images as English teachers, but their current self-images demotivated them to think of achieving their images of ideal teachers. In other words, they saw a
gap between what they were and what they think they should be and would like to be. In the time of transition from student to teacher, beginning teachers often show that their self-concept is a very dynamic entity that is negotiated and reconstructed through interacting with the environment as well as through exercising the teachers’ own sense of reflexivity. The authors conclude that even though demotivation comes when facing difficult realities in the school environment and the high demands on teachers’ duties, this leads to teachers showing a degree of reflexivity in regards to their experiences as English teachers, which eventually helps to reshape self-concepts and regain their motivation.

One more piece of research that is worth mentioning is that of Hayes (2008) who used life histories to explore and examine how personal and social circumstances motivated and influenced a group of seven non-native speakers (Thai speakers) to become EFL teachers. By means of in-depth interviews the researcher analyzed teachers’ stories and what influenced directly and indirectly their choices to enroll in teaching professions. The finding suggests that teaching is socially constructed, thus negative or positive experiences in school will somehow inspire individuals to choose a teaching career. Yet, some people have an intrinsic interest for learning a language and that may lead to becoming a teacher.

In regards to sociocultural aspects, the author found that some people decide to become teachers since it is the easiest program one could access in terms of financial and immediate geographical issues. The conclusions of the study point out that teachers’ narratives evidence how diverse their experiences are, and how many factors have influenced their careers. Their stories reveal how important it is to do research on this issue since it contributes to understanding circumstances that have a great impact upon classroom practices and the realities of schooling, especially for non-native teachers of English.
In synthesis, on the one hand, the different research works help to understand that there are different ways of conducting narrative studies, and that can be evidenced in the methodology and data collection (e.g. diaries, portfolios, biodata surveys, interviews, among others). Some researchers may focus on the content or on the meaning, others may focus on both aspects, but it all depends on how the researcher himself perceives the world. Most importantly, this array of research works evidence the fact that analyzing narrative is subject to the researcher’s interpretation, as such; given that, it is fundamental to go back to the participants and share what has been thought from the accounts.

On the other hand, the works that have been presented show important features and findings in narrative studies in regards to teacher development in EFL that lead the way to continue doing research, in order to promote reflection and growth in the teaching community. However, there seems to be scarce research that addresses the issue of non-certified teachers who do not speak English, but are in charge of teaching English in primary school. That lack is not negative whatsoever; on the contrary, it becomes a great opportunity to continue exploring other angles of the vast realm of teacher development.
Chapter III

Research Design

This chapter explains the type of study proposed for this research, as well as the context and the process of how data was collected. First, the research question, objective, and type of study will be presented. Then, the context and the participants will be depicted. I will be describing in detail the instrument that I used to collect data, which helped to answer my research question.

As it was presented in Chapter I, the research question that guides this study is

- How do non-certified ELT teachers in primary school comprehend their own pedagogical practices in teaching English as a Foreign Language from a narrative perspective?

The objective that follows my question is

- To explore the way non-certified ELT teachers in primary school comprehend their own pedagogical practices in TEFL through narratives.

Since I got interested in teachers’ experiences I posed my objective as to tap into what the participants in this study consider as valuable in their experiences. Thus, I opted for a type of study that suited the purpose and I describe it in the following segment.

Type of Study

This research took the form of a qualitative interpretive study in the sense that “Qualitative research focuses on studying things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 44).

Among interpretive studies we can find the design of Narrative Research. According to Czarniawaska (2004, as cited in Creswell, 2013), Narrative as a qualitative design, understands a
narrative as a text that accounts for events or actions that are connected in time and since they “describe human action” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5), they help us to understand it. Likewise, Creswell (2013) states that narrative studies focus on a few individuals – one or two, e.g. – to gather data through their stories. Stories let us know about people’s experiences.

It is important to highlight that narrative studies allow the researcher to focus on:

- What stories are about, what was told and why, when, where, and by whom.
- Circumstances that shape the narratives and that are reflected in them.
- Language ideologies and discourses that underlie narrators’ communities and to which they may identify with (Pavlenko, 2007, as cited in Barkhuizen, 2014).

In narrative studies, data can be gathered by means of interviews and that is one of the ways in which a story or account can be elicited (Creswell, 2013); however, there is also narrative when the researcher interprets and creates a story out of the stories heard from participants, and there is also a narrative that “a reader constructs after engaging with the participant’s and investigator’s narratives” (Riessman, 2008, p. 6).

Even though narrative studies converge in their view of story as accounting for human experiences and their dynamics, Polkinghorne (1995) suggests that there are two main kinds of narrative inquiry, analysis of narratives and narrative analysis. The analysis of narratives corresponds to a paradigmatic process in which

analysis results in descriptions of themes that hold across the stories or in taxonomies of types of stories, characters or settings. In the second type, narrative analysis, researchers collect descriptions of events and happenings and synthesize or configure them by means of a plot into a story or stories […]. (p.12)

Bearing that in mind, this study corresponds to an analysis of narratives. Furthermore, one
more aspect that is vital in narrative research is situating individual stories within participants’ personal experiences (their jobs, their homes), their culture (racial or ethnic), and their historical contexts (time and place) (Creswell, 2013, p. 74). In the case of the participants in this study, it was very important to consider their jobs and the historical contexts in which they were teaching since that is precisely what shaped their stories.

**Description of the Context**

The Secretariat of Education (SED) in Bogotá offers training courses (Language and Methodology) for teachers from state schools. These training courses contribute to teachers’ professional development. To carry out the courses, the SED establishes partnerships with other institutions. In 2014, the language institute from Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, ILUD, had the opportunity to lead the English training courses for the teachers benefited from SED.

The mission of the language institute relates to providing integral training to people so that they can generate changes in their settings, from the reflections made through their learning process. As for its mission, it has to do with offering academic spaces in which students are able to recognize their possibilities to make changes in their settings.

In the courses offered in partnership with SED, students (participant teachers) received their classes either at their schools or at ILUD itself, depending on the capacity of classrooms. They took classes 3 hours per day, and they were offered textbooks for free.

One particular aspect about these courses is that if students fail, they have to return the SED the money they invested during the time students were part of the program. However, in the course I taught there were many dropouts; students dropping out had time limitations and family issues that did not allow them to continue being part of the program, thus they were not part of
Participants

The participants in this study are two female teachers whose ages range between 40 and 49 years old. The two of them teach in primary school and they are in charge of teaching most of the subjects, including English. They hold bachelor degrees in other areas different from English – Biology and Philology and Languages – and they have also been enrolled in graduate programs. The participants have been in service for more than 14 years; however, their experience in teaching English is not that extensive. They have been in charge of teaching English for one, four, and five years in each of the schools they work for.

Regarding the selection of these participants, they were selected as Criterion or Unique Sample (Patton, 1990), since it is about reviewing and studying “all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance” (p. 176). In this case, the participants have a profile that any other teacher from a public institution could meet; however, I got interested in them because of the student – teacher connection that we created during the time we shared in the English course and what we went through during that time.

The reason why the participants were only two is because they were the ones who consented to participate in this study. Two participants are suitable for a Narrative Study, as there are many studies of this type with either one or two individuals only, “unless a larger pool of participants is used to develop a collective story” (Huber & Whelan, 1999, as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 157).

Consent forms (See Appendix A) were provided for the participants to authorize the use of their stories and voices in this research study, as well as to let them know what the purpose of the study was and the guarantee of not revealing their personal information in any way.
Instruments

One main instrument was used in this research study, narrative interview. The interview went through feedback first, and then it was piloted in order to know if it was efficient in trying to collect the narratives from participants.

Narrative interview. The narrative interview is a research method, an unstructured, in-depth interview (Bauer, 1996). This form of interviewing implies the eliciting of stories that tell us about experiences. Narratives are varied, ranging from those that recount specific past events (with clear beginnings, middles and ends), to narratives that traverse temporal and geographical space – biographical accounts that cover entire lives or careers (Riessman, 2006).

Narrative interviewing follows certain steps which are proposed by Bauer (1996) based on the work of Schuetze (1977, as cited in Bauer, 1996). The steps go as follows,

- Preparation
- Initialization
- Main narration
- Questioning phase
- Small talk

The narrative interview that I proposed follows the steps mentioned before. It was conducted in Spanish since the participants’ knowledge of English is basic, and Spanish is their mother tongue, so that allowed them to express their ideas in a better and wider way. The interview has an opening general question that goes as follows,

_Cuéntame tu historia y tu experiencia en la enseñanza del inglés ¿Cómo llegaste hasta este punto?_

To be able to validate the interview I went through some stages that helped me to refine
my idea and understand what were the advantages and disadvantages regarding the application of this method. I went through feedback from professors and then I piloted the interview. After I did the piloting, I made some changes to the initial question that I had, and finally came out with the one mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Another vital aspect from the piloting stage was that of understanding that a narrative interview works as a regular conversation because of its open-ended nature, and that implies “turn-taking, relevance, and entrance and exit talk” (Riessman, 2006, p. 24). However, not all the turns from the participants may be long as it would be expected. That is why it is the researcher’s work to try to create possibilities for eliciting extended turns in which the person is able to narrate as much as desired.

After conducting the research interview, the information was transcribed and analyzed in order to answer the research question and have a wider perspective on the stories of the participants. Afterwards, I intended to apply Member Check for validation; however, it was only possible with one of the participants (See Chapter IV). Member check is a practice in which the researcher submits materials relevant to the research such as findings, to be checked by those who provided the information (Bryman, 2004).

Member check is beneficial not only because it allows to confirm information but because it gives the informants the opportunity to correct “errors of fact or errors of interpretation”, and add information that they may have forgotten during an interview, for instance (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 314). Thus, I intended to guarantee that the information as I understood it was actually agreed upon by the participants.

**Role of the Researcher**

In narrative studies, the narrative researcher co-constructs with the informant even though
it may not be easy to build rapport at the beginning (Riessman, 2008). It implies that the researcher must interact at a very personal level with the participant to collect data. That is why Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) enhance the idea that there must be a respectful relationship that inspires reliance and equality to facilitate collecting data as well as analyzing and interpreting it.

What is more, in a narrative research the relationship between the researcher and the informant not only gives the researcher tools to analyze and understand certain situations, but it gives both parties the possibility to learn from one another (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, as cited in Creswell, 2013).

In my own experience in this process, I had started my relationship with the participants from the moment I met them as students in the English course from SED, and that was even before I developed a research interest in relation to their experiences. We had built rapport and I noticed it because they started to tell me about situations they had in their classrooms, anytime we had the opportunity to talk in and after class.

The following chapter presents the data analysis process and corresponding findings of this study.
Chapter IV
Data Analysis and Findings

In this chapter results of the analysis of narratives are presented. The narratives were collected through interviews (see Chapter III) in which the participants – two non-EFL certified teachers working in primary school – shared stories of lived experiences in teaching English at their work places. The data that was collected works in pursuit of answering the research question posed in the first chapter: How do non-certified ELT teachers in primary school comprehend their own pedagogical practices in teaching English as a Foreign Language? Thus, the objective of this study is to explore the way non-certified ELT teachers in primary school comprehend their own pedagogical practices in TEFL through narratives. The procedures for data analysis are described in the following paragraphs.

Framework of Analysis

Once I collected the interviews, I transcribed them one by one. To start analyzing the data I drew on the approach of thematic content analysis of narratives, which “focuses on the content of the experiences of the narrators and the reflections on these by searching for themes in the narrative data. These themes are often grouped into larger categories for the purposes of further interpretation and discussion” (De Fina and Georgakopoulou, 2015, pp. 98-99). The analysis also drew from a sociological perspective; Riessman (2008) defines the approach as thematic narrative analysis and argues that the focus is exclusively on the content and there is categorization of the themes that are found in the narratives of participants. Although it is argued that thematic content analysis is minimally or not focused on the local context that generates the narrative as well as other aspects that shape the narrative itself (Riessman, 2008), along the process of analysis I tried to bear in mind the framework of commonplaces in Narrative Inquiry.
proposed by Clandinin & Connelly (1990, 2000) in which the aspects of temporality, sociality, and place are important for understanding the narratives of the participants.

To start analyzing the narratives, I revised the interviews and identified the stories and events the participants were telling me about in our conversations about their experiences in teaching English. I wanted to look at not only the themes that arose when approaching the narrative accounts, but also at how those themes were intrinsically related to working for public schools and not being a certified ELT teachers. Once I had those stories, I gave them a name according to what was being told, and I started coding the themes that were salient; I used Atlas.Ti for such purpose. This kind of coding is said to be characteristic from the grounded approach in which researchers break down data, conceptualize it, and then bring it back into themes (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

However, Riessman (2008) argues that even though thematic narrative analysis may share similarities with grounded theory, there are striking differences that depend on the researchers such as attempting to preserve the stories intact for interpretation and paying close attention to time and place of narration. In this study, I took into account the time aspects that were mentioned by the participants such as how long they had been teachers and how long they had been teaching English at their workplace. After doing the process of coding, I grouped the information that shared commonalities or that referred to the same issue. Then, I named the groups according to the issue they described, having in mind the objective of this study – to explore how non-certified ELT teachers in primary school comprehend their own pedagogical practices in TEFL through narratives.

For this grouping of codes I created a map (See Figure 4) as a way to identify the information easily; the map presents a general category named *Teaching English as a sort of*
inevitable challenge (See findings in this chapter), which groups the codes into subcategories. That general category became a potential answer to the question I posed at the beginning of this research.

It is important to note that my interpretation of the participants’ stories can easily differ from that of another researcher. However, as it was mentioned in Chapter III, I intended to apply Member Check to share my perception and interpretation of the participants’ stories with them in order for them to confirm such interpretation or, on the contrary, to disagree with the way things were stated. Thus, at the end of the chapter I expand on this aspect.

Findings

After doing the analysis of two of the interviews that were collected, I organized the data into a category that is composed of three subcategories – as shown in Figure 4 – that are accompanied with codes that helped me to approach a possible answer to the research question posed at the beginning of this study. Thus, in this section I describe the subcategories supported with excerpts taken from the participants’ narratives as they help to illustrate the categories in a better way.
Figure 4.
Teaching English as a sort of inevitable challenge

Figure 4 shows how this category and its corresponding sub-categories are interwoven in order to understand what the narratives of the participants are about and how they understand their practices. The map presents three subcategories: Emotions that arise when teaching English, Teaching the subject, and Interest in improving, which are to be expanded in this chapter. However, it is important to first explain why I decided to name the main category as Teaching English as a sort of inevitable challenge. Throughout their narratives, the participants expressed their appreciation of the exercise of teaching English as can be evidenced in the following excerpts.

Excerpt 01

Mónica: Eh, mmm, no había opción. O sea, a alguien le toca dar inglés, dijeron allí entre nueve profesoras. Bueno, el año pasado también estaba en ciclo dos, mentiras, entre seis profesoras. A alguna de ustedes le toca dar inglés, ¿Quién se va a animar? Es al sorteo. ¿Quién se va a animar? [...] Entonces ya me arriesgué. Y pues las profes contentas de que no nos pusieron en apuros, sino que alguien se arriesgó. (Erm, there was no choice. I mean, someone has to teach English, they said there in a group of nine teachers. Well, last year I was in cycle 1, no sorry, we were six teachers. Someone has to teach English, who dares? This is at random, who dares? [...] So, I took the risk. And well, the other teachers were happy that none of them had to hurry, but someone took the risk.)

In Excerpt 01, the participant is clear in saying that there was no choice about becoming an English language teacher. She was aware that if someone did not make a decision quickly, she might have been randomly chosen in any case. The striking phrase was “a alguien le toca dar inglés (someone has to teach English)” which might have moved her to take a step ahead for that

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1 Translation of all the excerpts was made by the researcher.
challenge. In her longer narrative, Mónica expressed that she had studied a little of English at some point in her life, but she had always dropped out; however, this challenge would become a way of pushing herself to study English again. The feeling of teaching English being a challenge is also illustrated by the second participant

Excerpt 02

Gloria: Eh, pues, ahí se hacen como más acuerdos, ¿no? Entre los compañeros. Y pues, eh, ¿cómo es que dice el dicho? … Eh, en tierra de ciegos, el tuerto es el rey. Entonces fue como algo así ¿no? Ninguna tenía idea de nada, entonces pues, usted como ya hizo un curso así sea básico, entonces pues usted, eh, trabaje con los niños. Entonces como el colegio, pues vieron que yo había hecho el curso, entonces ya me han puesto di que a dictarles clases a los niños del mismo grado, eh, de inglés, y pues tampoco me siento como capacitada, eh totalmente. (Eh, well, we rather come to agreements among co-workers, right? And well, eh, what does the proverb say? In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king. So, it was something like that. No one had a clue about anything, so well, because you already took a basic course, then you, well, you go and work with the kids. So, in the school, because they saw that I had taken a basic course, then they assigned me to teach English to the kids in the same grade I teach. And well, I don’t feel fully qualified, either.)

Here the idea of teaching English as something that was inevitable became more salient. She spoke of agreements among co-workers, but those agreements seem to be one-way. Thus, if one has a basic knowledge of the subject, one is the one that is to be assigned to teach it. Not feeling qualified for performing this task is completely natural for Gloria, because after all, taking a basic English course for her did not mean getting ready to teach the language. These two
excerpts depict the way the two participants seem to perceive their practices in the teaching of the target language; they have more in common than I thought at the beginning of the interviewing process and I contrast it to Mendieta’s experience (2011). Mendieta (2011) realized that her research participants perceived their practices in individual and particular ways due to their own experiences, even though they belonged to the same teaching community – workplace –. In my case, the participants belong to different teaching communities, but there is a commonality in what they live in their schools and the way they react to teaching topics and dealing with not knowing and discovering ways of teaching. There is also a commonality in the degree of awareness of the need to improve English teaching practices that not only benefit the participants as such, but it is an action that has an effect on the learning process of students.

In recognizing that need, there were certain kinds of feelings that were present in the narrations of the participants. Those feelings are grouped into the first subcategory of this chapter.

**Emotions that arise when teaching English.** Nias (1996) asseverates that “as an occupation, teaching is highly charged with feeling, aroused by and directed towards not just people, but also values and ideas” (p. 293). Bearing that in mind, this subcategory has to do with the emotional aspects that were present in the participants’ narratives when teaching particular classes or even trying to figure out how to make things work. Four emotional responses were identified in their stories and they are exemplified with excerpts that most significantly represent the information. These are frustration, disappointment, confusion and lack.

**Frustration.**

In the stories, I could see that frustration is manifested when not reaching a class language objective, when comparing oneself to someone who we think is a model – a certified teacher –, when not being able to learn English.
In one of her narrative accounts – which I named “La canción de John Travolta” –, Mónica told me about how much effort she had put on helping her students to learn the school term topics – e.g. parts of the house –, and how much fun students had had with it. However, things did not end up as she would have liked to.

Excerpt 03

Mónica: Muy divertido todo, pero de la canción ¿Cuánto entendieron? Muy poco. A pesar de la repetición y todo eso. (Everything was fun, but about the song, how much did they learn? Very little, in spite of repetition and everything.)

Her idea was to have students learn one of John Travolta’s songs and have a kind of play. But Mónica felt the uneasiness of not knowing how to make them understand what the song was actually saying. She manifested that they had had a lot of fun, but it was not because the language component was interesting or appealing to the kids. Thus, Mónica ended up frustrated for not being able to reach a language objective. I relate her experience to my own experience as an English teacher some years ago; we had class observations more or less twice a year, and we were always given feedback on what had been positive or negative about our class; however, we were never asked about how we had felt while teaching the lesson. Not having the opportunity to verbalize my emotions about the class was something that probably made me feel even more frustrated. Then if Mónica does not have the opportunity to share her feelings either, in that lack of sharing opportunities for her to grow may be wasted.

Mónica’s frustration is also echoed by her impossibility to finish language courses as it is substantiated in the following excerpt from an account that I named “No había opción.”

Excerpt 04

Mónica: Siempre he querido aprender inglés y algo pasa, porque yo soy de la bendita
In this part of her narrative, Mónica said that she thought if she took the risk of teaching English at school, she might feel encouraged to join an English course and finish it. But there was also frustration about not knowing why she had not been able to finish the previous courses and for some reason she usually ends up dropping out.

Her frustration is then related to her agency as a language learner. Brown (2014) suggests that in learning, agency implies learners ideally “must contribute to the learning process and assume responsibility for the accompanying circumstances” (p. 103). However, in practice there are many learners that are rather passive and show a degree of disengagement due to factors that concern each individual (Brown, 2014). In the case of Mónica, her reasons for being passive in her learning process are still unknown for her. That state of unawareness brings out Trejo and Mora’s (2014) suggestion on using narratives as a tool that enhances reflexivity to help teachers become aware of their experiences and that way understand their agency in their professional lives.

In the case of Gloria, I felt she expressed her frustration the most – in one of the accounts named “Cuando fui a presentar el examen” – when she told me about another teacher and how she thinks her students perceive her in relation to that other teacher, which is not a positive thing for Gloria, since the other teacher is what we would call a certified ELT teacher, and Gloria feels
Gloria: [...] Me cuesta mucho, por ejemplo, la profe que les da el inglés, ella todo el tiempo les habla en inglés; entonces para ellos es un cambio, ¿no? Porque pues yo les hablo en español y les explico algunas cositas en inglés. Entonces ellos se quedan como, como pensando ¿no? ‘¿Esta profe qué?’ (I find it hard, for example the English teacher, she speaks to them in English all the time; so, for them it is a change, right? Because, well, I speak in Spanish and explain some little things in English. Then they are like, like thinking, right? ‘What’s wrong with this teacher?’

Gloria cannot avoid comparing herself to the other English teacher, and by English teacher she refers to a person who went to college and obtained a graduate diploma for teaching the target language. It makes her feel frustrated not being able to speak in English all the time as the other teacher does, and she worries about how students perceive her as a teacher, as it is something she finds hard to deal with.

In feeling frustrated I notice how Gloria constructs her teacher identity through the experiences lived inside the classroom, but also based upon a belief of what certified or qualified English teachers should be like; she cannot avoid comparing herself to a preset or normalized model of a teacher, and that has to do with her identity. In this regard, Zembylas (2003) conceptualizes teacher identity from a poststructuralist approach in which identity is understood as a dynamic process in which discourses, experiences and emotions converge in a socio-political context in which “emotions connect people’s thoughts, judgments, and beliefs” (p. 222). Hallman (2014) also stresses the fact that “teachers mediate their stories of self with the cultural and institutional expectations of what it means to be a teacher” (p.3). This could also be seen
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from the perspective of an imagined community (Anderson, 1991) of ideal English teachers. As Gloria is also an English learner, it is paramount to consider whether she envisions herself as a certified teacher who is able to speak English to her students all the time.

Her feeling also allows to think about the distinction between the certified vs. the non-certified English teacher, which may be seen as that who holds linguistic knowledge the most. In holding linguistic knowledge, we can draw on Zacharias’ (2010) research work in which he found that linguistic identities continue to be a central concern in non-native English speakers’ identity construction. In the case of Gloria, she does not feel that English represents her or it is not a means of expressing and negotiating who she is as a teacher as she does not have the same command of the language the other teacher has; thus, she positions herself in disadvantage.

Disappointment.

Another emotion that is salient in the accounts is that of dissatisfaction for not being able to see expectations fulfilled. In the following excerpt, Gloria tells about her experience taking an oral exam and how she felt at that moment – in the account named “Cuando fui a presentar el examen.”

Excerpt 06

Gloria: […] cuando trabajamos lo de las, lo de las prendas de vestir a mí se me olvidan esas palabras, […] por ejemplo, cuando fui a presentar el examen de, allá en el concilio.

Pues me mostraron una foto de un, pues de un hombre con una chaqueta de un color, con un pantalón de un color y unas medias. Y yo me quedé bloqueada porque no me acordaba cómo se decían medias. Por ejemplo, esas palabras que no, ahorita me acuerdo que se dice socks […] (when we work on, on the topic of clothes, I forget those words. […] for example, when I went to take the test at the council. Well, I was shown a picture of, of a
man wearing a jacket of any color, with pants of another color and socks. And I got blocked because I couldn’t remember how to say socks. And there are words that no, now I remember that it is ‘socks’ […]

Disappointment is deep (as well as frustration) and is not only expressed by Gloria when forgetting words, but also when not knowing how to express something that for her seems to be very easy and that she thinks she should already know. There is disappointment when thinking that one gets blocked for no reason and one may lose face in front of others, and those others can be one’s own students at any point. Her lack of awareness about why she forgets words may be related to a process of vocabulary teaching and learning. In this regard, Hunt and Beglar (as cited in Richards & Renandya, 2002) argue that there are three approaches to the teaching and learning of vocabulary: incidental learning (students learning vocabulary as a by-product of doing other things such as reading or listening, which implies out-of-class activity), explicit instruction (the teacher identifying specific vocabulary – acquisition targets for learners), and independent strategy development (teaching students strategies for inferring words from context and retaining the meanings of those words). The three of them are ideally connected, and the latter plays an important role in the sense that learners do need to be taught strategies that help them to deal with the learning of vocabulary, as such. Another way of explaining Gloria’s experience is that she simply forgot the words at that very moment, and neither she nor we will know why.

This part of Gloria’s story makes me reflect about myself, as well. When Gloria was in the English program – in my class – I do not remember myself teaching students strategies for learning and retaining vocabulary. Thus, her narration also means a lot to me, as it helps me to think about the gaps that I have left on students because of the rush of covering teaching materials and how that has made me feel as a teacher. This brings up the idea of Narrative
Knowledging explained by Barkhuizen (2011) as there is a meaning-making process of not only telling a story, but also analyzing it and discussing the interpretation. In this case, there is also meaning-making of my teaching as I read and interpret Gloria’s account. Disappointment is only evidenced in Gloria’s narration, but it is important to highlight it because there might be situations in which other teachers may feel the same way, and not necessarily because of forgetting words, but because it is an emotion that arises when not meeting certain expectations. As other teachers may feel their experiences mirrored in this emotion, then, it is also worth mentioning ‘confusion’.

*Confusion.*

In the following excerpt taken from the account “Era una confundida para mí tremenda”, Mónica manifests her confusion as someone who is learning how to teach something, and that experience is new for her. There was inner conflict when having so many options to teach a class.

Excerpt 06

Mónica: […] y unos decían una cosa, otros decían otra, o sea, las versiones se cambiaban, ¿yo a quién le creo?, o sea ¿cuál es la realidad? ¿Si? […] O sea, era una confundida para mí tremenda. ([…] and some said one thing, other said another thing, I mean, the versions changed. Who do I believe? I mean, what’s the reality? Yeah? […] I mean I was pretty confused.)

Mónica was supposed to teach *how much* and *how many* in her class, but she had no idea about how to do it, thus, she started looking for options. She looked at videos, she asked different English teachers about it, but she felt confused when having so many voices telling her how to do it. She taught that class at the school, but she still felt confused when doing it. As for this experience, Mónica is in the role of a learner, dealing with information that is completely new for
her. In this regard, D’Mello, Lehman, Pekrun, and Graesser (2014) suggest that confusion is related to learning theories of discrepancy and impasse-driven theories in the sense that we experience conflict when new information comes into contact with prior or existing knowledge structures. Thus, there are lots of emotions that are activated—such as confusion—depending on the context and the disparity of having new information that cannot be easily integrated. Moreover, impasses provide learning opportunities, as feeling confusion implies that the individual needs to make a cognitive effort in order to find a solution for his/her confusion; however, they are clear in saying that not all the situations that cause confusion are meaningful or have a great impact on learning, as confusion can disengage and demotivate the learner and there is no resolution at all. This latter explanation is what Mónica went through as she felt demotivated for feeling insecure in front of her students, even if they would not get to know it. She did understand how to teach the topic, but it was too late for her, as she expresses in the same account,

Excerpt 07

Mónica: Y cuando entendí ya esa clase no, porque ya estaba en otro curso, entonces como que yo decía, tenaz porque yo la di y ya no le puedo, o sea ya no puedo como retractarme, y… quedó así. (And when I understood, I didn’t have that class anymore, I had a different group. Then I said to myself, that’s terrible because I taught that class and now I can’t, I can’t go back, and it stayed that way.)

Mónica tried to teach how much and how many as it was mentioned in Excerpt 06, but later on she realized she had made mistakes. Time had already passed by when she realized about it, and she did not find the way to take it back. Such situation made her feel some sort of regret, and maybe not because of her, but because of the students being promoted to another grade and
not having the language tools that were needed. Her whole experience in that class implies that the classroom is a space where everyone is in the role of a learner – students and teachers –.

Mónica was not only struggling with thoughts of pedagogical strategies to teach the topic, but also with the understanding of the linguistic part, and that remains salient in her learning process of being and becoming an English teacher. She had so many possibilities that she got confused because she did not know what to do. Those many possibilities are the result of trying to find valid sources of information – teachers, videos on the web, etc. Therefore, in that process of search there is professional development – a search that implies elaborating and developing a teaching foundation that took her some time, as she needed to have the theoretical linguistic knowledge necessary to teach that class. She realized she had to converse with the what and the how to be taught (Morais, 2002), that is to say, she was constructing her pedagogical knowledge. Thus, when she was bringing her practice into line with a teaching theory, she was praxizing.

In one of her articles, Sharkey (2009) makes an invitation to what she calls praxize which means “fostering and sustaining an ongoing dialogical relationship between theory and practice” (p. 125). Although her work is related to pre-service English language teachers, and it suggests that teacher educators need to provide learners with as much theory as possible, it is paramount to reflect on how praxizing can be a part of Mónica’s process of being an English teacher (her own professional development) even when she is not enrolled in an L2 teacher education program and does not have formal or pre-established theories to contrast them with her practice. Mónica’s confusion can help to bear in mind that we are constantly learning – it is a process that never ends, and praxizing is not exclusive for pre-service teachers, but it is part of a life-long learning process in the context of teaching. When Mónica tells about her experience, she is creating a link
between theory and practice. Her narration is not simply a retelling of events, but rather a reflection on something that is being learned and constructed, and reflection is precisely at the core of teacher knowledge (Shulman, 1986, 1987; Wallace, 1991; Freeman & Johnson, 1998). Furthermore, when teachers see themselves as learners, they feed their professional identities as there is transformation and adaptation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to the situation that is taking place (Beattie, 2000), and that is an indicator of professional development. However, there is also the sensation of something lacking in her process of experiencing being an English teacher, something that does not allow her to make sense of teaching the language.

Lack.

A concluding emotion that was salient in the participants’ accounts is that of something lacking in the process of teaching English. In the following excerpts from “La Canción de John Travolta” “El curso básico”, and “Cuando uno no tiene la formación”, this emotion is referred by the participants as a lack of pedagogy or lack of training for teaching English.

Excerpt 07

Mónica: Se necesita pedagogía en inglés, porque yo puedo tener mucha pedagogía como profesora de primaria, pero para hacer entender el idioma como tal, no. (You need pedagogy in English, because I can have pedagogy as an elementary school teacher, but it’s not enough as to make someone understand the language.)

Excerpt 08

Gloria: y pues tampoco me siento como capacitada, eh, totalmente. […] Pues es, es un poco difícil, pues cuando uno no tiene una formación, es, es, pues para mí es difícil llegar a cuadrarles como una clase que sea, que dure las dos horas y que ellos estén como contentos, como aprendiendo todo el tiempo… (and I don’t feel fully qualified […] Well,
eh, it is a little difficult when you don’t have the training; it is, to me, it is difficult to prepare a class of any topic that lasts two hours and that makes them feel happy, like learning all the time.)

This sensation of something lacking is probably one of the most significant ones since it stands as a sort of explanation for the other feelings – although all feelings are interwoven –. The participants feel that not having the training to fulfill the task of teaching the target language is the cause of the difficulty. That lack affects their practices but at the same time gives hope to thinking that if they had the training they say is needed, that would make them feel better about their teaching practices. However, that concern about their practices does not mean they are ineffective teachers or they are not committed to what they do. The real concern is about how not being prepared for teaching English may affect the teaching – learning process, which is not a responsibility that lies on the participants as such. In this regard, Usma’s analysis (2009) of language and education policies in Colombia, especially that of Spanish – English bilingualism, may shed light on how the implementation of a language policy in the country somehow has taken the teacher participants to perform a task that they are not fully prepared for. The participants express that there are gaps in the guarantees that are needed for them to teach the language; in this case, that could be interpreted as an apparent lack in the pedagogical content knowledge in the teaching of the subject – English – that Shulman (1986, 1987) addresses as one of the categories of teacher knowledge. This does not mean they lack general pedagogical knowledge as such, but rather “the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others” (p. 9), as Mónica states in excerpt 07 “You need pedagogy in English, because I can have pedagogy as an elementary school teacher, but it’s not enough as to make someone understand the language”.

In looking at this emotional side of teaching English, some shared features can be found in participants’ stories although they have their particularities, as well. In Mónica’s case, not only does she relate herself and her experiences to her students, but also to English teachers and other people around her. She sees other teachers as valuable sources of knowledge; however, having so many sources becomes confusing for her as someone who is in the transition of adapting herself to teaching a foreign language. The confusion and frustration that she stresses in her narrations does not only affect her but it affects students directly, and when she realizes they are affected, she also realizes that she is lacking pedagogical content knowledge for teaching the subject.

In Gloria’s case, her feelings are related to comparing herself to someone who is a real English teacher and that makes her think that her level of English is rather basic for what is required to do and she also recalls her weaknesses as an English learner when saying that she gets blocked and forgets words that she knows are easy ones. As well as Mónica, she realizes she is lacking pedagogical content knowledge for teaching the subject.

Thus, on the one hand, this subcategory makes visible the recognition of the participants’ emotions by themselves when dealing with the teaching of English, which at first sight may be seen as if they experience some sort of negativity when teaching the language; however, instead of seeing emotions as positive or negative, we must understand them as varying and interacting within a given social context (Benesch, 2012). Emotions go hand in hand with experiences and “[t]he same emotion may be associated with different events, and different emotions may be associated with the same event in different situations” (Zembylas, 2003, p. 222). It means that understanding emotions in teaching triggers countless possibilities of overcoming limitations – being aware and thinking of possible solutions or ways of dealing with what seems to be problematic in teachers’ practices. That means there is the possibility of compensating for the
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apparent lack of what the participants call *training* – which I have referred to as pedagogical content knowledge – and the subject matter knowledge – mentioned by the participants as knowledge of the language as such - that were stated in different excerpts.

On the other hand, this subcategory also provides insights on how the participants’ experiences and emotions are embedded in the reinforcement of a language policy in the schools in Colombia, which implies several aspects: even though language policies have already been a topic of study in our country, they need to be reviewed in the light of the experiences of people who are implementing them in the classroom, and consider how teachers who enact the policy at a micro level connect what the policy says theoretically with the real practice. The enactment of a policy is not detached from teachers’ emotions and in such framework teachers deal with a variety of emotions - “emotions of anger, anxiety, and vulnerability, and express empathy, calmness, and kindness” (Zembylas, 2002, p. 201)

In sum, this subcategory lets us know how the participants embrace the challenge of teaching English by manifesting it through different emotions that are sometimes marginalized or ignored (Zembylas, 2003), and it is through their understanding that I as a researcher and the participants themselves may become much more aware of our own teaching and how our identities are being constructed and reconstructed in the process of *feeling* what we do. There is also an emerging need of giving room to emotional knowledge since it is an important aspect of teacher knowledge (Zembylas, 2007).

In the experience of teaching English, the participants have also paved their way to finding what they think is best to teach the language. Thus, the next subcategory is called “Teaching the subject”.
Teaching the subject. This subcategory has to do with the participants’ hands-on teaching English. I intend to offer my interpretation of their experiences keeping in mind that other elementary school teachers may be mirrored in the participants’ narrations. The participants’ stories are addressed separately at first, however commonalities are encountered.

Mónica.

Mónica’s story about John Travolta’s song – already mentioned in the first category and introduced in excerpt 03 – tells us about how she rehearsed a role-play using a song, and how repetition was used so that her students could learn the song, and it was fun for them; however, repetition did not help her achieve her real pedagogical intentions, as she expressed.

Excerpt 10

Mónica: Entonces yo decía, sí pues chévere, pero, pero la intención pedagógica real no se, no se cumplió, no se dio. Logré otras cosas, pero no logré que aprendieran parte del idioma ¿Sí? Entonces yo digo, sí, la repetición es buena, pero en estructuras para entender algo así complejo como una oración o una frase es un lío, y hay que saberlo hacer. Se necesita pedagogía en inglés, porque yo puedo tener mucha pedagogía como profesora de primaria, pero para hacer entender el idioma como tal, no. (So I thought, yeah, it was fun, but, but the real pedagogical intention was not accomplished; it wasn’t. I achieved other things, but I did not get them to learn something from the language, right? So I say, yes, repetition is good but when it is about structures to understand something more complex like a sentence or a phrase, then it is a problem. You have to know how to do it. You need pedagogy in English, because I can have pedagogy as an elementary school teacher, but it’s not enough as to make someone understand the language.).

In another opportunity, she used a rhyming song to help her students learn the numbers
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from one to ten and some other vocabulary. It seems that in this other experience, repeating and memorizing a song had a better impact not only on her students and their parents but also on her.

Excerpt 11

Mónica: Y había una canción, claro que ya ni recuerdo bien la canción, pero era para aprenderse los números y la canción rimaba con otro objeto en inglés, o sea, por ejemplo, era una luna, One moon, y tenía un ritmo bellísimo. [...] Y eran encantados cantando y siempre llegaba un profesor y les cantaban la canción. Entonces yo decía, mira cómo se aprendieron los números, perfecto. Entonces eso, eso fue muy divertido, una experiencia, entonces decían, incluso los papás, sí, es que profe, mire que el niño ya está cantando, mire que el niño ya está diciendo los números. [...] Me acuerdo en particular de eso porque fue color, porque fue juego, porque fue diversión y porque fue sencillo y porque y por eso hubo memoria también. Por una experiencia que a uno le va bien, uno Uy ya, ya yo sé cómo se enseña el inglés, (risas). (And there was a song, that I don’t remember quite well now, but it was about learning the numbers, and the song rhymed with other objects in English, I mean for example it was a moon, One moon, and the rhythm was beautiful [...] And they were fascinated singing and anytime a teacher arrived they sang the song. So I said, look at how they learned the numbers, perfect. Then that was, it was very fun, such an experience, and even their parents said, yes teacher, look at my child singing and saying the numbers. [...] I remember that in particular because it was color, it was playing, it was fun, and it was easy and because of it there was memory, as well. Because of an experience in which one does something good, one thinks: ok this is it, I already know how to teach English - laughs-).

What is substantial about these narrations is the fact that Mónica is reflecting on what
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happens in her classes. On the one hand, in the first excerpt, her reflection highlights the importance of not only implementing a strategy or technique in a class, but also the importance of the knowledge that is needed about the language and how to teach the language; by *how to teach the language*, I refer to the pedagogy that is inherent to the issue in question – English as a subject. In the previous category, this had already been salient and it refers to the pedagogical content knowledge that Shulman (1986) suggests as a component that goes hand in hand with subject matter knowledge. Thus, being that a conspicuous aspect, we need to question why if a language policy is being implemented in our country for quite a long time already, there is still a pending matter. One can assume that the training courses that SED has offered are not *de facto* guaranteeing that the people that are in charge of teaching English in elementary school have the content knowledge that is needed; however, guaranteeing such quality is a challenge that takes time as teacher knowledge means “the teacher must not only understand that something is so, but also why it is so” (Shulman, 1986).

On the other hand, the second excerpt makes me understand that Mónica is not just a teacher who cares about implementing something in class, but also cares about students’ learning apart from having or not the content knowledge that she manifests in the other narration and from the fact that she implemented repetition in the activity. Repetition and memorization are part of another long discussion on language teaching as Westwood (2013) states that “[r]ote-memorised material is also easily forgotten unless rehearsed frequently, and it is unlikely to generalise to new contexts” (p. 10). However, the use of memorization in elementary school classes is a reality that cannot be denied, at least in public schools in our country (Cadavid, McNulty, & Quinchía, 2004).

Furthermore, her two narrations take me back to considering the emotional part of teacher
knowledge, as in the implication of using repetition and memorization Mónica expressed frustration in the first narration (See excerpts 03 and 10), but in the second one there was satisfaction; in this latter, it didn’t seem wrong for her to use repetition as she valued the satisfaction students, parents - a relational plane - and herself felt - an individual plane - with the results of learning the song (See Table 1 in Chapter II). Thus, as it was mentioned in this same chapter, “[t]he same emotion may be associated with different events, and different emotions may be associated with the same event in different situations” (Zembylas, 2003, p. 222).

Gloria.

As for Gloria, I want to introduce four excerpts that represent the way she approaches the teaching of English and in which I can see how teachers’ emotions are inevitably present in classroom experiences.

Excerpt 11 (This first excerpt was presented also as excerpt 08 from a narration that I named “Cuando uno no tiene la formación”)

Gloria: Pues es, es un poco difícil, pues cuando uno no tiene una formación, es, es pues para mí es difícil llegar a cuadrarles como una clase que sea, que dure las dos horas y que ellos estén como contentos, como aprendiendo todo el tiempo… porque uno lo que maneja es casi que el vocabulario apenas, casi no maneja estructura, uno casi no maneja eh, comprensión de lectura, ¿sí? Como algo, como un poco donde tengan que pensar un poco más. Uno lo que trabaja básicamente es la memorización. Entonces sí, sí es difícil. (Well, eh, it is a little difficult when you don’t have the training; it is, to me it is difficult to prepare a class of any topic that lasts two hours and that makes them feel happy, like learning all the time… because what one basically knows is vocabulary, one does not know much about structure, one does not know, eh, about reading comprehension, you
know? Like something where they have to think a little more. What we work is basically memorization. So yes, it is difficult.)

This first account is quite similar to Mónica’s in pointing out the use of memorization which at first makes me think again about the need of teachers having content knowledge as to draw on many more resources for teaching their classes. I also believe she does not feel ashamed of using memorization (one cannot asseverate that it is the way she approaches her whole teaching, as English is something she was not prepared for after all), but she is indeed alluding to it as a limited way of teaching English, which may not enhance higher thinking skills in her students whatsoever. However, the telling and retelling of this experience (Connelly and Clandinin 1988, as cited in Shi, 2002) is what may lead her to transform this current reality.

The following three excerpts are presented in a row as I feel they related to each other in the sense that Gloria refers to using games, songs, and drawing for her classes.

Excerpt 12

Gloria: [...] Y entonces empezamos a jugar. Entonces yo, por ejemplo, yo me sentaba y les decía ['stan] up [sic] entonces pues ahí el que se equivocaba tenía que pagar una penitencia, o sea fue como, como jugando que comenzamos. ( [...] So we started to play. Then I, for example, I sat down and told them “stand up”, then the one who got it wrong had to pay a penalty. I mean, it was like, we started by playing.)

Excerpt 13

Gloria: [...] el año pasado para el English Day hubo que preparar una canción en inglés [...] Entonces cogí una canción de los Beatles que, que se llama You say yes, I say no. Y es súper fácil porque es una canción, eh, muy repetitiva y, y pues tiene un ritmo muy, muy chévere. Y eso se la aprendieron, todos salieron a cantarla, lo más de bellos, eh, esas
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Gloria: Entonces yo, lo que digamos, es que yo dibujo muy bien. Entonces yo les hago unos dibujos en el tablero, bien bonitos, ¿no? Y pues como que les llamo la atención a ellos. Y con eso es que básicamente yo trabajo. (So, I, let’s say, I draw really well. So, I draw things on the board, beautiful things, right? And well it seems they liked it. And that is basically what I work with.)

I see another Gloria in these narrations, one who dares to use games, songs, and drawings in her classes, overcoming a fear of not mastering the language as she wishes. My impression is that she is making use of her experiential knowledge, which Wallace (1991) refers to as a kind of knowledge that is developed in practice. Shulman (1987) calls it “the wisdom of practice” which he addresses as a source of teacher knowledge (p. 11).

Thus, having an appreciation about these games, songs and drawings as good strategies for teaching English in her context is only possible when one as a teacher recapitulates and narrates teaching experiences. Gloria shows the impact that those moments have had on her when she uses expressions such as “really easy”, “very nice”, “so beautiful”, “beautiful things”, “it
seems they liked it”. Such moments are shaping her identity as an English teacher, which, as I concluded in Chapter II, is “not developed in isolation but in connection with inner and outer spaces, and flashes of motivation and demotivation that help to reevaluate what and who we are” (p. 40). Compared to the narrations in the previous category, I see a flash of motivation that could help her to value when, where and how she is as a teacher (Trinh, 1992, as cited in Zembylas, 2003). Then teacher identity formation is in all senses fed by the dynamic comings and goings of emotions that are implicit even in small events; such events contribute to the meaning and interpretation of our identities as emotions “connect people’s thoughts, judgments, and beliefs” (Zembylas 2003, p. 222).

In summary, the participants’ narrations that are part of this subcategory inform about how they as teachers are aware of the importance of their students’ learning process, which at the same time becomes a learning process for the participants that are in the search for strategies or ideas to help students understand the language. That search occurs as a strengthening of their experiential knowledge which is a fundamental part of their professional development, considering it as a long-term process (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Moreover, although the main interest of this research is not on the participants’ approximation to language learning theories as such, that aspect is subtly implicit in both of the participants stories; probably the way they teach the subject is also how they learned it; I refer to the use of rote learning which continues to be part of the wide discussion about the teaching of English in Colombia and how the official guidelines of the language policy in the country seem to still enhance the use of that strategy (Guerrero & Quintero, 2009).

Finally, this subcategory demonstrates, once more in this chapter, that the teaching of a language and the reflection of such act are charged with emotion. Thus, even though teachers’
emotions is an aspect that was addressed in the previous subcategory (Benesch, 2012; Zembylas, 2002, 2003, 2007), it is also present here because emotions are always going to be implicit in our teaching as to feed our identity construction.

**Interest in improving.** A trait that I have seen as salient in the encounter with the participants’ stories is the willingness to move beyond their current reality. In their minds, there is no room for stagnation. This subcategory presents various accounts in which the participants demonstrate their concern about the teaching of English, which I have understood as an interest in improving their practices. The data from this subcategory is divided into three parts that are named *Questioning their own teaching practices, Desire to learn about the language, and Enrollment in professional development agendas.*

**Questioning their own teaching practices.**

I found it interesting to note that at the beginning of the interview with each participant, there were signs of introspection and questioning about what they have been doing since they started to teach English. Such looking inward can be interpreted as the beginning of a reflection process which several scholars refer to as pivotal for teacher knowledge (Shulman, 1986, 1987; Wallace, 1991; Freeman & Johnson, 1998) and professional development (Richards & Farrell, 2005; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004, 2012; Hardy, 2012).

*Excerpt 15*

Mónica: Sin embargo, pues estando en el curso de inglés en el ILUD pues me ha ayudado bastante a entender cosas que incluso yo les estaba enseñando mal, y lo digo con sinceridad. Yo les estaba enseñando a los niños cosas que estaban alrevesadas y pronunciación que me tocado decir “Ay, no. Así no se decía, se dice así”. *(However, being part of the English course at ILUD has helped me out a lot for understanding things)*
that I was even teaching in a wrong way, and I say it with sincerity. I was teaching the kids things that were the other way around, and pronunciation that I have said “Oh, no. That was not correct, it is like this.”

It is when Mónica joined the English course at ILUD - the place where we all met - that she started to gain understanding about the subject matter which led her to realize that something was not working well. In Gloria’s case, she first started to question herself about her teaching and then that led her to think about getting enrolled in an English course, as it is expressed in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 16

Gloria: Eh, hace dos años, que pues también me, me empecé como a cuestionar de esas cosas y pues salió un curso de la Universidad Distrital por RedPec para hacerme un, un básico de inglés, entonces pues yo me inscribí. *(Eh, about two years ago, I also started to question myself about these things, and then I saw a course from Universidad Distrital through RedPec which I could take to study a basic level of English, and I just registered).*

This act of reflection works as a stage that involves not only an exercise of describing the practices in the classroom, but the encompassing of a need to make changes; in the case of the participants the need for change implies the desire to learn about English.

*Desire to learn about the language.*

This segment about the desire to learn can be understood in two ways: desire to learn about the subject matter and desire to learn or gain knowledge about the language in order to help their students in their learning process. I perceive this latter as a potential pursuit of pedagogical content knowledge.

Excerpt 17
Mónica: Yo siempre he sentido, o sea, por ejemplo, te traje este libro para que vieras que desde acá es que me está gustando mucho más y me encantan las canciones de los Beatles, entonces me digo yo “Pues es una oportunidad para entender más las canciones que me gustan”. [...] Entonces dije yo, “no, esta es la oportunidad porque es la cotidianidad que me va a dar la posibilidad de aprenderlo”. Entonces ya me arriesgué. (I have always felt, I mean, for example, I brought you this book so that you could see that it is recently that I have felt I like it much more and I love the Beatles songs, so I say to myself “Well this is the chance to understand more the songs that I like”. [...] Then I say, “this is my opportunity because it is the daily practice that is going to give me the possibility to learn it.” So, I took the risk.)

In the stories, it is Mónica who manifests an interest towards the learning of English, but not necessarily because she finds herself obliged to do it. Rather than that, she embraces this challenge of teaching as an opportunity to enjoy something she likes to do, for instance, listening to music in English. Her enthusiasm in the learning of a language - which could also be seen as a trait of investment as a learner (Norton Pierce, 1995) - may contribute to a strengthening of her subject matter knowledge and to possible improvement in her teaching practices, considering that one of the reasons why elementary school teachers have a hard time in their English classes is precisely the lack of such knowledge (Cadavid, McNulty & Quinchía, 2004).

However, the participants also manifest an interest in learning the language because they know that their students’ learning process may be affected in great manner by that fact. This may also be interpreted also as an ethical position towards teaching and learning.

Excerpt 18

Mónica: Si, el how much y el how many, que no sé si incluso lo estoy pronunciando bien,
pero, pero entender eso para cuarto, que es uno de los temas que uno tiene que ver ahí según el currículo que le dan a uno, eh, como que yo decía, no. Yo miraba videos, yo preguntaba a los compañeros licenciados en inglés y unos decían una cosa, otros decían otra, o sea las versiones se cambiaban, ¿yo a quién le creo?, o sea ¿cuál es la realidad? ¿Sí? Hasta que hace poco le pregunté al profesor del ILUD y ya más o menos comprendí, o sea no era como me lo decían. (Yes, “how much” and “how many”, that I don’t know if I’m even pronouncing it the right way, but, to understand that is part of some of the topics that they have to learn in fourth grade according to the curriculum that we are given, and I said like “no”. I would watch videos, I would ask some of my co-workers who are English teachers and some said one thing, others said another thing, I mean, the versions changed. Who do I believe? I mean, what’s the reality? Yeah? Until I recently asked my English teacher at ILUD and I kind of understood, I mean, it was not what I had been told.)

Excerpt 19

Gloria: [...] yo un día me metí a la página de RedPec y vi que estaban oferta… Bueno, eso fue hace tres años, eso fue hace tres años, que fue en el centro. Y yo vi que estaban ofreciendo y que era por la tarde, pues… yo me inscribí, presenté un examen, y me ubicaron en el grupo A, sí en el A. [...] Pues eh… mi finalidad era aprender un poco eh, lo que era la pronunciación así fueran cosas básicas para poder trabajar mejor con los niños; o sea, a mí no me interesa que me voy a ir a viajar o que voy a aprender inglés para, para otras cosas sino para eso, para poder trabajar de una mejor manera. ([...] one day I got into RedPec webpage and I saw the ad… Well it was almost three years ago, and it was downtown. And I saw they were offering classes in the afternoon, well… I registered,
then, took an exam and got placed in group A, yeah group A [...] Well, eh... my purpose was to learn a little bit, at least pronunciation even if those were basic things so that I could work in a better way with the kids; I mean, I was not interested in learning for traveling or any other thing, but to work in a better way.

I see Mónica and Gloria trying to find sources of knowledge - co-workers, material that could be available online, teachers, courses - that may provide them with tools or ideas to improve their teaching which, as a result, will contribute to help students in their learning. I interpret this as a sort of search for pedagogical content knowledge, for finding ways to make English more comprehensible or easy to understand for students.

Wallace (1991) suggests that a pre-training phase is needed for teachers to receive such kind of knowledge - received knowledge - which can then lead to professional education in the sense that in-service teachers will manage their knowledge from the classroom experiences scenario. However, a pre-training phase denotes a kind of ideal context for teacher learning in which they have previously decided they want to become teachers and they go through that process of pre-training, professional education, and then, professional competence that Wallace proposes. Thus, the participants’ stories demonstrate that we need a more dynamic model of teacher knowledge that adjusts to their realities, as their so-called pre-training may be overlapping with the other phases.

It might be that Freeman and Johnson’s (1998) idea of teacher knowledge process gets to be a more suitable way of understanding Mónica and Gloria’s process of becoming and being English teachers, as they advocate for an interrelatedness between the nature of the teacher learner - their prior knowledge not only as learners, but as students of other education and graduate programs, along with their beliefs and experiences in classrooms in more than 10 years
of teaching -, the social context - which I understand as their being part of public schools and now teaching English within the framework of a language policy implementation in the country -, and the pedagogical thinking process of teachers - that would refer to aspects of subject matter and content that the participants seem to be concerned with - which together inform about the way teachers develop their knowledge.

Furthermore, this desire to learn more about the language has taken Mónica and Gloria to be part of courses that correspond to professional development agendas for elementary school teachers in Colombia.

*Enrollment in professional development agendas.*

Cadavid, McNulty, and Quinchía (2004) have found that in terms of support for elementary school teachers teaching English, the government has taken action in offering some English and Methodology courses that can be understood as teacher training which is more oriented towards the acquisition of skills for effective teaching (Díaz-Maggioli, 2004, 2012). In their narrations, the participants refer to their enrollments in courses that have been part of those agendas in the country. For instance, Mónica tells about her participation in a Bunny Bonita training course. Bunny Bonita is a project that was launched by the MEN, which comprises a series of lessons that are based on a Total Physical Response (TPR) approach and a procedure of Presentation, Practice, Production (PPP). At the end of the series the students are supposed to have reached an A1 level according to the CEFR (MEN, 2012).

Excerpt 20

Mónica: [...] luego otro compañero llamado Camilo, nos recomendó, pues a él le llegó el correo de un programa que hay en el Distrito que se llama Bunny Bonita. Y Bunny Bonita fue muy interesante. La capacitación que nos dieron que fue como de tres días, creo. Muy
interesante porque ahí le dicen mire, qué hay que tener en cuenta, qué competencia realmente hay que tener en cuenta para, y la mayoría de nosotros que estábamos allí éramos profes que no éramos… simplemente profes de primaria, o sea no teníamos énfasis en inglés. Y entonces nos dieron una buena dirección frente a eso y unos materiales muy buenos para hacer el currículo, “mira hagan el plan de estudio así y así”. Nos hicieron talleres, unas clases cómo se podría, pues esas clases nos sirvieron mucho porque es como la base para uno también hacer su clases, muy lúdicas. Pero entonces pasó algo ahí como la mayoría de cosas que nos dan, que nos ofrecen en el Distrito que uno se entusiasma muchísimo pero luego se cortan. Entonces, “no, que la capacitación sigue”. Nunca nos volvieron a llamar del Distrito… Sí, ese programa es del Distrito, Bunny Bonita. Nunca nos volvieron a llamar, no hubo otra capacitación. Nos dieron una maleta grande con unas fichas, unas flashcards, emmm… de cosas también de comandos y objetos y a colores. Muy bonitas, pero ya, o sea, uno termina ahí como que “¿qué más sigue?”.

(…then another partner named Camilo recommended us something about a mail that he received from a District program named Bunny Bonita. And Bunny Bonita was very interesting. The training they gave us lasted three days I think. It was very interesting because they told us about things we had to take into account, competencies that we have to keep in mind; and most of us who were there were not… we were just elementary school teachers, I mean, we did not have any emphasis on English. And then they gave us good instructions about it and some materials that were good to design the curriculum, “do the syllabus like this or that”. They gave us workshops, classes about how we could do it, and those classes were really helpful because they are like a base for us to make our own classes, they were very fun. But then something happened there, like
most of the things they give us, that the District offers us something that gets us very excited, but then they are cut off. So, they tell us that “the training will continue”. But we never got another call from the District... Yeah, this Bunny Bonita is a District program. They never called us again, there was not another training session. They gave us a big bag with some flashcards, mmmm... things about commands and objects and colors. Beautiful things, but that was it, I mean, one ends up like “what’s next?”

Mónica’s narration is telling us about her interest in getting more training - “it was very interesting”, “classes were really helpful”, “they were very fun”, “what’s next?” - but beyond that, she sets out a discontent and criticism not only about this particular event, but about a constant letdown towards interrupted processes from the Ministry of Education that have to do with professional development - “But then something happened there, like most of the things they give us, that the District offers us something that gets us very excited but then they are cut off.”

This means that TPD in Colombia - at least for elementary school teachers - could be detached from reality when thinking that teachers only need short training courses in order to enact a language policy (Hardy, 2012). Pretending that teachers will produce quick results in short time in order to meet educational goals (Avalos, 2011) is not new, whatsoever as other scholars have argued about the instability of a bilingual language policy in Colombia (González, 2007; Usma, 2009) and the need to outline a more continuous process of professional development based on teachers’ needs (Cárdenas, González & Álvarez, 2010).

Gloria’s experience in trying to be part of a professional development program is not so different from Mónica’s in the sense that she also has an appreciation about how these processes have been conducted showing a lack of organization.

Excerpt 21
I had already registered in a PFPD (TPD program in Spanish) that was called The Teaching of English. It was about the teaching of English which was also led by the language department of Distrital university, and then I registered for a basic English course [...] it was very hard to attend the two courses so I chose this one - English course -. Oh, no, I did attend the first class [in the PFPD course] and they explained what it was going to be
about... that they were going to work with the English curriculum, basically and...that they were going to provide some guidelines and methodologies to work with children. And the thing is that they said they were going to send an e-mail to say where it was going to be and the list of teachers and groups, but they got disorganized with that and they did not inform about it anymore. Then when a friend of mine started to attend this course [English course], this course was just for some schools, the one I took with you; it was not for all teachers, for teachers from bilingual schools or something like that. [...] So he told me, “look, they are offering these courses again, why don’t you join it?”. And I told him, “but my school was not called for that course”. And he said “well, I can talk to the teacher”. And as there were very few people in the course and people usually don’t take advantage of these things, then I decided to join it. A while after starting the course, I got a call for the PFPD course saying that they were going to start, etc., but I told them “no, I already started somewhere else.”

The discontinuity in these kinds of TPD activities could easily result in a lack of investment from teachers who are willing to get involved in an improvement of their practices. In that regard, McNulty and Quinchía (2007) have demonstrated that educational policies need to support such improvement with stable opportunities for teachers and research work for the sake of teaching and learning in schools in the country.

In sum this subcategory has presented phases of questioning, desiring, getting enrolled - that are all connected to the interest of Monica and Gloria in doing a better job as English teachers. That interest is given in the framework of a language policy that, ultimately, has become the driving force for their endeavor. However, their stories show that there are inconsistencies in this language policy that might end up in affecting the degree of investment
that teachers have devoted to the learning and teaching of English. Now in terms of how the participants have dealt with the challenge of teaching English, I see they are becoming adaptive experts (Diaz-Maggioli 2004, 2012; Howard & Aleman, 2008) not because they already possess a grounded knowledge about the teaching of English, but because they are adapting to changing realities against the odds and they are creating and strengthening their discourses as teachers and learners. At the same time, it is clear that they are doing their best to make a language policy work, as they reflect upon their own practices and look for ways to not only be better teachers but to accompany their students in the process of learning another language.

After coming out with this analysis, I contacted the participants once again to share my interpretations and they were willing to read or listen to this information; however, in the end contact was only possible with Gloria who only counted on her WhatsApp at that time. Both participants were active in the teachers’ national strike at the time of the member check and that kept them quite occupied. Thus, after three attempts I decided to summarize my interpretation in very few paragraphs for Gloria to read (See Appendix B). In few words, she agreed on what she read, but she also added one more aspect that she thought was missing, and that might turn out interesting for scholars and policy makers in our country in regards to the so called bilingual policy,

Excerpt 22
Gloria: […] en la básica primaria [n]o se le da una importancia a la enseñanza del inglés. Por esta razón los chicos primero llegan súper atrasados a la secundaria, y segundo, que no tienen ni las herramientas básicas que sí tienen los otros niños de colegios privados […]Y por eso mismo, el que hace un curso básico queda "listo" para enseñar […] Imagínate si es que llegan vírgenes a 6 grado. Sin saber nada de nada. ([…]) English
teaching in elementary school is not considered as relevant. That is why, first of all, the
guys come to high school really behind, and secondly, they do not count on or have the
basic tools that other children from private schools do [...] And for that same reason
[English not being important in elementary school] the one that takes a course is “ready”
to teach [...] Can you imagine, they [students] come to 6th grade as “virgins” without
knowing anything [emphasis added]).

What Gloria is adding is not just her perception of English teaching in public elementary
school; it is her reasoning after all these years of experience trying to deal with a language policy
that aims to reach great objectives, but whose micro-level processes seem to be congested. When
I first got interested in the participants’ experiences, I was not thinking about it from the
perspective of a bilingual policy in our country. However, Gloria’s final annotation has helped
me to understand much more than what teachers need to know and what they do in the classroom
– for better or for worse - is subject to economic, historical and socio-political agendas (Grant,
2008; McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008). In that regards, Barkhuizen (2008) also states that
teachers cannot control how their experiences are inevitably influenced by policies and
constructed under their legislation.

Moreover, what is valuable is the fact that Gloria is developing a kind of knowledge that
goes from an individual to a socio-political plane (Zembylas, 2007) or stage (Barkhuizen, 2008),
and she feels empowered to release a critical view of a policy that is affecting her students as she
expresses in her account. That empowerment is precisely the target of studies like this in which
teachers may be able to demonstrate their views and resistance to what affects their practices.

Becoming judgmental about elementary school teachers from public schools is easy when
seeing things from the outside; however, narrative has allowed me to visualize an inner phase of
their experiences which is in turn a way to expand my own teacher knowledge. Thus, in the following chapter I summarize the main insights of this research work that attempt to answer the research question posed at the beginning of the study. I also present some implications for narrative research on the importance of considering teachers’ stories in their process of teacher professional development as policy, practice, and research (Hardy, 2012), and the impact this study has had on my process as a novice researcher.
Chapter V

Conclusions

This research paper accounts for the result of a narrative study concerning the stories of two non-certified ELT elementary school teachers working in public schools where the enactment of a language policy has taken them to teach a foreign language. The concern of this study focused on understanding how these two teachers comprehend their own pedagogical practices in the teaching of English from a narrative perspective.

Thus, this chapter intends to condense the main ideas that answer the research question, and how the findings of this study suggest further research in pursuit of a better understanding of teacher professional development for teachers whose realities may not be distant from Mónica and Gloria’s. At the end, I also assign meaning to the impact that this study has had on me as a novice researcher.

From the stories the participants shared with me about their process in teaching English, I came to the realization that they embrace their English teaching practices as a sort of inevitable challenge, which is not to be understood as a negative subject in this thesis but as an opportunity to see the contribution of such experience to what they are as professionals. Consequently, *Teaching English as a sort of inevitable challenge* became the data category that led my analysis, and it was divided into three subcategories, *Emotions that arise when teaching*, *Teaching the subject*, and *Interest in improving*.

Through the analysis process I found that Mónica and Gloria highlight pedagogical and subject matter knowledge as important forms of teacher knowledge; throughout their narrations they constantly alluded to the fact that they lacked these two forms of knowledge. However, I learned that they have not gotten stuck in thinking about their lacks but they have moved onto the
search of knowledge that helps them to contribute to their students’ learning process; that fact also implies that they are creating knowledge - be it theoretical or practical - through experience, which in turn becomes a strengthening for their identities as teachers.

Such interest in knowing more about the teaching of English demonstrates Mónica and Gloria’s degree of investment in their own professional development as English teachers and an interest in reflecting at a larger scale upon what occurs in their teaching scenarios. Reflection is precisely the meeting point of the TPD ideas presented in this study (Shulman, 1986, 1987; Wallace, 1991; Freeman & Johnson, 1998) which ultimately advocate for a more critical degree of reflection - “examination of socio-political and moral and ethical results of practice” (Farrell, 2015, p. 9).

Nevertheless, it is the emotional dimension which I found as an area that needs further exploration in terms of teacher knowledge and professional development. As it was stated in previous chapters, we must understand that emotions are neither positive nor negative but interactive elements within a social context (Benesch, 2012), and as much as they are part of our nature, they need to be considered fundamental elements in teaching and learning processes (Hargreaves, 1998).

Hence, Monica and Gloria’s stories filled with emotions that I identified - frustration, disappointment, confusion and lack - and even with the ones that went unnoticed, make me think that TPD programs and language policies in our country need to become more aware of teachers’ emotions. In that regard, it is paramount to look at Zembylas’ (2003) defense on the importance of being aware of the role of emotions in teaching as they empower teachers to create resistance to predominant socio-political views that tend to normalize teachers’ identities suppressing their feelings from their work. In order for that awareness to occur, we need to consider
the development of mentoring relationships among teachers; the establishment of teacher-teams as forums for creating emotional and professional bonding; and the encouragement of teachers to engage in (action) research on their own practices and on the emotional aspects of the self that are inextricably related to practice. (p. 230)

The findings of this study also bring up the necessity of continuing to revise a language policy in Colombia that has aroused interest from different scholars throughout the last decade (e.g. Ayala & Álvarez, 2005; Cárdenas, 2006, 2007; Guerrero, 2008; Sánchez & Obando, 2008; Vargas, Tejada & Colmenares, 2008; Mejía, 2011) and whose studies have shown weaknesses and aspects to consider in order to improve the proposal. However, the policy seems to continue to lack optimal conditions for fulfilling its objectives adequately as some statistics show that the panorama is not favorable in terms of the objectives set for 2025 (Lizarazo, 2015), and by 2016 only 1% of students from eleventh grade were in a B1 level according to the CEFR (El Tiempo, 2016).

Thus, Mónica and Gloria’s experiences inform us about the need of evaluating the way this English language policy is being enacted at public schools through the country. One cannot generalize as to say that these research participants’ realities are mirrored in every elementary school. However, it is precisely the uncertainty about many other teachers’ realities what should move us to continue doing research on this matter, how do they feel? are they fully equipped for such task? does this process affect their identities?

Hence, one of the ways of approaching teachers’ realities is through the use of narrative research whose characteristics were discussed in Chapter III. Zembylas (2003) advocates for the use of narrative research as a way of understanding what teachers feel and who they are as professionals, and as a means whereby teachers can become “knowers of themselves, of their
situations, of children, of subject matter, of teaching, and of learning” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, as cited in Zembylas, 2003, pp. 214 - 215). That understanding is doubtlessly the product of a reflection process that results in the strengthening of teacher professional development models in our country.

Moreover, narrative studies should contribute to having a more appraising perspective towards teaching practices of pre-service and in-service teachers, which are most likely charged with multiple known and unknown forms of teacher knowledge. As it was stated in Chapter II, “One of the more important tasks for the research community is to work with practitioners to develop codified representations of the practical pedagogical wisdom of able teachers” (Shulman, 1987, p. 11).

Having said that, it is important for me to say that this study has helped me to validate Barkhuizen’s (2011) idea of narrative knowledging as a cognitive activity that refers to “the meaning making, learning, and knowledge construction that takes place at all stages of a narrative research project” (p.5). Such generated knowledge, says Barkhuizen, is not fixed but it is rather active, changeable and exchangeable, as one revisits the data and audiences read and re-read research reports, thus causing a shift in “understandings as they know, re-know, and un-know the reported experiences” (p. 6).

As a consequence, I have constructed a kind of knowledge that derives from the understanding of the participants’ stories in regards to the teaching of English in public schools in our country and the theoretical concepts that have come up from their stories. Their narratives have led me to contemplate aspects of my own process as a teacher and as a learner, to remember that my English teachers at school could have been Mónica and Gloria and I cannot help but imagine that they once taught me in the past, and they continue to teach me in the present
anytime I review their stories and retell them. Our experiences talk and converge, thus producing a co-constructed narrative. As for the participants, when I shared my interpretations with Gloria, she agreed upon them but she had more to add; she was re-knowing her experience - learning from her narration and mine - which after a while can be complemented with new perspectives.

Finally, I believe the participants and I have immersed ourselves in the understanding of a language policy from a more bottom-up perspective that starts with the comprehension of classroom practices. On this point, I want to emphasize my concluding idea from Chapter IV and it is the fact that elementary school teachers from public schools may easily be criticized, alluding to their apparent lack of preparation for teaching a foreign language. However, when one gets to know their realities thoroughly, there is an understanding about how the implementation of certain educational policies can affect teaching-learning processes for better or for worse, but also about the dedication and commitment that many of these teachers have with their occupation.

**Limitations**

The main limitation I had in this research process was moving to a different city and not having the possibility to have more face-to-face encounters with the participants. The member check process was not completely successful as teachers from public schools were on a national strike and my research participants were actively involved in it; hence, I was unable to reach Mónica, and I chose to summarize my interpretations for Gloria as she did not count on a computer at that moment and her only means of communication was Whatsapp.

**Further research**

English teachers’ experiences have been object of inquiry in our country for significant time already. However, non-certified ELT elementary school teachers deserve much more
attention in terms of their knowledge construction and TPD process; that way more actions (See McNulty and Quinchía, 2007) may be taken for improving their teaching conditions and contributing to their students’ process of learning English as a foreign language. Also, more research on the inclusion of emotional knowledge in TPD programs in our country is necessary.
Non-certified ELT teachers' narratives: A pedagogical reflection

References


Non-certified ELT teachers' narratives: A pedagogical reflection


Non-certified ELT teachers' narratives: A pedagogical reflection


Non-certified ELT teachers' narratives: A pedagogical reflection


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PROYECTO DE INVESTIGACIÓN: Teachers’ Narratives: A Pedagogical Reflection.

OBJETIVO DEL PROYECTO:
Este proyecto tiene como propósito explorar la manera en que los docentes que enseñan inglés en básica primaria, y que tienen perfiles distintos a licenciados de inglés, comprenden la experiencia de enseñar esta lengua. El proyecto se origina a partir de la iniciativa de la investigadora por conocer las experiencias de enseñanza de los docentes participantes, toda vez que dichas experiencias contribuyen a la comprensión de la realidad de la enseñanza del inglés en casos particulares en el país.

COMPROMISOS DEL INVESTIGADOR:
Se le garantiza:

- El uso de nombres ficticios para proteger su identidad si usted lo prefiere.
- Estricta confidencialidad con información que usted considere que lo puede afectar.
- La oportunidad de verificar las declaraciones hechas en las entrevistas y la interpretación que se haga de ellas.
- Que el proyecto no tendrá incidencia alguna en su trabajo.
- Que se le responderá cualquier duda que le genere el proyecto.
- Que usted podrá desertar de este proyecto en el momento en que lo desee y por las razones que usted considere sin tener que dar explicación al respecto.
TÉCNICA UTILIZADA:

Para el pleno cumplimiento del objetivo planteado, se recogerán datos por medio de entrevistas narrativas con ustedes. Con esta información se pretende tener una comprensión amplia de esas experiencias vividas por ustedes en sus aulas de clases desde que empezaron a enseñar inglés en sus respectivas instituciones.

Agradezco de antemano su autorización para contar con usted como participante en este proyecto. Si es así le solicito llenar los datos en la parte inferior de esta carta.

Cordialmente,

Keily Duran Acero

Investigadora

NOMBRE DEL PARTICIPANTE: ____________________________________________

CERTIFICO que he sido informado(a) sobre el objetivo de esta entrevista organizada por ________________________ en el marco de la investigación arriba referenciada. Conozco el procedimiento que se va a realizar y me han informado acerca la confidencialidad y uso que se dará a la información que se suministre durante el proceso de la entrevista. Acepto participar de forma voluntaria y libremente en la entrevista.

FIRMA: ____________________________

FECHA: ____________________________
Appendix B

Member Check - Gloria

[19:10, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: Gloria, cómo has estado? Espero que bien. Te escribo porque se me ocurrió que como no hemos coincidido con los horarios para conversar, a lo mejor podría contarte acá sobre mis interpretaciones con respecto a tu experiencia y tú me dices qué opinas al respecto.

Al leer tus narraciones sobre cómo ha sido tu experiencia en la enseñanza del inglés, yo codifiqué la información y la organicé en una categoría que titulé: El reto inevitable de enseñar inglés. Le di este nombre porque pienso que a pesar de que podrías elegir si enseñabas inglés o no, a su vez decidiste asumir ese reto y lo que esto implicaba.

Esa categoría tiene tres partes importantes: Las emociones que emergen en el proceso de enseñanza, la manera en la que enseñas el idioma, y el interés que has mostrado en mejorar como docente de inglés.

Las emociones que emergen en el proceso de enseñanza: en esta categoría expongo cómo este proceso de enseñar una asignatura para la cual no te preparaste - a nivel de pregrado y postgrado- ha suscitado emociones como frustración, decepción, confusión, y sensación de falta de conocimiento. Sin embargo, no presenté estas emociones como negativas sino simplemente como emociones que se tornan parte del desarrollo profesional y que indican que la investigación docente necesita preocuparse más por conocer lo que sienten los docentes y lo que sucede dentro del aula en el marco de la implementación de una política de bilingüismo en Colombia que aún tiene muchas debilidades.

Estas emociones a su vez se han convertido en parte de la formación de la identidad docente que se nutre de las vivencias en la enseñanza.

La manera de enseñar: Acá hice alusión a cómo aparecen las estrategias como el uso de canciones, dibujos, juegos, etc. que hablan del interés que tú como docente tienes por ayudar a los estudiantes en su proceso de aprendizaje y que no hay muestra de estancamiento por parte de la docente al sentir que carece de conocimientos, sino que se vale de su formación pedagógica para poder conducir a los estudiantes en el proceso de aprender inglés.

Interés en mejorar: acá me refiero a cómo te has involucrado en el aprendizaje del inglés a través de cursos, de talleres, entre otros, porque todo esto contribuye a tu desarrollo profesional. A su vez este interés da una mirada crítica a la falta de continuidad de los procesos del Distrito con respecto a la implementación del bilingüismo en los colegios del estado.

Creo que un punto valioso de estas historias es precisamente el ejercicio de narrar. La narrativa, nos lo dice la teoría, conlleva a un proceso de reflexión crítica porque nos ayuda a valorar el pasado con relación al presente y en miras del futuro. La narración nos empodera en la medida que nos hace entender quiénes somos.

Bueno, creo que esto es algo bastante condensado sobre mi interpretación. Me gustaría saber si estás de acuerdo, si tienes algo por agregar, o si en algo muestras desacuerdo.

Te agradezco mucho por haber compartido un poco de tu experiencia conmigo.

[19:21, 6/6/2017] Gloria: Hola. Si que pena contigo...con esto del paro andamos como embolatados. Creo que todo es cierto y bueno creo que falta algo como que en la básica primaria bo se le da una importancia a la enseñanza del inglés. Por esta razón los chicos primero llegan super atrasados a la secundaria y segundo que no tienen ni las herramientas básicas que si tienen...
los otros niños de colegios privados
[19:21, 6/6/2017] Gloria: Y pues se supone que entre más temprano mejores herramientas tendrán
[19:25, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: Está bien, Gloria. Creo que voy a agregar esa percepción tuya en la parte donde se hace la crítica a la política de bilingüismo en el país.
[19:28, 6/6/2017] Gloria: Y por eso mismo, el que hace un curso básico queda "listo" para enseñar
[19:28, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: Jajajajajajaja
[19:29, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: Por ahí estuve rastreando unas noticias de eso
[19:29, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: Y los resultados han sido muy pobres
[19:29, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: Porque ellos todo es por la vía fácil
[19:29, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: Lo rápido
[19:30, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: El año pasado solo el 1% de los muchachos de once grado alcanzaron los objetivos esperados

[19:31, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: 😞
[19:33, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: Ok. Éxitos y bendiciones
[19:40, 6/6/2017] +57 311 6581420: Muchas gracias!